

Women's World Cup diaries, day 3 | Paper chase

Washington, 23 September 2003, 4:00 p.m. | The challenge for the day was finding paper. It has been a while since I practiced daily journalism, and the necessity of having paper did not strike me until relatively late in my stay. As I tried to set up a meeting with a couple of South Korean players at their hotel—through the good offices of team contact **Randy Cho**—I realized that paper and pen would go a long way toward creating the aura of professionalism I desired.

There was no paper, however, available at my hotel, and the bookstore I visited had no paper—none that hadn't been written on already. The stationer's store at a second hotel had sold out. They had greeting cards, which seemed inappropriate. (Meanwhile, I was writing phone numbers and e-mail addresses on the front page of my *Financial Times*.) Finally, I found a ruled writing tablet at a nearby pharmacy, but I'm a bit nervous about the psychedelic cover, with the pharmacy's name emblazoned thereon. I'll try to keep this cover concealed in an interview situation.

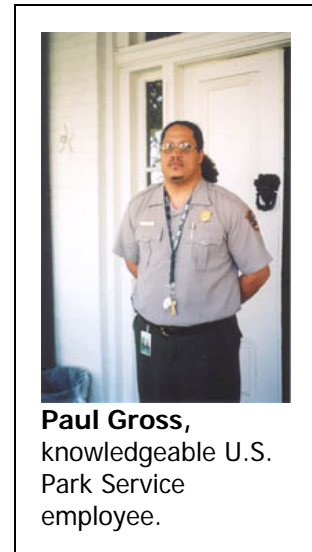


The view from Cedar Hill, the Anacostia home of **Frederick Douglass**.

I left Randy Cho, whose lunch I interrupted, at his hotel to try to arrange my interview for the evening. The hotel, by the way, housed three of the teams competing in tomorrow night's **Group B** matches: Brazil and France, in addition to the Koreans. Seventeen-year-old **Marta** cruised through the lobby, requisite headphones in place, heading toward a bank of pay phones. (She might have been **listening to forró**, a Brazilian folk style and her favorite music, according to *USA Today*.)

For the afternoon I had planned a drive to the **Frederick Douglass National Historic Site** in Washington's Anacostia section. The time being shortly after 2 p.m., rush hour had started, so the 15-minute trip took about 45 minutes. (The return would take more than an hour.) I hiked up to Douglass's home, Cedar Hill, which he occupied from 1877 until his death in 1895. I especially enjoyed the stone-and-mortar hut behind the house, a one-room retreat that Douglass called the "Growlery," a term pulled from **Charles Dickens's** *Bleak House*.

Paul Gross (right), a knowledgeable U.S. Park Service employee, led the house tour. Gross had an intricate tattoo on his right forearm, and I found myself studying it, instead of the period wall coverings. Our group consisted of Georgians, North Carolinians and two men from Ethiopia and Sudan, befriended by another man who complimented them in the visitor's center, before the tour, for their willingness to fight for a cause.



Within the visitor's center, on a wall of African American heroines, was a picture of Korean violinist **Kyung-Wha Chung**. I am not sure why her picture was included (perhaps because Douglass played the violin), but it reminded me of the South Korean team and if Cho was having any luck setting up an interview. (It turned out, as Cho told me later, that the team "had a change of plans" and left the hotel for dinner that evening. As of this writing, I'm still waiting for a return call.)

Again, as with the **Women in Military Service for America Memorial** the previous day, the Douglass site, given Douglass's advocacy for women and the large portrait of **Susan B. Anthony** on the wall of his study, seemed an appropriate place to visit during Women's World Cup week. Douglass had written: "I would give woman a vote, give her a motive to qualify herself to vote, precisely as I insisted upon giving the colored man the right to vote. I have never yet been able to find one consideration, one argument, or suggestion in favor of man's right to participate in civil government which did not equally apply to the right of woman." Perhaps he would say the same about women's football.

On the drive back to Rosslyn, the traffic crept past the U.S. Capitol and Democratic Party headquarters. I was happy, though, and drumming on the steering wheel, because Washington jazz station **WPFW-FM** was playing nothing but **John Coltrane**, whose birthday was being celebrated.