

## My future

### Lead-in

**1** Discuss with a partner.

- 1 Do you play or watch a sport?
- 2 Do you think sport has changed over the last 50 years? In what way?

**2** You are going to read an article about sport in the future. Look at these words from the text and match them with the definitions below.

*to foresee    light-hearted    undeniably    a plethora    a referee*  
*to vanish    astonishing    a paraplegic    autonomous    an outcome*

- 1 a result .....
- 2 someone whose lower body (including legs) is paralysed .....
- 3 amazing .....
- 4 a lot .....
- 5 to predict, anticipate .....
- 6 able to function independently .....
- 7 funny, not serious .....
- 8 to disappear .....
- 9 without doubt .....
- 10 the person in charge on a football pitch .....

### Input

**1** How do you think football will be different in the year 2050? Work with a partner and discuss:

- where it will be played
- what technology will be used
- who will play

2 Read the article and see if your predictions were correct.

## Football of the future

Who will win the World Cup in 2050? It's difficult to foresee so far ahead, but it may well be that we will be playing on Mars if Sepp Blatter is right. Sepp Blatter, the president of FIFA, the body which governs international football, was talking about the future of football just days before the start of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. 'We will have not only a World Cup, we will have inter-planetary competitions. Why not?' he said in a recent interview. Although his comment was meant to be light-hearted, it raised some interesting questions about how football and other sports might have changed by 2050.

Human beings are undeniably getting better at sport. The winner of the 2012 Olympic marathon was nearly an hour and a half quicker than the winner of the 1904 race and in the 100 metres, Usain Bolt would have finished 14 metres ahead of Jesse Owens, who won the 1936 gold medal. So athletes are undoubtedly going to be fitter in the future and technology has to take some of the credit.

Indeed, the World Cup in Brazil saw a plethora of new technology. Goal line sensors were used to determine whether the ball had crossed the goal line and there was also a vanishing spray to show footballers where to stand for a free kick. But perhaps the most

astonishing piece of technology was the mind-controlled exoskeleton, which 29-year-old paraplegic Juliano Pinto wore to kick the first ball of the tournament.

It would seem that there is a good chance that robots will be seen at future World Cups. Technology could be used to make players 'superhuman', but is that what people want to see? 'Do the fans want football to go the same way as Formula 1, where the car matters more than the driver?' asks a technology specialist.

In fact, there is already an annual football competition for robots called the RoboCup.

Professor Alexandre da Sliva Simões, the chair of the RoboCup, believes that it is likely that robots will be working on the football pitch in the future, but they won't be playing. 'I expect that in 2050 we will not have human referees any more,' he says. He predicts that by then human referees will have been replaced by some sort of robot.

And he has a prediction for FIFA. 'In 2050, a football team composed of fully-autonomous humanoid robots will play against the human winners of the World Cup.' And the outcome according to Professor Simões? The robots will definitely win, of course!

*"there is a good chance that robots will be seen at future World Cups"*

3 Was there anything which surprised you about the predictions? Do you agree with them?

**Language focus**

1 In the text there are a lot of expressions for making predictions about the future. Find them and write them in the table below.

definitely happen in the future	possibly happen in the future
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actions in progress in the future	actions finished at a future point in time
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2 Add these expressions to the correct column in the table above:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>it will have changed a lot in 35 years</i> | <i>I would guess that ...</i>       |
| <i>in all probability, we will see ...</i>    | <i>It's quite possible that ...</i> |
| <i>I think it's pretty unlikely that ...</i>  | <i>We might see ...</i>             |
| <i>we won't be watching football in 2050</i>  | <i>Technology is likely to ...</i>  |
| <i>I'm convinced there will be ...</i>        |                                     |

3 Think about other sports you know well. How might they have changed by the year 2050? Discuss your ideas in pairs and write sentences.

- |                      |              |        |
|----------------------|--------------|--------|
| tennis               | chess        | skiing |
| car/motorbike racing | horse racing |        |
| swimming             | cycling      |        |

**Task**

- How will the world be different in the future? Your teacher will give you a card with some topics. Discuss each one and make notes about how you think each one will have changed by the year 2050.
- Present your predictions about your topic to the whole class. Do they agree with your predictions?

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**Review**

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