

## Norway Cup 2006

Great experiences always leave great memories. At first, when I was told about going to Norway, to Oslo, to "the greatest youth football tournament in the world", I didn't feel so confident about it. Would the experience be so good?. Moved by the idea of practising English and my curiosity, I decided to be part of it, and I arrived to Oslo that Friday in 2006 July, along with other 4 mates from my Referees Association.

Once there, soon I found out that was more than just a football tournament: that was a party, in which it wasn't important if you were Spanish, English, Norwegian or Swedish. We all talked the same language, although we couldn't understand each others when speaking, we could always talk into a football pitch... With my logical problems trying to adapt to Norwegian football, so different to Spanish, days were passing by, and the chances of being appointed to one of the finals increased. In fact, the news I was receiving from the organisers (from the group of 13 Spaniards we were, I was the one who spoke better English, so in the end I was like "part of the Staff") were quite good and in the afternoon of Friday, August 4th they were confirmed: I was appointed to referee the female U-16 final.

And the morning of August 5th finally arrived. I got up quite early, and I started my daily routine: had a shower, had breakfast, went back to my room to get dressed, got my backpack, back to the dining room to have "the second breakfast", and off we go. Once at the pitch, I watched one of the previous finals, and then I entered into the "Pre-match zone". I had a small briefing with my assistants there, and before we could get nervous, it was already time to start the match.

Honestly, the match was not very difficult to referee, but it was quite moving to see my mates at the crowd, with the Spanish flag I had brought to the tournament, and cheering me as if I was another player and, above all, the idea of entering into the field of play when I blew for the end of the match, throwing me into the air ... was unique!.

It was such a great experience. So much, that this year we're going back, with more people from my Referees Association. And if things are just like I want them to be, I'll come back to Norway as long as I can. It's a tournament it's worth travelling to, and the good things are, by far, more than the bad ones.