Dear Participants and Staff of the 2017 Super Cup, it is with great pleasure and an open heart that on behalf of the Strikers FC-South Coast, I direct these humble words of gratitude and regards to all of you. Firstly I would like to thank our staff for taking on a challenge that is never easy and always criticized. I would especially like to thank Trainer and Coach Jimmy Turner who by example and devotion made the coaches ability to coach less of a hardship. It is a pleasure to work with such a committed and enthusiastic professional. To our Head Coaches, Edward and Sergio, I will always be indebted to your dedication and ability to organize two amazing teams, that had every opportunity to arrive at the top. Discipline, togetherness and a bit of luck is what will eventually make for true success and if you can take that away from this, then I know we have succeeded. To our quiet, but intelligent Technical Director, Marcos Canseco, I truly hope that you can take away so much from this trip and apply it to the future of our Club. Times have changed and you have been a witness to what is now needed worldwide.

Many times I reflect upon the reasons why we continue to make traveling to Europe for Soccer a priority in our Club. At times, I personally come home with feelings of regret, could have been, if onlys and other times with emotions of true happiness. Not until I see the faces of the parents waiting for their beloved sons do I remember and fortify my reasons. To see the faces of gratitude and hope for a better, realistic, integrate education for their young men. For the soccer players that need to make cross roads decisions regarding what they are willing to continue to sacrifice and understand about what it takes to arrive at being a professional athlete or any professional career that they chose. As I said before, we are in the business of making good human beings, not just soccer players. Our sacrifice financially and energy wise, my own and the clubs, I believe is not in vain. We have always been pioneers in everything we have done and God keeps opening up doors for us that will eventually touch all of the United States, as they have done already.

There are so many people I need to thank and acknowledge for making our tournament experience an amazing one. Hector Rodriguez for organizing from home base. Evelin Luna for making all financial responsibilities accurate and possible. Omar Cardenas, for giving us the best action pictures and memories ever. And who is still hard at work to finish a beautiful memoir of highlights and posters that will endure the test of time. To my beloved cousin, Porfirio Peña, who stayed up late so many times with me to finish the daily postings and daily journals. To Junior Team Player, Adrian Hong, for writing the daily journals for both teams, from a place of honesty, integrity and a player's perspective. So young, only 15, but I can see a bright future ahead and his ability to come back, sans his back injury and lead the team as a Premier. I am so grateful for all of your help.

I want to direct my final, but never last words to the players. Boys you have seen the amount of excellence required to get to the next level. All of you have come home with a new understanding of world class soccer. When you set your feet on a field, you must be the best that you can possibly be. The best at discipline, without caring about acceptance from others or peer pressure which is a debilitating, self-esteem problem. You must have arrived with the best possible sleep, the best possible eating habits, the best possible training commitment, and the best frame of mind. Otherwise, you will not succeed in this sport or any sport. Please remember that when you sign up for a team, you are not for yourself anymore. You are committed to a bigger you and you being part of that whole, will determine how that whole performs. Its weaknesses and strengths lie within the parts. If the parts are the best they can be, then the whole is the best it can be. And it is my knowledge and experience that human beings have no limits regarding what they can achieve. Tribulations and defeats will come to teach us patience, and patience to teach us experience, and experiences to teach us hope. My hope for all of you, is that you arrive at wisdom and understanding for true and lasting success. I truly wish you to take that from this trip for your life and your future.

May God Bless us All and continue to show us the way for His glory and not our own.