

Toman Brod With His Brother And Mother In The Mountains



This is me, my brother Hanus and our mother Olga Brodova.

The picture was taken in 1935 in the Krkonose Mountains, in Harrachov.

I think that about three times a year, for Christmas, during Spring break and at Easter, we used to go to the mountains.

Our father would say: you're pale, you're city children, at least once in a while you have to have mountain air, you have to go skiing. So we would go to the mountains.

To Spindleruv Mlyn, and to Harrachov always to the same hotel, to this day it still stands there. Well, as a skier I was no great shakes, but it was fun.

We skied downhill, uphill you had to walk, back then there were no ski lifts yet, and those hills were more these pastures, not ski runs, those I didn't have the courage for. You went, stopped against some fence, and walked uphill again.

That feeling when a person, all frozen through walks into a warm, cozy chalet, perhaps has some tea, that's something that's not easily equaled.

And of course, we were also big on sports, we were soccer fans, at least my brother and I were.

We also actively played soccer, but more with more enthusiasm than skill, we were fans of Sparta and Slavia, we followed their performance, and that was something, when during the World Championship in 1934 in Italy, our soccer players reached the finals.

Where they lost, but it wasn't all fair, then they got a hero's welcome in Prague, they arrived in an open coach and everyone covered them in flowers, I was there too.

Soccer players of those times weren't gladiators, millionaire slaves, that let themselves be sold back and forth for millions, they were people that really played for prestige and with enthusiasm, for the love of it.

With patriotism. For them it was a real point of pride to represent Czechoslovakia in the international arena. In those days patriotism wasn't a cliché, it was a real, deep feeling.

I was a Sparta fan, Hanus a Slavia fan. In fact, before he died, our father bought my brother a Slavia and me a Sparta sweater.

I knew the entire Sparta team roster, I had it hanging above my bed, and always on Monday our teacher, Mr. Pokorny, he was this older man with glasses, would come up to me and say:

'Brod, how did you end up on Sunday?' So I reported: 'Mr. Teacher, sir, we won.' I would say we. 'So you won? That's amazing news.' And so then I would describe to him how it was that we won.