

THE BALL

by Orlando Mesquita
5 minutes, Mozambique

Somewhere on a dusty soccer pitch in Mozambique, a group of boys are playing a game of soccer. Suddenly a man runs onto the field shouting. He stops the game and accuses the boys of stealing his condoms. There are different ways to use condoms. In Mozambique, young boys are great consumers of them

Synopsis:

Somewhere on a dusty soccer pitch in Mozambique, a group of boys are playing a game of soccer. Suddenly a man runs onto the field, shouting. He stops the game and accuses the boys of stealing his condoms to make soccer balls.

The Ball takes an amusing look at condom use in Mozambique, where around 20 million condoms are distributed annually. Considering that 4 million Mozambican men are sexually active, this means that each man only uses 5 condoms a year. However, a large number of condoms are used by children to make footballs.

Determined to carry on playing, the boys go off to buy new condoms to make another ball. The ball is ingeniously constructed by wrapping the inflated condom first in a plastic bag and then in a piece of cloth and binding it up in string. Oh no, the string runs out! They see the baby's jacket hanging out to dry at the side of a nearby house and decide to use that instead. They pull a loose strand of wool and start binding the ball. The little jacket is soon totally unravelled and the boys get back to their game.

A goal is finally scored! The ball goes shooting off into a nearby house, where it lands in the lap of the old lady who made it in the first place. She gets out her knitting needles and has soon reconstructed the jacket, which she hangs up once more.

Director's Biography :

Orlando Mesquita has made over 30 films since 1984 as an editor, director and producer. His work covers features (editor/assistant director in *Disobedience*, 90 min, 2001), educational programmes, and many documentaries. He has been involved in projects which have documented just about every aspect of contemporary Mozambican life, from the roles of women to the war and its aftermath of refugees (editor in **A Arvore dos Antepassados**, 50 min, 1994) and demobilized soldiers (editor/director in **A Caminho da Reintegração**, 23 min, 1997). In 1999 he won a Kuxa-Kanema

best video Award for his work as co-director and editor on **Community Stories** (6X 26 min .1999)

Directors Comments:

The Ball is a fun football story, in which the children have found an interesting way to make a football using a condom.

Making this film made me relive my own childhood, also in a poor neighbourhood in the north of Mozambique, where we made similar balls, the big difference being that instead of using condoms, we used bladders of animals which after being filled would be transformed into balls in the same way as we can see in the film.

Naturally these two realities, distant in time but so near in form, captivated me and making me give myself over passionately to the making of this film.°
Accordingly for me it is a homage to poor children, many of them orphans in this central region of Mozambique, whose creative capacity gives rein to them enjoying themselves like any other child in the world.

Making a ball from condoms is only one of the examples of how many children use condoms for fun. I hope that when people see the film they really enjoy themselves, but fundamentally that they hold onto how mistaken our statistics are in relation to condom use.

Credits:

Production Company
Director
Producer

Ebano Multimedia
Orlando Mesquita
Lic nio Azevedo

Cinematographer
Sound
Editor
Music

Joao Funcho Costa
Valente Dimande
Orlando Mesquita
Chico Ant nio