

A Soldier's Friend

3. Football (cont...)

by Megan Rix



eleven players per team. Soon there must have been fifty or more soldiers playing against each other. And not just British and German soldiers, but French and Belgian ones too.

Their pitch was no-man's land. Their goal wherever the goalie with his arms opened wide was.

Sammy was as happy as could be, racing round and round, not playing on any one team, but on both at once. The ball his prey and his prize. He even jumped up into the air to try and get it when Oliver kicked a long shot. The soldiers from both sides manoeuvred round him and were careful not to kick the little dog as he ran between them and the ball.

Mouser watched the men's legs running about, and Sammy running through them, as she was petted by soldiers from both sides. She herself was not the least bit tempted to join in and gave the occasional miaow when the play got too close to her.

But Sammy loved it and played on and off all day, with short breaks to catch his breath before the excitement of the game forced him back into it, until he was panting with exhaustion, while Mouser watched the game from different soldiers' laps.

Finally Sammy tired and rolled on to his back and held the ball in his forepaws. Oliver watched him and shook his head.

'You are one football-loving dog,' he said and the other soldiers laughed.

These two football matches happen in very different places. Discuss the differences and then answer the questions on the next page.

