

The bicycle kick that spared England's pride

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Saved by the Bellingham: Gareth Southgate was 85 seconds from losing his job before this scorcher rescued his career.

Is this the most difficult move in sport? Jude Bellingham's amazing goal against Slovakia is being described as one of the greatest ever scored by an England player.

What's happening?

Things were looking bad. With time running out, England were losing 1-0 to Slovakia. They were heading out of the Euros. But then something incredible happened.

With his back to the goal, **Jude Bellingham** launched himself into the air as the ball approached. Pulling off a perfect bicycle kick, he buried the ball in the corner of the net.

The game went into extra time. A minute later, a header from Harry Kane took England to an unlikely win.

Find out more

Yesterday, British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph* ranked the goal third in their list of the best ever scored by England in a major tournament.

People argue about the first player to come up with a bicycle kick. Some believe it was invented by the Chilean footballer Ramon Unzaga in 1914.

Others think it started during a game in Peru in 1892, when a local player amazed a team of British sailors.

Whatever the truth, the kick is seen as the most difficult move in football. **Wayne Rooney's** brilliant goal for Manchester United against Manchester City was voted the **Premier League's** greatest ever.

But are there ever harder moves? Other possibilities include hitting a fastball in baseball. The ball can go at over 95 mph, requiring a **reaction time** of 0.4 seconds. In golf, most people are very unlikely to ever score a hole in one. And ice skaters must spin four times in the air before landing safely to pull off a quadruple jump.

Is this the most difficult move in sport?

Some say

Yes! To pull off a bicycle kick, you need to be a quick thinker and very fit. To kick a ball into a goal you cannot even see is almost a miracle.

Others think

No! Every sport needs huge skill at the highest levels. Bellingham is certainly a very good player. But he also needed luck to pull this off. After all, he happened to be in the right place to kick the ball.

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - Have you watched the Euros?

2. Wonder

What questions do you have? - For example: How many goals are scored from bicycle kicks?

Some people say

"Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties."

Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), English writer and lexicographer

Empty heading

What do you think?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Can you pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure from this story?

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - Jude Bellingham asks for your opinion of his goal. Think about what you would say

5. Express

What do others believe? - Which is the best sport to watch? Take it in turns to say.

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Imagine you are asked to paint a mural of Jude Bellingham's goal. Draw or paint a design for it.

Glossary

Slovakia - A country in central Europe. Until 1993 it was part of Czechoslovakia.

Jude Bellingham - An English professional footballer, born in 2003.

Chilean - From Chile, a long, narrow South American country home to nearly 20 million people.

Peru - A country in South America. It is home to Machu Picchu, an ancient Incan city.

Wayne Rooney - A former English football player and current manager. He was considered one of the best players of the 2000s.

Premier league - England's highest level of men's football.

Reaction time - How quickly you respond to something.