

The Sizzling Case of The Soccer Saboteur

by Andrew West
with contributions from Jack Pachuta



How to Organize the Investigation

Before the party:

1. Print off one copy of the suspect roles (pages 8 - 15).
2. Print off enough copies of the Notes and Answer Sheet (pages 4 - 6) so that every girl who is investigating the mystery has a set. You can, at your discretion, make "clipboards" by stapling these pages to sheets of cardboard.
3. Print off the Solution (pages 16 & 17) and keep it hidden.

At the party:

1. Assign the roles to eight girls. Everybody else becomes an investigator. No information needs to be memorized because each suspect has notes containing the answers to questions.
2. Read "Sabotaged!" and "Rules of the Game" (pages 2 & 3) out loud to everyone.
3. Hang the Diagram of the Stadium (page 7) in a central location where all of the girls can see it.
4. Distribute the Notes and Answer Sheets to the investigators. The investigators will need to make notes to collect information. If the suspects are investigating the events, they'll also need clipboards. Based upon the group, determine if they should work individually or in teams.
5. Tell the girls to talk with each other to find out what everyone knows about the events. You can organize this if you want to, or you can just let it happen.
6. When time's up (after an hour or so) gather everybody together and, one at a time, ask the individual girls or the teams the questions on the Answer Sheet. Have the girls read the answers exactly as they wrote them.
7. Read the Solution to the case. You may want to award a prize to the person or team that comes closest to the correct answers.

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Sabotaged!

The rolling cheer of a wave ripples around the stadium and the scent of hotdogs and popcorn fills the air. It's the finals of the All Girl Starling Cup Soccer Championship - and it's a sell-out! Many in the crowd have traveled hundreds of miles to watch the most-anticipated game of the year. The Rolling Hills Bluebirds are playing the Seashell Cove Wildcats, and the winners will be the State Champs! The sky is blue, the sun is shining, and everybody's looking forward to a great game. But things are about to go terribly wrong.

The teams run out to wild applause. It's traditional for the team captains to shake hands before the game starts. The Rolling Hills Bluebirds captain Rebecca Goodkicks and the Seashell Cove Wildcats captain Victoria Smee jog onto the field to roars from the crowd. They go to the center to shake hands, but before they reach each other, Rebecca starts slowing down. She looks uncomfortable. What's going on? A few moments later she turns and runs back into the locker room! Is she limping? What's happening?

A few minutes later, Ella Galaxy, the booth announcer, relays the news that the game will be delayed, and groans are heard from everyone. Rebecca's soccer shoes have been sabotaged with itching powder! Rebecca needs some time to recover. The Rolling Hills Bluebirds coach, Ivana Winalot, is refusing to let her girls play until the mystery is solved and the culprit is found.

The crowd is getting restless. Everybody wants the game to begin. The guilty party must be brought to justice. The local police proclaim the game will be delayed until the case is solved. Everyone has been deputized and is ordered to help find the culprit.

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Be sure to ask:

1. Who are you?

2. What have you done today?

3. Who do you think is responsible for the itching powder?



Notes about
Rebecca Goodkicks



Notes about
Riba Steps



Notes about
Allison Toomee



Notes about
Courtney Lately

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Rebecca Goodkicks

You are a suspect. Always tell the truth when people ask you questions.

Who are you?

Goodkicks. Rebecca Goodkicks. Nice to meet you. In case you don't know, I'm the captain of the Rolling Hills Bluebirds, and the cause of all this fuss. Ouch. I can't talk to you for very long. In a few minutes, I have to go and put my feet into a bowl of cold water for an hour. Ivana says this is the only cure. My new shoes are completely ruined.

What have you done today?

I arrived at 1:30 and immediately bumped into Riba. That was awkward! Ask around if you want to know why. I went to the locker room and started to get ready. Coach Winalot gave us a pep talk, then we went outside to warm up. I wore some old shoes instead of my new ones for the warm-ups, and I suppose I must have left my locker unlocked. When we came back I changed into the new shoes and we went out onto the field. I knew something was wrong right away. When we got to the center of the field, my feet just got hotter and hotter and itchier and itchier. I couldn't stand it! We came back to the locker room and Ivana found the itching powder under a bench. We knew that had to be it.

Who do you think is responsible for the itching powder?

It could be anyone. I'm a great player, and a lot of people are jealous of me. The obvious person is Victoria, but I'm not so sure it was her. I've met her before and she's really nice. I can't imagine her doing anything like this. The more I think about it, the more I get this weird idea that Ella might be the culprit. She's not just an announcer - she owns the stadium. And everybody knows it's not doing very well - people keep going to the new stadium in the next town instead. She really needs some publicity, and she's definitely got it now! I bet she's giving interviews to the newspapers already!

Are you making this up to distract the other team?

Who's been making up such silly things? Why would I put myself through all of this?

Did you really measure the posts on the goal like Allison Toomee asked?

No. I didn't want to get into trouble so I didn't tell you that sooner. Ella asked me not to. You see, she couldn't get the goal fixed in time and she knew we'd have to cancel the game if it wasn't fixed. So I said it was OK. I'm really sorry! Ask her about it.

Did you find out about Courtney and Victoria's deal?

Nobody was meant to find out about that! Yes, Victoria told me about their little arrangement. I was furious! I went to tell the coach, but as I approached I could hear her yelling into the phone, asking where the talent scout was. Coach Winalot obviously thought nobody was around to hear her. I didn't want her to know I'd heard her, so I handled the problem myself. I told Courtney that if she didn't keep the other team from scoring, she'll be replaced as our goalkeeper. I didn't really mean it, but I needed her to know I was angry about it! Wait, you don't think Courtney might have done this for revenge, do you? I'm sure she wouldn't.

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