



## Center for the Study of the Southwest Texas State University San Marcos

Please cite the interview the following way:

Alejandro del Valle, "Dialogue with Carlos Abreu Mendoza," Center for the Study of the Southwest, Texas State University, <https://www.txstate.edu/cssw/projects/futbol.html>

### **Dialogue**

**Alejandro del Valle:** Where are you originally from?

**Abreu Mendoza:** Huelva, Spain a small southwestern city. <sup>1</sup> Where the first team was created ever in Spain but is now long forgotten and third division. <sup>2</sup>

**Alejandro del Valle:** When did you first encounter soccer?

**Abreu Mendoza:** At school, during their 30 minutes breaks. There were four classes who all had a team and played each other. They had to wear a uniform for school and they played in their nice clothes. <sup>3</sup>

**Alejandro del Valle:** Did everyone play soccer during the breaks? Or only certain people?

**Abreu Mendoza:** All the guys played and only one girl would play with them. <sup>4</sup>

**Mendoza:** Didn't really play on the weekends or anything for the school because basketball was the only sport. <sup>5</sup> Kids had the chance to join a league team, but he was

never able to play because every weekend he would go visit his grandparents who were out of town

**Alejandro del Valle:** Did you ever play soccer competitively?

**Abreu Mendoza:** He started playing soccer competitively in Spain playing indoor (futsal) during the summers. Easy access because it was close to the house, it was free, and the kids in the neighborhood made a team and played tournaments. <sup>6</sup>

**Alejandro del Valle:** Where did you first start playing soccer? Around what age?

**Abreu Mendoza:** At school was when he first started playing soccer recreationally. However, Futsal was first encounter of competitive soccer. There were four big tournaments. He was about 14 years old.

**Alejandro del Valle:** What kept you playing soccer?

**Abreu Mendoza:** He loved it so much. He kind of gave up on it when he went to college because he never found people to play with, because they were more focused on other things regarding school. But he kept watching it on TV a lot. When he first moved to the USA, he started to play because it was so easy to find a pick up game. He would feel very stressed throughout the week and playing soccer was like a stress reliever. <sup>7</sup> He also likes the idea of teamwork and the social aspect of it. <sup>8</sup>

**Alejandro del Valle:** What obstacles have you faced in continuing to play soccer after high school?

**Abreu Mendoza:** It was hard to find someone to play with. Because he was playing in a new city where he didn't know anybody. He didn't know where to play or where he could sign up to play. <sup>9</sup> But in the San Marcos it is different, it is easy because it is a small city and you hear about where the students play and what leagues are available. But he really never faced any major obstacles or hardships. However when he first started traveling to the Americas, he noticed it was also difficult for him to play because you had to rent a field and know people and be in the circle. <sup>10</sup> Like when he visited Argentina, He

knew his friends brother who knew people he could pay in order for him to be able to play.

**Alejandro del Valle:** How has your participation in soccer changed?

**Abreu Mendoza:** He is more involved now. He used to play everyday as a kid from 5-8 and when they had tournaments, they would play several times a week. But now with all the technology it is easier to create groups.<sup>11</sup> Like when he plays in soccer in Austin, he is able to set everything up through group chats for games and also for social events after the games like cookouts. He feels more engaged because of more communication. He also plays at the university with the students at the rec center and plays intramurals.<sup>12</sup>

**Alejandro del Valles:** How often do you play?

**Abreu Mendoza:** He plays in the Fall and the Spring in Austin. And he also plays in the rec center at Texas State University to stay in shape and also plays intramurals. Maybe 3-4 times a week.

**Alejandro del Valle:** What do you think of soccer in Austin?

**Abreu Mendoza:** Soccer is beginning to grow in Austin especially because the city keeps growing as well.<sup>13</sup> There is also a lot of soccer involvement with universities and people who move to the city from other countries. One problem he finds is that things are becoming more expensive for players to play.

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<sup>1</sup> What is life in Huelva like? Here is a link that talks about Huelva's history  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huelva>

<sup>2</sup> He mentioned that Huelva is a small city that isn't very well recognized and also how they were the first to develop a team in Spain. Recreativo De Huelva was established in 1889 and is the first Spanish football club. This link gives some history on the development of soccer in Spain  
<https://www.livestrong.com/article/345229-the-history-of-football-in-spain/>

<sup>3</sup>Despite him being in another country, Mendoza, seemed to have encountered the game of soccer in a common way, through recess breaks at school.

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<sup>4</sup> It is interesting that all the boys played but only one girl played. Why is that? This article shows ten reasons why men watch or play sports more than women. Even though these are based off adults, some of the 10 reasons make sense to why the guys played soccer at recess and the girls didn't.

<https://delapage.com/stories/why-women-are-not-that-interested-into-sports-like-men/>

<sup>5</sup> Its strange that at the time basketball was superior to soccer in Spain at the time... Here is an article on basketball history in Spain

<http://www.spanishunlimited.com/spain/culture/2014/9/what-you-didnt-know-about-spanish-basketball>

<sup>6</sup> It caught my attention that he played futsal more than he would play outside because in my childhood futsal was not common at all. Here is an article on Futsal's influence in Spain <https://youthtoprosoccer.com/tag/spain-futsal/>

<sup>7</sup> It is very common for people to play sports as a means to get away from daily stress. Here is an article about how playing sports relieves stress

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/533771-how-does-participating-in-a-sport-relieve-stress/>

<sup>8</sup> He also mentions that soccer holds a lot of values he admires such as teamwork and discipline. Here is an article explaining how soccer is more than just a sport.

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/467041-difference-between-soccer-volleyball/>

<sup>9</sup>It is understandable that it is hard to find something in a new city. But it is pretty simple to start a soccer game on your own. Why didn't he try to start something on his own if he didn't see anyone else was?

<sup>10</sup> I've been playing soccer most my life in the United States and have never had to pay to rent a field to play on, so I wonder what places he was going to. Ironically, the only place I have had to pay to play soccer somewhere was when I was in Madrid with my cousins.

<sup>11</sup>Mendoza is right in the fact that due to technology, people are able to communicate more effectively, which makes it easier to get things together for a soccer match. Here is a link explaining how technology has improved communication

<https://itstillworks.com/technology-improved-communication-1207.html>

<sup>12</sup> I am curious about the style of play of the players at the rec center and intramurals. Is it competitive or more of a friendly/fun game?

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<sup>13</sup> Mendoza is right in the fact that soccer is growing in Austin. This article shows that is true because FC Barcelona is opening an academy in the city of Austin soon <http://www.statesman.com/sports/soccer-giant-barcelona-bringing-academy-austin/kg4T9KkGkB1t6Loz0vLbK/> This article also talks about professional soccer is in development for Austin in 2019 <http://www.statesman.com/sports/austin-soccer-franchise-will-roll-2019-000-seat-venue/6sBCjNXuGInuLgesJzpeTJ/>