

**The Philosophers' Football Match** is a Monty Python sketch depicting a football match in the Olympiastadion at the 1972 Munich Olympics between philosophers representing Greece and Germany. Starring in the sketch are Archimedes (John Cleese), Socrates (Eric Idle), Hegel (Graham Chapman), Nietzsche (Michael Palin), Marx (Terry Jones) and Kant (Terry Gilliam).

Confucius is the referee and keeps times with an hourglass. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine (sporting haloes) serve as linesmen. The German manager is Martin Luther. As play begins, the philosophers ponder their theories while walking on the pitch in circles. Franz Beckenbauer, the sole genuine footballer on the pitch and a "surprise inclusion" in the German team, is left more than a little confused.

The sketch was performed in the Grünwalder Stadion. It originally featured in the second *Monty Python's Fliegender Zirkus* episode and was later included in *Monty Python Live at the Hollywood Bowl (1982)*

Outcome:

Nietzsche receives a yellow card after claiming that Confucius has no free will. Confucius replies, "Name go in book". In the second half, Karl Marx replaces Ludwig Wittgenstein, but does nothing to advance the game. With just over a minute of the match remaining Archimedes cries out "Eureka!", (I've discovered it!; I've found it!) takes the first kick of the ball and rushes towards the German goal. Socrates scores the only goal of the match in a diving header off a cross from Archimedes. As the sketch closes, the Germans dispute the call; "Hegel is arguing that the reality is merely an a priori adjunct of non-naturalistic ethics, Kant via the categorical imperative is holding that ontologically it exists only in the imagination, and Marx is claiming it was offside."

## Line-ups

The names of the Greek philosophers in the line-up are displayed in German in the sketch.

<b>Germany</b>	<b>Greece</b>
Gottfried Leibniz (goalkeeper)	Plato (goalkeeper)
Immanuel Kant	Epictetus
Georg "Nobby" Hegel (capt)	Aristotle
Arthur Schopenhauer	"Chopper" Sophocles
Friedrich Schelling	Empedocles of Acragas
Franz Beckenbauer	Plotinus
Karl Jaspers	Epicurus
Karl Schlegel	Heraklitus
Ludwig Wittgenstein	Democritus
Friedrich Nietzsche	Socrates (capt)
Martin Heidegger	Archimedes

Karl Marx - substituting  
Wittgenstein in the 2nd half

(Wittgenstein was, of course, Austrian.)

## **Philosophers Football Match 2010**

Inspired by the famous Monty Python sketch, and with the full backing of the surviving Pythons, a tribute/replay of **The Philosophers' Football Match** was held in North London, at Wingate & Finchley's Harry Abrahams stadium, North London on 9 May 2010.

This tongue-in-cheek re-staging – on a real London pitch – of the original sketch, was the idea of The Philosophy Shop, a specialist provider of education and training for primary school children. The group works to enable Philosophy graduates at University level to conduct practical philosophy sessions for children aged 5 to 11 as part of a drive to boost their reasoning skills from their first days in the school environment.

Philosophers A.C. Grayling and Former England Manager Graham Taylor had been appointed as managers for the event, and players included comedians Mark Steel, Tony Hawks, Arthur Smith and Ariane Sherine, as well as philosophers Julian Baggini, Nigel Warburton, Simon Glendinning, Stephen Law, Angie Hobbs and Mark Vernon, plus other academics from Universities nationwide. Match supporters included sociologist and Radio 4 Thinking Allowed presenter Laurie Taylor, the BBC's John Humphrys and educationalist and author Anthony Seldon.

Address:

*[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Philosophers'\\_Football\\_Match](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Philosophers'_Football_Match)*