

ANDRES INIESTA BEGINS GLORIOUS GOODBYES

Slowly, swallowing hard, eyes red, Iniesta, the great Barcelona player, made his way across the pitch, team-mates coming to embrace him as he went, and all around the Metropolitano supporters got to their feet, applauding. They stood in the Barcelona end and they stood in the Sevilla end, too. Iniesta's name rolled around, accompanying him until he vanished from sight, taking a seat on the bench. He sat there for a little while, tears forcing their way through, and then he got up again and went to collect the Copa del Rey, alone.

It was the 34th title of his career and a 35th would follow, but it was this one that felt like it marked the end. As he climbed up to collect the trophy, down on the grass Barcelona's players waited for him, as they had waited for him when he scored the fourth goal, ensuring that this would always be his night: the Iniesta Final. Eyes closed, Messi held him in an embrace that may become the image of the final, maybe even of a generation; he held on just that little bit longer, like he didn't want to let go.

Although Iniesta wouldn't say so, something broke last year, and while a "lifetime" contract was signed, he didn't want to leave too late and he didn't want to play against the club he joined aged 12 from Albacete Balompie, his original club. Iniesta described that day in September 1996 when he arrived at La Masia as the worst of his life. Iniesta couldn't stop crying. A few hundred metres away in the hotel, nor could his parents. His father, José Antonio, couldn't sleep and the same went for Andrés's grandfather.

Together, they planned to go and get him, take him home. Mari, Iniesta's mum, stopped them. "Let him try," she insisted. So, they did. And all the football fans should be grateful for that.

Adapted from www.theguardian.com

READING COMPREHENSION.

Add TRUE or FALSE and copy the evidence from the text to support your answer.

- 1 Barcelona and Sevilla players hugged Iniesta when he left the pitch.
- 2 Iniesta received the trophy together with his team-mates.
- 3 Iniesta wasn't interested in facing Barcelona.
- 4 All Iniesta's relatives were sure that Andrés should stay in La Masía the first day he arrived there.

LEXICON

Find words or phrases in the text that mean the same as these given.

1. Moved in a circular way:
2. Disappeared:
3. Making certain:
4. Kept:

PHONETICS

1. Is the final "-s" pronounced /s/, /z/ or /ɪz/ in "supporters"?
2. How is the "-ed" pronounced in "waited", /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/??
3. Write a word from the text that includes the sound /tʃ/ as in "church"
4. Write a word from the text that includes the sound /i:/ as in "meet".