

Life & Community

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Daejeon defeat Seoul U for title

By Sebastian Harrison

Daejeon de la Cuba made history last Sunday by taking the SSFL Division 1 title after an electric 1-1 draw against defending champions Seoul United. With the title only ever having been won by teams from Seoul, Daejeon have memorably written their names onto the SSFL trophy and completed a remarkable fairytale story, which has seen them twice escape relegation on the final day of the previous two seasons.

As the two teams stood for a minute of silence around the centre circle in memory of Han River Harrier and former Seoul United Wailer player John Egerton, the tension was palpable.

The raucous traveling fans of Daejeon, made up of various teachers and a whole lot of Cuban flags, added a lot of atmosphere and the stage was set for a remarkable finale. With only a draw needed to take the title on head-to-head results following a victory against St. Patrick's last Sunday, the odds were beginning to shorten on Daejeon de la Cuba, who had never before come so close to winning the Division 1 title.

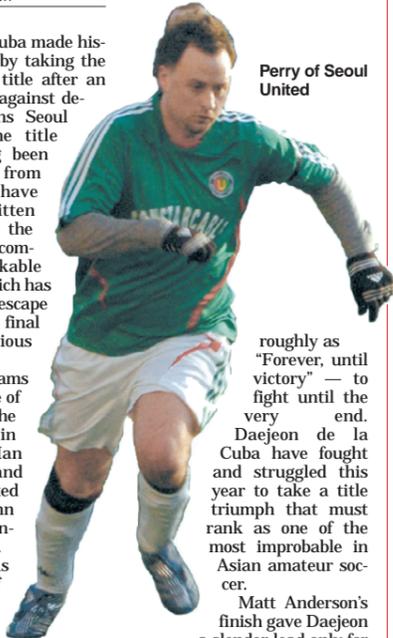
Seoul United were heavy favorites going into the match, brimming with talent reminiscent of Real Madrid's famous Galacticos: The talented Mexican Alex Ramirez, golden boot winner Matt Boulton, the lightning pace of Jerry Kakkar and the inspirational French captain Didier Balistere, among numerous other players who have played soccer at all levels. Their play lit up the First Division last season as their brand of total football left countless victims.

Daejeon's tale is slightly different. They are widely known to be a team of redoubtable heart: working miracles with a shortage of resources yet always scrapping to avoid relegation in the final weeks. With only a fraction of Seoul's population of foreigners in Daejeon, the drive and determination of veteran de la Cuba's Eoin Daly, Shane Etchegary and goal machine Matt Anderson ensured the team survived into the year. The very survival of the team had been in question before and it seemed at times only a matter of inches could have shut them down for good — or relegated them to an uncertain future.

"This victory is a long time coming. We've had many long and difficult seasons to get where we are today. Years of dedication from De la Cuba players along with some fantastic acquisitions this season have helped us realize our dreams," said Shane Etchegary, the captain and goalkeeper of Daejeon de la Cuba.

"I am delighted with this victory and so proud of our players. We showed tremendous character to come together for such a triumph. We are a family first and foremost and that will never change," the captain said.

"Hasta la victoria siempre" was one of the final things Ernesto "Che" Guevara wrote to Cuban leader Fidel Castro before he died. It translates



Perry of Seoul United

roughly as "Forever, until victory" — to fight until the very end. Daejeon de la Cuba have fought and struggled this year to take a title triumph that must rank as one of the most improbable in Asian amateur soccer.

Matt Anderson's finish gave Daejeon a slender lead only for Seoul United to equalize in scrappy fashion. Only a last stand in the final twenty minutes denied Seoul United the goal they craved after multiple last-ditch tackles and great saves.

For a team outside of Seoul to take the title in such dramatic fashion is an outstanding achievement, and demonstrates that heart and spirit can triumph in the face of adversity however strong and talented. If this is a revolution in the SSFL then the seeds have been sown by Daejeon, who can always reflect on the fact that it was them who broke the Seoul monopoly on the title, and proved that impossible is nothing in the land of the morning calm.

Division 1 round-up

St. Patrick's brave mission to stay in the First Division came unstuck as they lost to the SBFC Butlers 4-1 to send them down to division 2.

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Ryan Fitzgerald
Photos by Shiraz Hussain

Pub owners pitch in for orphans

By Matthew Lamers

Picture this: You're a little child, you have some 20 brothers, 25 sisters, and your 20-year-old fridge is barely working. One day, some giant foreigners show up with burly, hilarious looking mustaches. They then ask you to choose who has the most hilarious looking mustache and give you a present: a huge fridge filled with candy.

"It was nice to see smiles on the kids without parents to love and care for them," said Albert Ryan.

Ryan was one of the key organizers of a very special charity drive that recently raised nearly \$2,000 for two Seoul orphan-

ages. The idea was simple, but the overall issue is complex. Ryan and his business partner, Bernie Mullin — owners of the popular 3 Alley Pub in Itaewon — had 31 people grow mustaches and collect sponsors, the proceeds of which were to go to the orphanages.

"It's a contest that is common every 'Movember' in New Zealand and in Australia. Usually the contest, obviously for men, is to raise money for prostate cancer — a men's disease."

He explained the cancer society in Korea told them that the society is already well funded. So their attention turned to Seoul's orphans. "From there we chose orphans as our charity and one of our regulars came up with the

idea of actually going to the orphanage and having the children vote on the before and after pics."

The two bar owners raised 1.7 million won (\$1,850), which they split between two orphanages. One had been using a fridge that was over 20-years-old, so they decided to put some money toward buying a new one, and added a little treat inside. "We had a new one that we filled with candy delivered to them, and it cost 1 million won," said Ryan.

Ryan said the other orphanage has 35 infants, who are all under three-months-old. That orphanage told the organizers they were most in need of diapers so Ryan and Mullin used the rest of the money to buy diapers to send them.

Ryan, a Canadian, has been in

Korea for eight years, is married and has a one-year-old. He explained that it was gratifying to give something back to Korea after years of living here. "We are always excited when we can give something back to the community here in Korea. My business partner and I are both long-timers here and loved to have the opportunity to do a little good."

"Going to the orphanage and meeting the kids was special. They loved participating in the contest. We put the before and after pictures up on white boards in an auditorium. The kids took turns in small groups coming up to look at the photos and then cast ballots to choose a winner. They all had a good laugh," said Ryan.

Ryan said that he and Mullin like to donate to charities every year. In the past they made donations to Helping Hands Korea — a charity organization that helps North Korean refugees. "Movember" was a tremendous success and I believe we have started a tradition that will live on for years to come. Team work brought the whole thing together but my business partner Bernie Mullin deserves the credit. It was his idea. We were very thankful that so many people were sympathetic to the cause and donated," said the 3 Alley Pub owner.

"I hope that fundraisers such as this will help to raise awareness and give them some exposure. That way they have a chance to get other donations as well."

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This week's PHOTO CHALLENGE asked you to show us "your Korea"



My Korea is a country that is larger than life, full of vibrancy and beauty, often in the most unexpected places. At times Korea seems to the outside eye to be big and confusing yet there is an ease that comes with living in Korea. Most of all it is fiercely unique, there is no place that is quite like Korea and it shows in its people and culture. Photo taken at the Seoul Prison Museum.

Ryan Chappell/ www.lotuseaterphotography.com

Ask the photographer

Q — Hi, I'm new to DSLR photography and I have only one lens, an 18-70mm. I like the lens, but I'm thinking of buying another one. What kind of lens would be a good second lens? Also, my friends talk about prime lenses a lot, but I don't really understand the benefit of prime lenses. — Michaella, Seoul

A — Your first question is difficult, because types of lenses are kind of like types of shoes — they serve different purposes. For example, you wouldn't buy high heels to go walking on the beach.

There are three basic types of lenses: wide angle, macro and

telephoto. Each is fairly self explanatory. Wide angle lenses are around 12-18mm and are perfect for really wide landscapes. Wide angle lenses usually have some barrel distortion though, due to their extremely wide range. Macro lenses are for extreme close-ups. Macro lenses are the best choice when it comes to photographing bugs and flowers. Telephoto lenses are zoom lenses. These are really handy when you're far away from your subject. Wildlife photographers like zoom lenses; so do sports photographers.

Portrait photography is a different story, but there are no specific lenses for working with

people. However, a longer lens — such as a telephoto — is recommended because they tend to give a more natural face shape, thanks to the fact that telephoto lenses have little barrel distortion. The general rule of thumb is any lens longer than 85mm.

Usually, the lens you leave on your camera is referred to as a base lens. It's for general shooting and your 18-70mm is great for that. So, before choosing another lens, I'd recommend taking a lot more photographs and deciding what you're good at. If you realize that you love landscapes, get a wide angle lens. If you think that portraits, macro,

or wildlife photography is your thing, then get a lens to suit that style of shooting.

Another great idea is to befriend people who have the same make of camera. Then you can borrow lenses and test them out. It's an excellent way to learn about how other lenses work.

Moving on to prime lenses. Prime lenses have no zoom. This can actually have a lot of advantages. Prime lenses require less glass, less moving parts and less engineering to make them work. Therefore prime lenses are generally sharper and faster. Also, it's easier to get prime lenses with a

better maximum aperture. For example, a 50mm prime lens can have a large aperture like f1.4 or f1.8. This is virtually impossible in a zoom lens. Using a prime lens can have advantages when you're photographing a subject in low light, or if you want to make the background extra blurry, by limiting your depth of field. We call that technique Bokeh.

David Smeaton is a photographer living in Seoul. He can be reached at davidsmeaton@gmail.com. To submit a photo for the photo challenge, please e-mail David.

A fresh take on an ancient civilization

By Penelope Thompson

ULSAN — For a fresh cultural perspective, foreigners sometimes have the ability to observe a place and its people in a different way than locals do. The International Creative Community is a unique artist's group founded in 2006. It was started by Australian artist Lainie Cooper and Ulsan-based Korean artist Kim Chang-han with the aim of fostering cultural exchanges between artists of different countries through exhibitions, workshops and home-stay exchange programs.

In June this year, 12 Australian artists visited Korea to participate in an exhibition in the prestigious Hyundai Art Gallery in Ulsan, as well as tour Korea and participate in a variety of art seminars and workshops. During this time I met one of the visiting Australian artists and viewed the exhibition, and subsequently joined the group myself.

The membership of the ICC is diverse and includes Australians, Canadians, Americans and Brits.

Emerging or established artists of any nationality are welcome to join as new members. This month, from Dec. 11 to Dec. 20, the ICC is holding another international exhibition in the Bukgu Culture and Arts Centre in Ulsan. The title of the exhibition, "Impressions From Afar — A Visitor's Perspective," reflects the way that foreigners often view a new country with fresh eyes. Hence, the Korean artists are sharing works of art inspired by their overseas travels, with many interesting visions of foreign lands such as Africa, China, Australia, India and Europe — and the foreign artists are showing work based on their varied impressions of Korea.

Unlike the June ICC exhibition, when most of the foreign artworks were contributed by visiting Australian artists, this time around many of the foreign artists represented reside in Korea, which adds quite a different dimension. There are three foreign resident photographers — Kevin Pope, Katrina Baran and Gareth Copley —



The International Creative Community's "Impressions From Afar" exhibition postcard

showing their unique vision of the Korean people and landscape, as well as multimedia artist Ryan MacLay, who is displaying an installation inspired by the distinctive graphics and design features of Korean clothing.

Other resident artists include Canadian painter David Macri, with his commemorative portrait of an uncle who died in the Korean War, and Australian painter-writer Leah Broadby with some autobiographical works. Also included are paintings and ceramics sent over by some of the Aussie exchange

artists inspired by their Korean visit in June 2007.

Of course I contributed to this exhibition as well, with last night's opening performance entitled "Portrait of a Foreign Artist in Korea, 2007," and an installation of the same name. During one part of my performance I actually emerged from a zipped up suitcase and proceeded to give an English lesson on the theme of "time is money" (something which should be readily understood by many a foreign teacher in Korea).

The ICC Impressions From Afar exhibition takes place at the Ulsan Bukgu Culture & Arts

Centre gallery, 1010, Saneop-ro, Bukgu, Ulsan. You can contact the Gallery by phone at 052-219-7400, or for enquiries in English about the exhibition or ICC membership, please contact Kim Chang-han at kchn@use.go.kr or call 018-591-3338.

Penelope Thompson is an Australian contemporary artist living in Busan who works in performance, installation and community art events. You can see her blog at <http://penelopethompson.blogspot.com> (thompson_penny@yahoo.co.uk)