



ECHOES BY
ASRAR CHOWDHURY

Checking exam scripts: One moral side of teaching

ASRAR CHOWDHURY

I
I can safely proclaim that one of the hazards of teaching is checking exam scripts. The longer you take to open a parcel of scripts, the larger the giant in the parcel grows. So, the day you receive exam scripts, open the parcel. Let the giant out. Keep in mind though, the giant shall be pestering you.

Common sense now suggests you count and check you have all the scripts. Sometimes the giant in the parcel plays funny tricks. One script could be inside another one. Now order the scripts in their ID serial if somebody hasn't done it.

Class sizes in universities range from 30 to more than 150. Whatever the number, you won't check the scripts in one session. Break the number down into convenient segments. Now count backwards. Finish each segment and then say, (n-1), (n-2), etc. are left. Checking small segments helps you to stay focused. Remember: focus is the first keyword.

II
How much time you have may vary. In public universities, they give you roughly five scripts per day. In private universities, you normally don't get more than one week. Whatever the time limit, you need



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

to be focused when you check. To remain focused, you need to keep few things in mind.

You must be in a happy mood. If you're grumpy, you may not stay focused. To be in a happy mood, you also need to be alert. This means you can't check

scripts when you're tired, exhausted, sleepy, or doing the task at the last moment. If you do, you may lose focus and not do justice. Remember: justice is the second keyword.

What could be the last thing you need to keep in mind? Checking scripts will

involve a few hours in small sessions. You need to be happy and not tired. You also need to make sure you're not on an empty stomach. Can you really focus on something when you're on an empty stomach?

What do you do if you mark two scripts in a row that did bad? Take a break. Have a Kit Kat or a cup of tea. Go for a stroll. If you carry on checking, the third script may not receive proper justice.

III
Teaching is unlike other professions. You need to be a friend, philosopher, and guide to the students. You also need to be a judge and do justice. Marking scripts is one aspect of teaching that illustrates a Hippocrates oath. You may fail to make a student dream. At least don't shatter their dreams. *No teacher has the moral right to do so.* This last sentence is what Jewel Aich told me twice a few days before I joined Economics at Jahangirnagar as a lecturer. I never forgot that last sentence of wisdom from Jewel Da'.

Asrar Chowdhury is a professor of economics. He follows Test cricket and listens to music when he has free time. Email: asrarul@juniv.edu; or asrarul@gmail.com

The Fascination behind Cult Heroes in Football

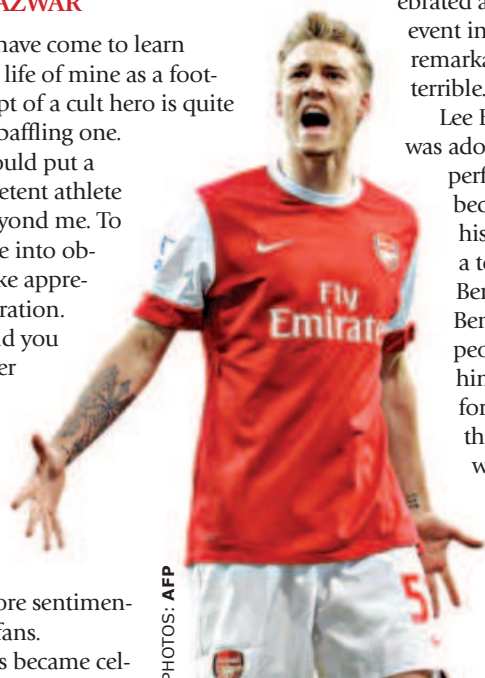
SYED TAMJID TAZWAR

Of all the tropes I have come to learn about in this short life of mine as a football fan, the concept of a cult hero is quite possibly the most baffling one.

Why anyone would put a seemingly incompetent athlete on a pedestal is beyond me. To miss tap-ins or fade into obscurity should evoke apprehension, not admiration. After all, why would you worship a footballer who is terrible at football?

The answer to that question transcends the statistical aspect of the game and emerges from a more sentimental place amongst fans.

Most cult heroes became cel-



PHOTOS: AFP

ebrated after only one standout event in their careers. It may be remarkable or even downright terrible.

Lee Bowyer, for instance, was adored by Leeds fans for his performance but eventually became a cult figure for his on-pitch brawl with a teammate. Nicklas Bendtner, or Lord Bendtner as most people know him, is infamous for his off-pitch theatrics and will continue to occupy the minds of Arsenal fans for a long time. Divock Origi was in the middle of a pretty non-descript Liverpool career, until that one

legendary match, and then a few more.

On the other hand, you have Michu, who blew up everywhere after scoring twenty-two goals for Swansea in the 2012/13 season. He was possibly the best player I've witnessed in a Swansea shirt.

There are no clear guidelines as to how a player may achieve such a title. The reason cult heroes exist is out of love and passion from the fans. They decide who gets to write their name in the cult hero book. If you take a close look, one can see most of the cult heroes come from lower-end clubs; clubs that have very few things to celebrate.

Fans start glorifying lesser-known footballers with unique quirks and for different reasons other than athletic greatness. Building a community around someone for these reasons is actually wholesome and enjoyable, even for people

who are not fans of that club. There's something beautiful about an average Joe going against all odds and achieving magnificence.

Cult heroes often represent brilliance in the ordinary. As a kid, watching Michu score 22 goals in a single season for Swansea and giving the great Robin Van Persie a run for his golden boot was inspiring. Yes, Michu disappeared into football obscurity the following season, but for that short moment in time, he managed to inspire millions and bring happiness to everybody watching him.

The concept of cult heroes might seem a little vague to anyone hearing of it for the first time. But it makes sense if you spend some time with it. The idea behind cult heroes is fascinating and fun, and they add something really unique to the sport we all love.

Syed Tamjid Tazwar is a contributor at Shout. Contact him at syedtazwartamjid@gmail.com.

