



LEAVING ON A JET PLANE WITH CARLOS QUIEROZ

The Portuguese boss Carlos Quieroz talks exclusively to Pumafootball.com as we prepare to board the same rickety plane from Luanda to Cabinda to watch the opening game of the African Cup of Nation's Group B.

Q: So Carlos, what are you doing here in Angola?

A: I've come to watch Ivory Coast who are in Portugal's World Cup group.

Q: Did you catch that insane Angola vs Mali game?

A: Yes, what an opportunity missed for Angola. To be winning 4-0 and then draw is a huge technical mistake.

Q: Can Angola bounce back?

A: They can if they learn from the situation how to keep a result. It takes maturity and experience. Only naivety can explain what happened on Monday night. Only in football can this happen.

Q: Has anything like this ever happened in your career?

A: One time with Manchester United we were winning with just a few minutes to go but then conceded an equalizer in the final minutes. You have to realize that a game only finishes in the last second. Until then you need to maintain the same attitude and concentration, otherwise you'll get punished.

Q: Who do you think will win CAN 2010?

A: I believe the big sharks will be in the final four. Ivory Coast is well-positioned, and we can likely expect a team from North Africa, as well as Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria. There will always be an underdog who surprises though.

Q: You mentioned you've come here to keep an eye on Ivory Coast. What have you made of their performance so far? That 0-0 draw against Burkina Faso is not much to write home about, eh?

A: It's hard to draw an opinion from first games in tournaments, especially this one. The pitch was poor, the weather extremely humid and the fact that there are now only three teams in their group means that they had to be very cautious. If they lost before their game against Ghana they would be almost out of the tournament so they had to be very careful.

Q: Portugal are in the Group of Death with Brazil and Ivory Coast. What do you need to do to make sure you qualify?

A: It's a tough group for everybody but Portugal needs to win and that's it.

Q: How important will Cristiano Ronaldo be to your success in South Africa?

A: All great players are important to their teams. When things become tired he can make the difference.