

Late nights in fall

More work than fun
those late nights in fall

with us at the back four
fields quiet as fog

filled our arena
and the fresh cut pitch

wrapped by trees
like a *curva* of waving fans

watching the repetition
of crosses from corners

to perfect headers
the sweat and steam off limbs

in the little light left
before we finish with scrummage

Home run fireworks

we were a year apart
became friends however friends start
at nine or ten
used our summer
to count home runs

under a storm we stayed
pitched to each other
measured our distance
the thunder and lightning like fireworks
for the winning homer

Road hockey rules

after teams were made
with captains and a draft
and the kids with pads
were assigned to ends

road hockey rules said
the first to ten
don't high stick
watch for cars

face-off halfway
slap blades and say
N-H-L
then drop the ball
to start

Quick tic-tacs

quick tic-tacs

between both feet

like the ball's strung

to him and his sprints

around and over defenders

splayed across the pitch

reaching the eighteen

still upright

à la Maradona

shoots with the instep

mesh

Reminded of the game

Deflated size fives in the closet,
under my cleats and folded kit -
clean except for the stains
from slides and getting clipped

I'm reminded of the game
I learned to play
of short passes and possession
especially that season alongside Simic

Barely five-ten, slim, but fit at forty
he was quick and sharp like a scythe
his feet wrapped the ball
as he cut and rounded opponents