

Rancho Mastatal Updates

April 2006

Welcome back to the rainy season Mastatal style. "Las lluvias" have been pretty steady these last few weeks and everything in the forests and gardens are exploding. The golden grass has transformed to an emerald green and the birds are singing songs of happiness everywhere they dash. Susan's rain gauges told us that in a recent thirty-day period we received about 75% of the rain that Seattle averages in a year. And the rainy season has just begun! Her group has hit its stride and will be wrapping up their quarter abroad shortly. It's been a fabulous course and we're already looking forward to 2007.

We just had a nice visit from MICHAEL SUZZERIS, Robin's former yoga teacher based out of Seattle. He hopes to be doing some bodywork and yoga in the near future for at least a few weeks a year here in Costa Rica. We hope to see him at the Ranch on his next visit to Costa Rica. We also received DAVID SKINNER, a retired plant enthusiast who spent four days in Mastatal studying the Costaceae family of flora in our area. His enthusiasm was absolutely contagious. He identified a few species in this area that had not been documented before and hopes to return in August with his wife to find some of his beloved plants in bloom and to continue his studies. We're expecting a pretty quiet June and hope to be able to make headway on our building and other projects. We're planning on cranking up the volunteer program and get to work. There's a lot going on. Our attention is needed at the "choza", the Hankey and the new classroom so we'll have no problem keeping occupied. I'll end this a bit shorter than usual, as this is the longest newsletter that we've ever released thanks to contributions by ROB HANKEY, MATT STONE and TYLER SEE. If you need a break this summer, come on down and spend some time in lovely Mastatal. Les esperamos.

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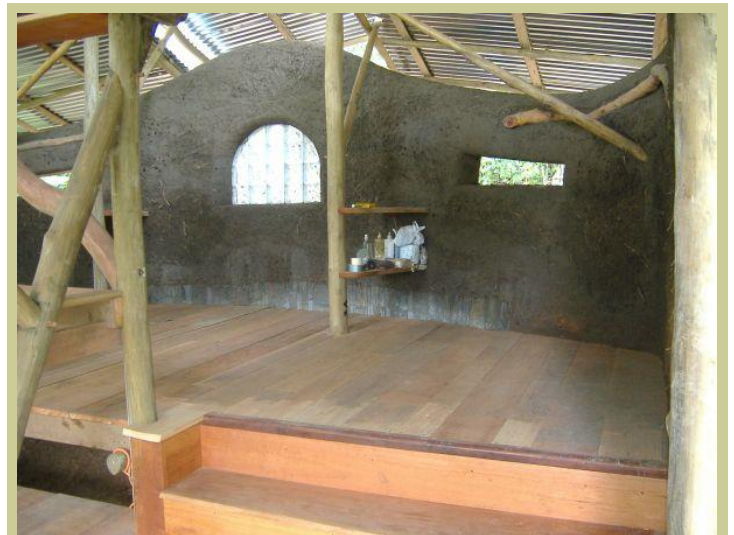
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Hankey House first floor cob wall

photo by Rob Hankey



The tradition of the local general store lives on in Costa Rica-- the pulperia is the village's commercial center

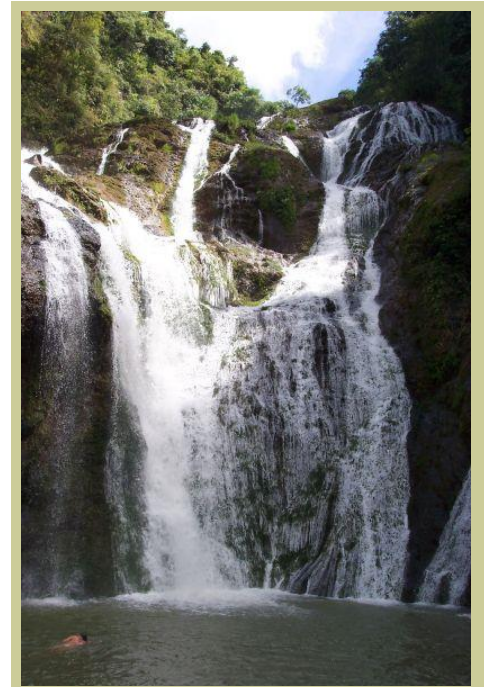
RM Program News: Small Business

What is a small business? According to our business professors in college, it's an enterprise employing between 1 and 20 people. Or something like that. One of our goals here at the Ranch is to promote small, sustainable businesses within our community. We do this both by buying locally and by encouraging and facilitating locals to begin their own small enterprises. We think often about how to help speed up the latter as the area's youth continue to head to San José and other metropolitan centers in search for work in factories. We have dreams of a group of youngsters making natural soap and selling the bars, wrapped in banana leaves, to small

shops in Quepos and Jacó. Or candles, made from palm wax, destined for the same stores. Or a local guiding service whereby locals take visitors on trips into the rainforest and to nearby waterfalls. Or a small bakery to supply the growing demand for bread consumed in local households. The list of potential projects seems endless at times. But then why don't we see these types of businesses springing up all around us? Why does it seem so difficult to put a group of motivated individuals together and start producing something that they can make a living from or become financially secure by selling. Picture frames from all of the scrap wood in our woodshop. Horseback tours to nearby hot springs. The challenges that confront the residents of Mastatal at times seem so easily surmountable, and other times so daunting. The trials of living in a small rural community in Central America without phones and limited resources can be unique. Please let us know if you have any ideas. And drop us a line if you have some small business teaching materials that we could use here to educate some of the kids and adults about starting their own business in the near future.

Conservation Update: Plan de Manejo

The Management Plan for La Cangreja National Park is done. This is quite a feat considering that Manuel Antonio, a park that has enjoyed this lofty status since the early-70s, still does not have one. The Ministry of the Environment (MINAE) in our area worked diligently and efficiently to assure that the document was done well and that local opinions were taken into account prior to releasing the final version. They sought community insight and local opinions when defining the more delicate parts of the plan. I would like to congratulate all of those involved in the process. I was able to be an integral part of the entire process and feel that it was done fairly and intelligently, all things considered. We have a copy of the Plan here at the Ranch, thanks to MIGUEL RODRIGUEZ, our friend at MINAE, if anyone would like to take a peak.



The waterfalls at San Miguel



Hankey House first floor staircase

photo by Rob Hankey

Building Report: Hankey Transition

Well, the new volunteer house's namesake, Mr. ROB HANKEY, has been forced to hang up his toolbelt for a while as he prepares to board a plane for the U.K. We're tremendously sad to see ROB go after an incredible 6-month run here in Mastatal. His work ethic and creativity are unmatched and his legacy will live on for many, many years in the form of the Hankey House. The structure that he designed and is building will revolutionize the Ranch in ways yet unknown and will enhance all future volunteers' experiences immensely. Once the word gets out about the Hankey, I have a notion that our already popular volunteer program will become even that much more well-liked. Can you imagine, no more shuffling around volunteers during group visits? We hope that this will be a place that volunteers can call home. The Ranch's first two-story building will also provide precious storage space for SUSAN and TIBURONs' action packers and will be home to the Ranch's fourth composting toilet. The house is stunning with views off of the front side into the forest.

There's still quite a bit of detail work to attend to but the house has already begun developing its personality. The cob and wattle and daub walls are up, the floors and staircase installed, and the interior plans more-or-less drawn up. It will undoubtedly continue to provide a plethora of project opportunities for incoming vols and should begin housing people in the coming months. We'll miss Rob's talents, his Maui genius and his easy way of being. He has talked about the possibility of returning at the end of the year to attend to some final details at the Hankey. We certainly hope to see him again before too long and wish him the best during his stay in the "Big Smoke". We'll be putting new photos of the Hankey up on the web and on the Yahoo! site as soon as possible. In the meantime, if you'd like to check out one of Rob's other endeavors, go to <http://www.unu-life-com>.



The magic of tropical skies--another of those moments of indescribable beauty

Volunteer/Guest Gossip: Life Lessons from Chanchó

The pop – whiz of soccer balls flying. The splat – sizzle of egg toasties frying. The “pura vida,” “tuanis” of people greeting each other at the pulp. How can you not love a culture in which it's mandatory to shake the hand of everyone else in the room when you enter it? The Europeans got close with the whole cheek-kissing thing, but the honor and blind respect of indiscriminant handshaking isn't implored by many other demographics besides urban high schoolers and the people of Mastatal.

Mastatal. Sparky and Alan called it a fairyland. And where else but a fairyland can you sleep in a bamboo house then get up for a massive breakfast of fresh fruits and pancakes before walking down to swim beneath a secluded waterfall. A place where Caraca can erase the shame of letting up six goals by scoring two goals the next week (Mastatal won 2-1, hola!). A place where you can spend your day learning how to make cob, or teaching English to kids with infectious smiles, or cooking with two girls who'll make fun of you the whole time in a language you don't understand. A place where you can spend your nights playing “shithead” and talking with friends. Where else are you going to have “Maui” by candlelight! Or lemongrass daiquiris! Or dance to the beats of Discomovil! (It's 100% bailable.)

But the fairyland has its trying moments. A few weeks ago a bunch of us were hauling rosewood

out of the forest with Chepo, and everything was catching up to me. I was tired and it was hot. The log was wearing on my shoulder, the bugs were biting the shit out of me, and my boots were shaving away at my legs. All I could think of was how I'm not cut out for this. These guys get spoiled on Americans like Geoff and Jeremiah – guys with muscles I didn't even know existed. I was raised on white-bread cheese sandwiches! I still get scared of snakes! This is not what I was made to do. And just as I'm thinking this I look up. I look up and see the light breaking through the rainforest's canopy. It's magnificent (just like I saw it in Ferngully and pictured it on Che's marches), and I realize that I'm working with Costa Ricans alongside a river in the jungle, this is it – the immersion, the experience – that I was looking for. And it feels good.

I want “just look up” to be the life lesson of this story but it can't be. A) it's far too corny, but B) it doesn't even work out. Half the time at the Ranch by “looking up” all I'd see would be bamboo ceiling, or Rob's ass sitting on a rafter... and there's no poetry in that.

So I get back to the Ranch, exhausted, to lie down in a hammock on the side porch when Annia yells at me from the ping-pong table: “Hola Chanchó!” (My flattering nickname.) I yell back, “Que pasa?” (Half because I think that's what you say in that situation, half because I don't know how to say much else.) That's when she yells as her reply, simply “tuanis!” then turns back to her game. Now I don't really know what that's supposed to mean. Translated into English, what is it? Some form of ‘cool’ or ‘what's up?’ Either way it makes no sense in this context. But I'm lying in my hammock with an Imperial, Annia's playing ping-pong with her nephew, a blue butterfly floats between us – and fuck it, shit it is “tuanis”.

The night fades away with my second and third beer, while some foul Electric Six song blares over the speakers – and I realize I'm not really coming to any conclusions here; I haven't given my life lesson yet. But you know what? I think life lessons are presumptuous, and there's nothing I could tell you all that you didn't already know. I could never come close to defining any of your experiences in Mastatal, as I don't even think I could define my own. So I guess all I really have to say to Mastatal is – in the infamous words of Daddy Yankee – “que pasó, pasó entre tú y yo.”

By Connor Malloy



Community Facts/Stories: the Maui Addiction

Robin demonstrates the proper technique for grasping bagels

Since Maui was released to the population of the Ranch over 3 months ago I've seen its grip on the people here strengthen to levels no one expected. Though it has brought others and myself many hours of entertainment, it has a dark side. This isn't a quick fix of pleasure, but rather a torturous and never ending battle for perfection. Though the highs are incredible – one of the best feelings, simply indescribable – there are deep lows, and the long-term effects are rarely highlighted. I feel it is my obligation to show, before it swallows other lives, this powerfully addictive substance for what it really is. Like with most drugs, few people will say they're addicted but I'm comfortable admitting my weakness. It's got me good! I've seen it overwhelm lesser individuals, it regularly baffles even the sharpest of minds and it has driven at least one person clinically insane within minutes...

...What am I talking about: a card game! Who would have thought it... there have been bouts of Ultimate Frisbee frenzy, Ping-Pong fever and even Horse-Shoe hysteria here at the Ranch, but to have such a kuffuffle made about a card game (that can be played anywhere) it's got to be a good thing to share... I thought it about time we released the beast to the general public, but be warned – it's not to be taken lightly, play at your own risk and – though it may seem like a good idea – using it as a drinking game is positively dangerous!

Maui rules to follow...

Please note. The point of the game is that there are a lot of rules to remember, unfortunately this means a lot for me to type out and a lot for you to read through and memorize, but you'll get the swing of things soon enough and its worth it in the end. Ok, are you ready for this... pay attention now.

Dealer shuffles 2 whole decks (of regular playing cards without jokers) together and gives each player (best played with 4 or more) 7 cards. The game starts when the dealer flips over the top card of the remaining deck. Play starts clockwise, left of the dealer. The game ends when the first person gets rid of all their cards.

The basics of the game are not unlike UNO: the object of the game is to get rid of your cards, you must follow suit or number (e.g. if the person before you lays a 6 of Clubs, you can lay any 6 or any club) and if you can't go, then you must pick up one card from the deck – that's the end of your turn. Similarly to UNO there are pick-up-two cards, wild cards, skip-a-go cards and cards that reverse the direction. You must declare when you only have one card remaining and say Maui (rather than UNO) when going out.

The 7's are the pick-up-two card: if the person in front of you lays a 7 (of any suit) you must also lay a 7; if you can't then you have to pick up two from the deck, which ends your turn. If you can lay a 7 then the person after you must also lay a 7 or pick up four, if they lay a 7 then the person after them must lay a 7 or pick up six, and so on. Once a 7 (or run of 7's) has been picked up on it becomes a 'dead 7', which means normal play resumes – the next person can lay anything of that suit, or another 7.

The **wild cards** – Jacks – that can be laid on any card, except for a ‘live 7’, and the suit changed to whatever the player desires, it is then the next person’s turn.

8’s reverse the order of play

Aces are skip-a-go – it misses out the next person’s turn.

And that is about where the similarities between Maui and UNO end... from here on its gets more and more complicated.

Maui is basically a self-governing game in which you get penalty cards (handed out to you by your opponents from the deck) for not playing by the rules. It can and will get pinickety... How kind you’re feeling at the time will determine how strict you want to be with the rules. Penalty cards can be given for a plethora of reasons – I will start with the general rules (and things you must do when laying certain cards), which must be followed to avoid getting penalties, and then get into some finer details of the game, exceptions, objections, etc.

It is worth noting at this point that these rules can stack up on each other – if a card carries with it more than one rule, all must be followed (TO THE LETTER!) to avoid penalization... and if mistakes are made, penalty cards can be given for each and every error.

General rules:

During the game you **cannot ask any questions** (just saying “what” when something unexpected happens counts as a question too).

You **cannot swear** during the game, except when you lay a 5, when you have to swear. (There have been huge debates here as to what constitutes a swear word. We had thought about compiling a Maui dictionary but have not yet done so – if it continues to be such an addiction, things might just get that serious? For the time being I will leave it up to whom ever is playing... like most aspects of Maui, its up to the players how strict they want the game to be.)

You **cannot express desires** (though in my experience this does not often happen anyway, so this rule is usually forgotten about)

You must **call a Spade a Spade**. i.e. If you lay the 4 of Spades you must say (as you lay it) “four of Spades”, or if you lay the Jack of Spades you must say “Jack of Spades” followed by the suit you wish to change it to, for instance “Hearts”.

Another quick note on the **wild card Jack**: if a player lays a Jack but does not call suit, it then becomes open for any other player to call whichever suit they like.

The **‘same card’** rule: This is a complicated and confusing one – it can easily throw people off the correct order of play. Because there are two decks of cards being used there are two of each card. When playing a ‘same card’ it must be identical – suit and number. You can play a “same card” at any point during the game (it can be laid out of turn and does not effect the order of play, it is as if

it was invisible) – provided you play it before the card is covered by the next persons go. The same cards have to be on top of each other. “Same card” must be said if you wish it to be considered as such – otherwise you can be penalized for playing out of turn. Again you must always comply with the other rules too, e.g. “same card, F**king five of Spades”.

Here’s an example that I hope will help clarify: in a game with five people (players 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), the dealer (player 5 in this instance) turns the top card of the deck to start the game – it is a 2 of Diamonds. Player 1 starts and lays a 4 of Diamonds, player 2 has no Diamonds or fours, so uses his Jack to change suit: “Jack of Spades, Hearts”. Player 3 then lays an Ace of Hearts, player 4 (though it is not their turn – the ace skipped their go) quickly lays the Ace of Hearts and says “same card”. Now it is player 5’s go – the second Ace does not have any effect. This works similarly with a 7, 8 or Jack laid as a “same card” – their ‘powers’ are ignored.

Note: It is not always beneficial to lay a “same card”. For example, it is your turn, the 6 of spades was just played, you’ve got a 6 of spades in your hand but no other Spades or 6’s... If you played “same card, 6 of Spades” then it would still be your go and you would be forced to draw a card from the deck. If, however, you called “real card, 6 of spades” or just “6 of Spades” (the “real card” call acts as a clarifier but is not essential) then it counts as your turn and play continues.

If a 7, 8 or Jack is flipped by the dealer to start the game, their ‘powers’ DO count. I.e. the person left of the dealer would have to lay a 7 if a 7 was flipped, if a Jack is flipped anyone can call suit, and an 8 would mean that play starts right of the dealer going counter-clockwise.

“Point of order”

If you are completely lost and don’t know what’s going on – which will undoubtedly happen, especially when your learning – then you can resolve any confusion by calling a “point of order”. (This can be done by anyone, at any time during the game.) When this happens, play stops and everybody puts down their cards. During a Point of Order questions can be asked and you can swear as much as you like but NO-ONE can touch their OWN cards (if they do they can be given a penalty card). People can touch the discarded pile and sort through them to help figure out who laid what and why etc in order to answer any questions. You can also give out penalty cards or take back unjustified ones from other peoples (down turned) hands but you can never touch your own.

Once everyone knows where he or she stand, the Point of Order can be ended by the person who called it. (If anyone else ends the point of order this also deserves a penalty card.) Because a Point of Order is called to clarify things, it must be ended in a particular way (which, again, if done wrongly, warrants penalty cards) so that everyone knows exactly what’s going on. You have to say what card is showing, whose turn it is, and towards whom the play is going. You must then say “end Point of Order” and touch your cards. If anyone touches their cards before you (the person who is ending the Point of Order) they can be given a penalty card - technically the Point of Order is not over till the cards are touched.

Note: If a point of order was called when a 7 was showing you must say whether it is a ‘live 7’ or a ‘dead 7’(and how many there are). And if on a Jack; when calling what card it is you must say what suit it has been changed to.

Going out: When you only have one card remaining you must declare it by saying “last card”, if you don’t call it out then someone else can, and give you a penalty card for the error. When you throw down your last card you must say “Maui”, but if you end on a Jack you must say “Maui Maui”. That’s the end of the game (provided you did everything correctly)! It might take a while – it’s not uncommon to go through the entire (double) deck before someone goes out.

Other Penalties:

Going slowly... To keep the game moving along at a reasonable pace you are aloud to give penalty cards for players going slowly (i.e. taking too long to play their turn). It is up to the players and how new they are to the game as to what constitutes going too slowly. Another thing I should mention with going slowly is the Jacks: if someone is slow to call suit then you are able to jump on in there and call it before they do.

Playing out of turn. This is obvious really – you shouldn’t play if it’s not your turn! Penalty!

Calling anything but a Spade. You can’t call out “Jack of Hearts, Clubs” for example: your turn is over and you have changed it to Clubs but you can be given a penalty card for Saying “Jack of Hearts”. (We’ve now got to the point that you can’t even say “F**king five”)

Bad penalty giving. Once a card has been taken from the deck it cannot be put back. Therefore if you give someone a penalty card incorrectly, it must go into your hand, not back into the deck.

Drawing too many, or too few, cards. If you can’t play on a series of 7’s and therefore have to pick up – whatever multiple of 7 it may be – but then draw an incorrect number of cards, you deserve a penalty card. If you picked up too many in the first place, tough luck!

Checking the discarded pile during play is not allowed for any reason and deserves a penalty card. (This usually only happens when someone is trying to see how many 7’s were laid in order to figure out how many cards they need to pick up – if you don’t remember, you just have to guess!?)

Details of penalty giving:

Penalty cards can be given at any time after the offence has happened provided the mistake has not been rectified. In any way shape or form, if the rules are not followed to the letter you are entitled to dish out penalty cards. But be careful – don’t be too stringent – you must play within the abilities of the group – if you give a penalty card that is contested, and the other players agree with the recipient that you were being overly harsh, then you can be given the penalty card instead.

There is often a disagreement about the timing of penalty giving, most commonly with penalty cards for ‘going slow’. The point at which the penalty card is lifted from the deck is the exact time of giving, if the error has not been rectified at this point then there can be no argument. If things happen ‘at the same time’ well, I’ll leave it up to you! This is just one of the times when a Point of Order is called and the self-governing debates ensue.

New rules

If a player wins 5 games in a row, they are entitled to create a new rule. Here are some examples of rules that have been added to the original game since it was brought here by BEN YEOMEN.

You must **pay respect to the Ace of Spades**. i.e. “Respect the Ace of Spades” or “Ace of Spades, respect it!” (as long as the word ‘respect’ appears in the phrase you’re ok – and of course you have to call a Spade a Spade)

Bad Point of Order. You get a penalty card for calling a Point of Order when it wasn’t really necessary, or if it was only yourself that was confused: if everybody else knew what was going on then you get a penalty card.

Throwing a “Ten”. When someone lays a Jack and changes the suit, you are able to throw down a ten of the suit that was called in a similar way to laying a same card – you can lay it out of turn and it doesn’t effect the order of play. In the same way that you would have to say “same card”, if you want to use this rule you must say “Ten” or “Ten, Ten of Spades” if you’re laying the ten of Spades.

Bad dealing... if the dealer deals badly – the wrong way round, gives too many cards, whatever – again it is up to the players as to how strict they want to be – this deserves a penalty card.

(We now play with all the above rules.)

Well I think that’s about everything, if your brain isn’t completely fried, here’s a quick recap to summarize:

- Basics of play are like UNO
- You cannot ask questions.
- You cannot swear.
- Ace skips the next persons turn.
- 5 you have to swear.
- 7 you have to lay another 7 or pick up two.
- 8 reverses the order of play.
- Jacks are the wild card – can be played on anything except for a live 7 and a change of suit can be made
- Always call a Spade a Spade.
- A same card can be played at anytime.
- Declare your last card
- Call Maui when going out (except with a Jack when “Maui Maui” must be called.

If anyone has actually read all of this, thank you – it was worth me writing it! If it made any sense, even better! The main reason for going to such lengths was obviously to share a game that we really enjoy, but it was also a good test of my technical writing abilities and about the only way to truly illustrate the pedantic nature of the Maui beast. Thanks for your patience and (provided you understood what I was going on about) I hope you enjoy the drama and excitement of this devilish drug.

That's the lot! Adios.

By Rob Hankey



The local Mastatal futbol team showing their stuff...

F?tbol Follies: April Showers Bring More Showers

This month's follies come with almost as much fury as the rains that have finally descended for good on Puriscal county. Tensions ran high for most of the month between the rival Ligistas and Saprissistas, though the former had much more work to do to secure rights to the championship trophy. With Puntarenas and Brujas out of the way, the Clásico was set for the 2005-2006 final. La Liga Deportiva Alajueense hosted the first of two games, yet failed to take the lead in the series after a last minute corner kick was headed off the post from point blank range. The score was thus left to be settled on Saprissa's

turf, and as it proved, on Saprissa's terms. Los Morados were too much for the red and black, and with this final victory placed themselves atop the leaderboard for both the first and second half of the season. All of a sudden there would be no more national play to watch, leaving fútbol fans the heart-wrenching wait between Champions League games. More on this action in next month's update.

But enough about the professionals, let's get to what you've all been waiting for. Following the Semana Santa respite, teams traveled to San Vicente to do battle. The spectator sideline had been painted as a V, the field boasted plenty of dirt and spotty crabgrass, but at least there were nets in the goals (as mandated by tournament "rules.") There were only four squads competing that day, as Deportivo San Vicente and F.C. Zapaton both enjoyed their first bye week. The first match-up of the day ended in a tie between San Miguel and the caballos of Salitrales. Then came Mastatal's long-anticipated confrontation with Guarumal, the tournament's front-runner by one point. Los Amarillos came out with the typical line-up, though managed to recruit another community affiliate, Pablo, to better secure the midfield. Yet what began as an even match-up was soon tipped in the opponent's favor, as goal after goal seemed to stream in past Caraca in net. Combined with the not-uncommon disorganization and lack of team-oriented play, Mastatal ended up sulking off the field with a disappointing but humbling 6-2 loss. As Timo commented after the game, "It's good to get humiliated from time to time." Indeed, a tough loss can often empower a team for its next match. Would that be the case for Los Galácticos?

April's final Sunday was spent here in Mastatal, with plenty of hometown food and cheer. Community members scrambled to paint the lines, secure the nets and organize the day's "ventas," but the real debate revolved around the one thing nobody could control. With a number of solid rains early in the week, and an earth-pounding midweek mejenga, the plaza was looking abused on Saturday morning, but with a little communal offering to the rain gods, there was still potential for a manageable gameday. As everyone tended to their Saturday afternoon, many gathering in the

pulperia per usual, the skies opened up in spiteful ferocity, ensuring a mudbath for all players in the morning. Yet this was no time for Los Amarillos to hang their heads, the day's match against Zapatón would be critical, not just for restoring some pride, but for their place in the overall standings.

Given the conditions, everyone appeared sluggish from the opening whistle. Play was slow across most of the field, almost impossible in a number of "piscinas" that had formed overnight. Zapatón's strikers looked eager to put one away early, placing worrisome pressure on Gollito in the backfield. Their persistence eventually led to a penalty kick that marked the first goal of the day. Marcos was "atajando" for Los Galácticos, Caraca having been pulled on account of both the previous week's 6-goal performance and the assumed "goma" he would be sporting after Saturday night. And so he warmed the bench with Graven and Tyler, not to enter until midway through the second half, when the score stood at 1-0 in favor of Zapatón. In the final ten minutes, their striker collected his second yellow card, reducing his team's numbers to ten. With that Los Amarillos went on the attack, and in an outstanding performance, the man who was supposed to be suffering a serious "goma" suavely controlled the ball up front and put two in the back of the net to give his team the much needed homefield victory. Now with a slightly larger head, Caraca vowed to play in the field from that point on. While often a positive presence out there, what he would be leaving behind in net worried some of his teammates.

better or worse, Los Galácticos felt pretty good about their position at the end of the month, maintaining second place as Guarumal had a bye week and Salitrales tied San Vicente. After five weeks of play, it was still anybody's tournament for the taking.

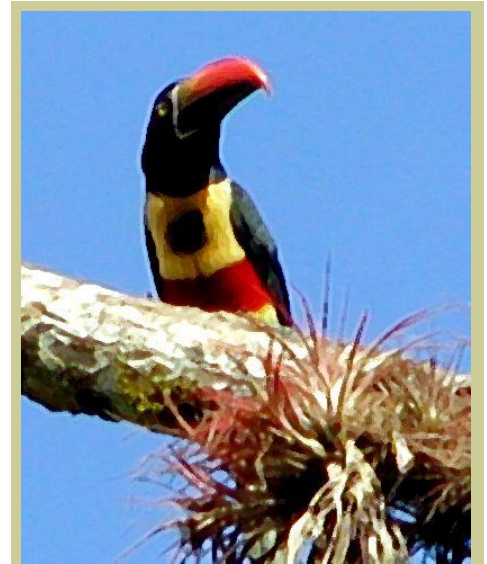
TEAM	W	L	T	PTS
Guarumal	3	0	1	10
Mastatal	3	1	0	9
Zapatón	1	2	2	5
Salitrales	1	1	2	5
San Vicente	0	2	3	3
San Miguel	0	2	2	2

Brujita

Inspirational Impressions: Walden

“There is some of the fitness in man’s building his own house that there is in a bird’s building its own nest. Who knows but if men constructed their dwellings with their own hands, and provided food for themselves and their families simply and honestly enough, the poetic faculty would be universally developed, as birds universally sing when so engaged”.

---Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854



A Brilliantly-Colored Collared Aracari, a familiar visitor to the trees around Rancho Mastatal

photo by Tom McDonald