



## **DARE TO DREAM** *By Koos Stenger*

“I had seen that man before and now he was sitting in the snow outside the stadium [in Madrid]. I asked him what he was doing there. He said he’d been there for five hours, hoping for a chance to see the game, but his money had run out. That’s when I knew I had to help.” This is how José Mourinho, then coach for Real Madrid football (soccer) team, described his meeting with Abel Rodríguez, a Mexican-American who waxes floors in Los Angeles.

Rodríguez had first met Mourinho in the U.S. several years earlier when Real was on a training campaign and needed a volunteer to carry water for the players. It wasn’t a paid task, but Rodríguez was happy to help, and that’s when he decided he had to see a real game. He saved money for the plane fare, flew out, and hoped for the best.—And it was “hope,” because he neither had a ticket for the match nor anywhere to stay.

It paid off. After their encounter, Mourinho put up Rodríguez in the same hotel as the players, all expenses paid. He proceeded to give him a paid job as kit man for an upcoming Champions League match against Manchester United, which meant Rodríguez flew with the team to England as a staff member.

“We must help each other to live our dreams,” said Mourinho.<sup>1</sup>

When I first heard about this incident, I was impressed. Mourinho has a reputation as a tough character. He never seems to miss an opportunity to ridicule his opponents, and he comes across as proud and harsh. Yet, when faced with this man’s dreams, his heart was touched. It shows that deep down we may be quite different from the image we project.

Then there is the faith of the cleaner. How could he have flown across the world with hardly any money, expecting to manage to see a game in one of the world’s biggest soccer stadiums? That seems rather ridiculous. Irresponsible, actually. Dreamers do crazy things that average people might never attempt. But in following his dream, Rodríguez ended up with a unique and inspiring story to tell.

If people can dream big dreams for things in this life that have little eternal value, how much more should we, as God’s children, dream big and do as much good as we can in a world that is desperate for love and recognition. **DARE TO DREAM BIG!**

1. Voir <http://www.si.com/soccer/2013/04/10/real-madrid-fan-jose-mourinho>.

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