



# SUBBUTEO NEWS

## A Short Story

### The Greatest Goal Ever Scored

I was in a bit of a pickle.

I was playing against Ian Aggett in a Supremos World Open game and was wondering what my next move might be. I was in possession and the ball was an inch past Aggs' defensive line, tucked in behind it. The snag was that my only attacker was offside and had already had two flicks. I debated whether to use an onside flick and decided to play at the ball instead, hoping to make myself a nuisance to Aggs as he tried to clear it. I played up to the ball and the player came to rest touching it and, crucially, onside.

Now what? I did have another player in Aggs' half. Unfortunately, he was on the far touchline, surrounded by two of Aggs' defenders. All the rest of my players were on or near my shooting line. I considered a possible but improbable option of huge loop out to the left wing and back to the right on a flat angle behind Aggs' defence but there were too many obstructions en route.

No – the only sensible option seemed to be to miss. Should I get another attacker upfield? Or should I plug the gap in the middle of the defensive line?

Referee Kev Dyson saw my hesitation. "You've messed up there, haven't you, Pepper?" he said (only he didn't say "mess").

"You'll look stupid now if I hit the ball," I said.

"I'll tell you what," Kev said, "if you can hit the ball, fairly, without fouling any players, I'll give you a goal." Aggs nodded sagely as he planned his clearance of the ball.

There was a significant shift in the risk-reward balance here. And I needed another player up front. I decided to go for it.

The plan would be to flick a player from my shooting line straight up the middle of the field and see what happened. I selected a player in the middle of the line and flicked it hard but without following through, imparting a touch of spin.

The outcome was spectacular. The player skidded up field and turned sharp right as it entered the shooting area, colliding with the ball, which deflected off the player that it was touching and rolling to the edge of the penalty area. My two players danced a short waltz with each other before one of them detached himself and ended up behind the ball.

There was a couple of seconds of silence before the three of us collapsed into fits of laughter. Before I could compose myself for the shot, Aggs had picked up the ball and put it on the centre spot.

So there we have it. The greatest goal ever scored.

Never went in.