Soccer in Spain is a force to be reckoned with, and no two teams draw more attention than Real Madrid and the Fútbol Club Barcelona. Whether the venue is Madrid’s Santiago Bernabéu or Barcelona’s Camp Nou, the two cities shut down for the showdown.

**Rivalidad del Fútbol**
- Argentina: Boca Juniors vs River Plate
- México: Águilas del América vs Chivas del Guadalajara
- Chile: Colo Colo vs Universidad de Chile
- Guatemala: Comunicaciones vs Municipal
- Uruguay: Peñarol vs Nacional
- Colombia: Millonarios vs Independiente Santa Fe

paralyzed by fútbol fever. A ticket to the actual game is always the hottest ticket in town.

The rivalry between **Real Madrid** and **Barça** is about more than soccer. As the two biggest, most powerful cities in Spain, Barcelona and Madrid are constantly compared to one another and have a natural rivalry. There is also a political component to the dynamic. Barcelona, with its distinct language and culture, has long struggled for increased autonomy from Madrid’s centralized government. Under Francisco Franco’s rule (1939–1975), when repression of the Catalan identity was at its height, a game between **Real Madrid** and **FC Barcelona** was wrapped up with all the symbolism of the regime versus the resistance, even though both teams suffered casualties in Spain’s civil war and the subsequent Franco dictatorship.

Although the dictatorship is long over, the momentum of all those decades of competition still transforms both cities into a frenzied, tense panic leading up to the game. Once the final score is announced, one of those cities is transformed again, this time into the best party in the country.

**ACTIVIDAD 1:** ¿Cierto o Falso? Indicate whether each statement is **cierto** or **falso**. Correct the false statements.

T F 1. People from Spain don’t like soccer. ____________________________

T F 2. Madrid and Barcelona are the most important cities in Spain. ____________________________

T F 3. Santiago Bernabéu is a stadium in Barcelona. ____________________________

T F 4. The rivalry between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona is not only in soccer. ____________________________

T F 5. Barcelona has resisted Madrid’s centralized government. ____________________________

T F 6. Only the FC Barcelona team was affected by the civil war. ____________________________

T F 7. During Franco’s regime, the Catalan culture thrived. ____________________________

T F 8. There are many famous rivalries between soccer teams in the Spanish-speaking world. ____________________________

T F 9. River Plate is a popular team from Argentina. ____________________________

T F 10. Comunicaciones and Peñarol are famous rivals in Guatemala. ____________________________

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Los Deportes

Miguel Cabrera y Paola Espinosa

Miguel Cabrera, considered one of the best hitters in baseball, now plays first base for the Detroit Tigers. Born in Venezuela in 1983, he made his Major League debut at the age of 20. Cabrera has been selected for both the National League and American League All-Star Teams. In 2012, he became the first player since 1967 to win the Triple Crown.


ACTIVIDAD 2: Comprensión: Write the name of the athlete described in each sentence.

1. Es un jugador de fútbol de Argentina.
   ____________________________

2. Es una mujer que practica el golf.
   ____________________________

3. Es un jugador de béisbol de Venezuela.
   ____________________________

4. Es una mujer mexicana que practica un deporte en la piscina.
   ____________________________

ACTIVIDAD 3: ¿Quién es? Write a short paragraph describing an athlete that you like, but do not mention his/her name. What does he/she look like? What sport does he/she play? Where does he/she live? Read your description to the class to see if they can guess who it is.