

In your face, Uli Hoeness!

 By Nick Said

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So the curtain has been drawn on the 2010 FIFA World Cup and what a fantastic success it has been for South Africa!

The football on the pitch was at times disappointing, but that is the way the international game has been going in recent years. Off it though, South Africans and international visitors have partied like never before.

There were no machete-wielding gangs roaming the streets looking for 'Johnny Foreigner'. While there was some petty crime, the Afro-pessimists, of which there were many, sit now on 12 July 2010, with egg well and truly planted all over their faces.



Uli 'ell is Hoeness? Who cares?

One of the more outspoken figures ahead of the tournament was former German international Uli Hoeness, now president of Bayern Munich. Let's go back to January 2010 and take in just what he had to say:

"I was never a friend of a World Cup in South Africa and Africa as long as the security issue is not 100 percent solved," Hoeness said.

"Mr [Sepp] Blatter had to have his way, I always considered it wrong. Now you have to make the best out of it [but] I am convinced that deep down Mr Blatter has realised that giving the World Cup to South Africa was one of the biggest wrong decisions he ever made."

On the contrary Herr Hoeness, it was "one of the biggest right decisions Blatter ever made", possibly his greatest decision as FIFA president.



The Cup has boosted our self-confidence, our pride, in a job very well done

I truly hope that while ignorant fools like Hoeness have learnt a little during this World Cup, and that, unlike his belief that Europe should be the centre of the footballing world and the only power to gain from the game, we live in a global village.

Perhaps his comments were tinged with some jealousy, after all the South African World Cup followed an efficient, but ultimately sterile, German tournament in 2006. Were the Germans afraid of being upstaged? Well, if they were, their worst nightmares have come true.

South Africa will face many challenges in the future and we are by no means a healed nation, but I hope this tournament has given us a little confidence to move forward, a little pride in our flag and anthem, and a little respect from the rest of the world.

We deserve it you know.

Images sourced from www.fifa.com and <http://vietbao.vn>

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