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Women's World Cup 7/19/99

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JULY 19, 11:41 EDT

Clinton Honors World Cup Winners

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton marked ``a moment of celebration and a moment of sadness" today, welcoming the World Cup-winning U.S. women's soccer team to the White House and pausing to remember John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife and her sister.



Clinton gets a Women's World Cup soccer jersey
AP/Dennis Cook [27K]

The president and his wife, Hillary, and Vice President Al Gore and his wife, Tipper, joined hundreds of enthusiastic fans on the South Lawn on a sweltering day.

Clinton opened his remarks by speaking of Kennedy, his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her sister, Lauren Bessette, presumed dead in a plane crash.

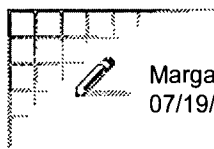
``We all know this is both a moment of celebration and a moment of sadness for the United States," the president said, adding: ``Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of John Kennedy and Carolyn and Lauren Bessette.

``It is at times like this that we really stop to recognize that as big and diverse as our country is, we can come together as a national family," he said. ``We can come together in sorrow or in joy if it reflects the values that we honor most. This is one of those moments."

Saluting the team, Clinton said they had ``brought America to its feet, had us screaming our lungs out with pride and joy."

``Their triumph has surely become America's triumph," he said. ``We are all proud of them."





Margaret M. Suntum
07/19/99 11:46:46 AM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: remarks to World Cup Soccer Champions

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release July 19, 1999

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO WOMEN'S WORLD CUP SOCCER CHAMPIONS

The South Grounds

11:12 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Please be seated. Hillary and Al and Tipper and I are delighted to welcome all of you here, the members of the team, the members of Congress who are here. We want to welcome Marla Messing, the President of the Women's World Cup; Donna de Varona, the Chairman of the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee. Thank you and -- yes, give them a hand. (Applause.) And we want to welcome this remarkable team -- they are all here, but two, today. That's an amazing turnout. Give them a hand. (Applause.)

We all know this is both a moment of celebration and a moment of sadness for the United States, and our thoughts and prayers are with the families of John Kennedy and Carolyn and Lauren Bessette. It is at times like this that we really stop to recognize that, as big and diverse as our country is, we can come together as a national family. We can come together in sorrow or in joy if it reflects the values that we honor most.

This is one of those moments. The Women's World Cup Champions, here at the White House, brought America to its feet, had us screaming our lungs out with pride and joy. They also didn't spare us the suspense. (Laughter.) But their triumph has surely become America's triumph. We are all proud of them and we are thrilled to have them here at the White House today.

As someone who got to watch the game at the Rose Bowl, who sat so far on the edge of my seat I actually almost fell out of the sky box, I can't help recalling just a few moments of that game. Kristine Lilly heading away what would have been a game-winning goal for the other side. (Applause.) She's not here, but I have to mention Michelle Akers charging up and down until she collapsed from sheer exhaustion. (Applause.) The perfectly-timed leap Brienne Scurry made to the left to block China's third penalty kick. (Applause.)

I might say, I saw the last three games, and I concluded that if I had to do it all over again, I'd like to be a goalie. (Laughter.) No pressure. (Laughter.)

And, of course, Brandi Chastain's perfect shot right into the top right corner of the goal to win the World Cup. (Applause.)

The day after the game, a lot of us who aren't so young anymore were trying to search the whole cluttered attic of our memories to try to think if there was ever a time when there had been a more exciting climax to an athletic event that meant as much to so many. I'm not sure that in my lifetime there has been. It's no wonder that so many young girls like Stephanie Howell here are following the lead of our World Cup champions.

Over a half million girls and young women have begun playing soccer in the eight years since America won the World Cup in 1991. Thanks to these women, America's passion for women's soccer and women's sports in general is growing, and we owe them a lot for that. (Applause.)

I also can't help mentioning briefly, again, the role that Title IX has played in all this, and for all of you who have supported it, I thank you very much. (Applause.) I can say this: For the Clintons and the Gores, the proud parents of daughters, it is always a wonderful thing to see women finding new ways of expressing their God-given talents and abilities. Because what we want for our children is what I think all Americans want for all of our children, whether they're girls or boys, which is a chance to find their way and to follow their dreams.

These women have sent a signal loud and clear to millions and millions and millions of girls that they can follow their dreams. And I thank them for that. (Applause.)

Now, you will be happy to know I have exercised some leadership today -- it's over 90 degrees out here and I cut my speech in half. (Laughter and applause.) I don't know who's next -- I think Hillary is next, the First Lady. (Laughter and applause.)

* * * * *

THE PRESIDENT: You have all been very patient in this warm, hot sun. I want to, again, say thank you all for coming. Thank you for supporting America's soccer team. I want to thank the women on the team. I would be remiss if I did not say, also, how profoundly impressed I was at the quality of their opposition.

You know, when we had the last NCAA Men's Basketball Championship, and UConn beat Duke, the Duke coach said something I think every coach would like to say. He said, we did not lose this game, we were defeated. The German team, the Chinese team, the Brazilian team -- they can honestly say that, too. And this is something happening all over the world, for which I am very grateful. And, again, I am very grateful that our women are leading the way.

Thank you very much. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

11:32 A.M. EDT

Message Sent To: _____

Final 07/19/99 9:30am

Gottheimer/ Shesol

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO USA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP
CHAMPIONS
THE WHITE HOUSE

July 19, 1999

Ack.: VP; First Lady; Mrs. Gore; Members of Congress; Julie Foudy & Carla Overbeck (team captains); Stephanie Howell (DC Scores player); Marla Messing (President of the Women's World Cup); Donna de Varona (Chair of the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee).

Before we begin, I'd like you to join me in a moment of silent reflection and prayer – for John Kennedy, Jr., for his wife Carolyn and her sister Lauren, and for their families.

[moment of silent reflection]

I'd like to talk for just a moment about something that I talk about with some frequency – and that's the idea of Americans coming together, across all the lines that divide, to celebrate our common values, our shared joy and pride. And even, as we've seen in recent days, our shared sadness. Americans from all walks of life are coming together in deep concern for the Kennedy and Bessette families. I know that's something on the minds of all Americans.

It's times like this, I think, that we really stop to recognize that we are a national family – united at once in sorrow and in joy. We have an unbounded capacity to come together to honor the things we value most.

This is one of those moments. Today, despite our sadness, we are gathered here to celebrate a triumph. And it makes me so proud to welcome the Women's World Cup Champions to the White House. What a whirlwind this has been for all of you – from that winning goal in Pasadena to the White House in a little more than a week, and pausing to be celebrated just about everywhere in-between.

Your team is America's team, your triumph is America's triumph, and I am thrilled to have you here.

Now, I know that every member of the American family is proud of every member of this team. What makes us so proud is the way you have worked together to lift each other up, and lifted us all up as a result. And as skilled as each of you is in your own right, what you have accomplished together is greater than any individual achievement.

Still, as someone who got to watch you play at the Rose Bowl, as someone who sat so far on the edge of his seat I almost leaned out of that sky box, I'm not going to forget the individual moments that showcased your skills:

The moment Kristine Lilly headed away what would've been a game-winning goal in overtime.

The sight of Michelle Akers charging up and down that field, relentlessly, until she collapsed from the sheer exhaustion of her efforts.

The perfectly-timed leap Brianne Scurry made to the left to block China's third penalty kick.

And, of course, Brandi Chastain perfect shot -- right into the top right corner of the goal -- to win the World Cup. I can't remember a more exciting moment in sports.

This team has taught America a lot -- not just about a game at which you excel, and which is becoming more and more popular as a result, but also about courage, about perseverance, and about the simple power of self-confidence. It's no wonder there are so many girls, like Stephanie Howell, following your lead.

Over half-a-million girls and young women, like my own daughter, have begun playing soccer in the eight years since you won the first World Cup in 1991. And thanks to you, America's passion for women's soccer, and women's sports in general, is only growing.

Let me tell you why I think that's important. It's because, as you've shown, the real test of your mettle isn't just whether you win. It's whether you get on the field, or the court, or the track, and compete. And in the case of women athletes, particularly, seizing the opportunity to compete is often the greatest victory of all. That's what Title IX was designed to do – to give more young women the chance to step onto the playing field.

And now a new generation of young women are watching you. . . learning from you. . . developing better skills and dreaming loftier dreams.

Congratulations again for all you've accomplished.

And thank you for sweeping us up into this remarkable victory for you, for all young women, and for all Americans. Thank you and God bless you.

Final 07/19/99 9:00am
Gottheimer/ Shesol

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS FOR USA WORLD CUP CHAMPIONS
WASHINGTON, DC
July 19, 1999**

Ack.: VP; First Lady; Mrs. Gore; Members of Congress; Julie Foudy & Carla Overbeck (team captains); Stephanie Howell (DC Scores player); Marla Messing (President of the Women's World Cup); Donna de Varona (Chair of the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee).

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[moment of silent reflection]

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It's times like this, I think, that we really stop to recognize that we are a national family – united at once in sorrow and in joy. We have an unbounded capacity to come together to honor the things we value most.

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What a whirlwind this has been for all of you – from that winning goal in Pasadena to the White House in a little more than a week, and pausing to be celebrated just about everywhere in-between. Your team is America's team, your triumph is America's triumph, and I am thrilled to have you here.

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Let me tell you why I think that's important. It's because, as you've shown, the real test of your mettle isn't just whether you win. It's whether you get on the field, or the court, or the track, and compete. And in the case of women athletes, particularly, seizing the opportunity to compete is often the greatest victory of all. A new generation of young women are watching you. . . learning from you. They're developing better skills, and dreaming loftier dreams.

Congratulations again for all you've accomplished. And thank you for sweeping us up into this victory for you, for all young women, and for all Americans. Thank you and God bless you.

Draft 07/18/99 3pm
Gottheimer/ Shesol

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WASHINGTON, DC
July 19, 1999

Ack.: Vice President; First Lady; Mrs. Gore; Members of Congress; Julie Foudy and Carla Overbeck (team captains); Stephanie Howell (DC Scores player); Marla Messing (President of the Women's World Cup); Donna de Varona (Chair of the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee). *[moment of reflection]*

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Circulate - get copies to Dong, Loretta, Gordon, Maria, Stephanie, Karen

- call

Mon

11:00 Women's World Cup

330 Press conf - Barak

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the civ. rts., pub. serv.

Renew Pres K's call to action
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Wed

Holding for press conf

Date: Sunday, July 18, 1999 6:35:42 PM
From: Shesol
Subj: Revised, includes your new paragraph
To: Joshua_S_Gottheimer@who.eop.gov, Shesol

Draft 07/18/99 2pm
Gottheimer/ Shesol

Joe's 8:15
re: speaking
program

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WASHINGTON, DC
July 19, 1999

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