The Pool Competition

The elders of Alqueria had thought long and hard about the disruptive, expensive and exhausting barrio rivalry and in particular, how to end it. It doesn't require a vast intellect or expansive imagination to realise that any scheme proposed by the elders would be inept, inane and totally ineffectual, they didn't disappoint.

They were to hold a pool tournament. Believing that the spirit of sportsmanship and friendly competition would somehow bring about a spontaneous and unprecedented change in the mass psyche of the villagers. This reasoning was of course fundamentally flawed but that hadn't stopped the implementation of similar schemes in the past. Preparations were duly started.

The venue was to be the function room of the Bar La Casa Devante. The contestants were to be made up of four teams, one male and one female from each of the two barrios. The passive sexism of the organisers came to the fore and the ladies' matches were set to go ahead first. The thinking being that they would be an anticlimax to the supposedly more skilful rounds played later by the men.

All went well, that is until the first ball was struck. It was Manuela's blow for the Hill People. Whether she was conscious of her actions isn't clear however from past experiences one assumes she was. Just why she found it necessary to lean so far over the table in a dress completely unfit for the purpose is perhaps not a great mystery. For the aficionado of pool the reason for her caressing the cue in such a sensual manner might not have been appreciated. It was however appreciated by the men-folk of Alqueria. The sound of the balls being driven home by Manuela's skilful use of the cue was too much for some causing them to flee the hall shaking, muttering and sobbing.

Unfortunately the powers that be didn't take into account the extreme emotions felt by one section of the community when the other starts to have lustful thoughts about

their women folk. If anyone is going to inspire lustful thoughts then it is Manuela. A misguided but well directed grab for Manuela's nether regions signalled the end of peaceful competition and the start of hostilities.

Pool balls flew with remarkable accuracy flooring belligerent after belligerent. The ladies fenced with cues, parrying and lunging as they attempted to force the coup de grâce. It was a scene of complete chaos and continued until exhaustion, unconsciousness or intoxication laid the assailants low.

Manuela alone remained standing and surveyed her handiwork with satisfaction.