

WORLD CHILE 1962: Semi-final Santiago
de Chile, Estadio Nacional, 13 June 1962

CHILE - BRAZIL

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GENIUS AND UNRULINESS OF GARRINCHA, 'CHEER OF THE PEOPLE'

To understand the importance of this World Cup semi-final it is necessary to know that in 1960, two years before the event, Chile had suffered the most terrifying earthquake of the 20th century. The devastation caused had led FIFA to question the Chilean World Cup, but the population, who strongly wanted this event, managed to react and rebuild the necessary stadiums and infrastructure in record time. The Chilean national team arrived at this World Cup with the drive and anger of a people seeking redemption, and managed to reach the semi-finals against all odds and by all means. Having eliminated Italy in the first round with brawls, beatings and intimidation of the players, in the quarter-finals they knocked out the USSR of the 'Black Spider' Yascyn by playing a sensational game and with full merit. Facing them in the semifinals, Brazil was more or less the same, fantastic, team from four years earlier in Sweden, with only the change of the two defensive centre-backs. But, in the second game of the first round, Pelé was seriously injured and had to miss the rest of the competition. His place was taken by Amarildo, who fitted into the team very well with a brace on his debut against Spain. Brazil beat a strong England side in the quarter-finals and faced Chile in a packed Nacional stadium in Santiago with 76,000 spectators cheering on the home team. Such hell would have frightened anyone, but not Garrincha, the Brazilian Alegria do Povo; perhaps because nothing had ever frightened him in his life, and against the advice of any sports doctor he had managed to become a professional footballer, despite the various congenital defects that afflicted him: slight squinting, deformed spine, unbalanced pelvis, six centimetres difference in leg length. This gave him a very distinctive way of running that was reminiscent of a bird's hopping (hence the nickname 'Garrincha') or the movements of the actor Charlie Chaplin. But it was also his secret: thanks to his deformation, Garrincha could perform unnatural feints that disoriented every opponent. Just eight minutes into the game, Garrincha collected a short defence rebound and fired an unstoppable left-footer into the top corner, and Brazil immediately took the lead. The Brazilian star was unleashed, he took off with his feints and entered the area, Rodriguez had to tackle him to stop him but, according to the referee, it was not a penalty but an improbable free kick in the area, which Didi kicked badly wide. Having recovered from the shock, Chile began to grind out the game, strengthened by a first-class midfield line that became more and more aware as the matches and victories went by. Ramirez on the right flank, Toro in the middle and Rojas on the left are three tireless plungers with good feet: in the 19th minute, a left-footed conclusion by Rojas hits a spectacular post, the crowd warms up and understands that the feat is not impossible. On the reverse Vava scored the double for Brazil on an assist from Amarildo, but the referee cancelled for a non-existent offside. In twenty minutes he had already made two big gifts to the hosts, but fortunately they would be the only ones in the entire match. Immediately afterwards, Chile's centre forward Landa hit a backhand shot on Ramirez's assist and the ball went just wide; only a minute passed and Vava invented a spectacular assist with a volley for Amarildo, who, however, stretched the ball too far and allowed goalkeeper Eskuti to come out in despair. Toro, the Chilean number 8, is a spectacle to watch, with an almost impractical physical appearance (definitely overweight) he grinds out kilometres and distributes balls with extraordinary elegance, and in the 29th minute he even goes close to scoring with a far-ranging shot that Gilmar deflects into the corner. But just when Chile are

Playing great football and seeming to be able to grab a draw, Brazil's cynical side doubled the score: once again, Alegria Garrincha headed Zagalo's corner kick into the net. Brazil were 2-0 down, but could do nothing in the 41st minute when Toro himself invented a masterful free-kick from 30 metres, which went into the net: the Santiago crowd exploded and the first half ended 2-1. At the start of the second half, however, Brazil went back to within two points with Vava's header, again from a corner kick: his shot was powerful and folded Eskuti's hands. But Chile's heart was still alive and beating: on 16 minutes, Tobar, who had been evanescent up to that point, tried to find a team-mate in the box but the ball impinged on the outstretched arm of Brazilian Zozimo and it was a clear foul, though probably an involuntary one. The referee doesn't think about it for a second and awards the penalty, which Leonel Sanchez scores with confidence with his deadly left foot. Chile were now all forward, supported by the warmth of the crowd: Rojas grazed the post in the 20th minute on Ramirez's invitation and Tobar sent over the crossbar on Landa's assist in the 23rd minute. But no sooner had they loosened their grip than Brazil's champions re-emerged, Zagalo flying down the left and crossing for Vava's imperious header to seal the win: 4-2. Two minutes later Landa set off on a percussion and was stopped by an obstruction from Didi, reacted badly and tried to throw a punch at him, so the referee threw him out. Garrincha was no different in the 38th minute when he was stopped incorrectly by Rojas and kicked him in the back: he was sent off as well. A blunder that could have cost him the final, but the rules of the time did not provide for disqualification for the next match following expulsion (unless extremely serious). The last Chilean gasp was a personal action by the unsinkable Toro, who brought two Brazilian defenders to heel with a feint and kicked right-footed into the outside of the net. Brazil go through to the final but great honour to Chile.

CHILE: Eskuti 5.5, Eyzaguirre 7, R.Sanchez 6.5, Rodriguez 6, Contreras 6.5, Rojas 7.5, Ramirez 7, Toro 7.5, Landa 6, Tobar 6, L.Sanchez 6. Coach Fernando Riera.

BRAZIL: Gilmar 7, Djalma Santos 7, Mauro 7, Zito 6.5, Zozimo 6, Nilton Santos 6.5, Garrincha 7.5, Didi 6.5, Vava 8, Amarildo 6, Zagalo 7. Coach Aymore Moreira.

Referee: Yamasaki (PER) 5.5

Sent off: 80' Landa, 83' Garrincha.

On 9' Garrincha 0-1; on 32' Garrincha 0-2; on 42' Toro 1-2.

On 47' Vava 1-3; on 61' L.Sanchez (Rig.) 2-3; on 78' Vava 2-4.



The funambulist Garrincha wearing the shirt of his historical club, Botafogo.