



ARIEL ORTEGA

The Last Great Dribbler. A tribute to the career, the art of the feint, and the everlasting legend of an Argentine football genius.



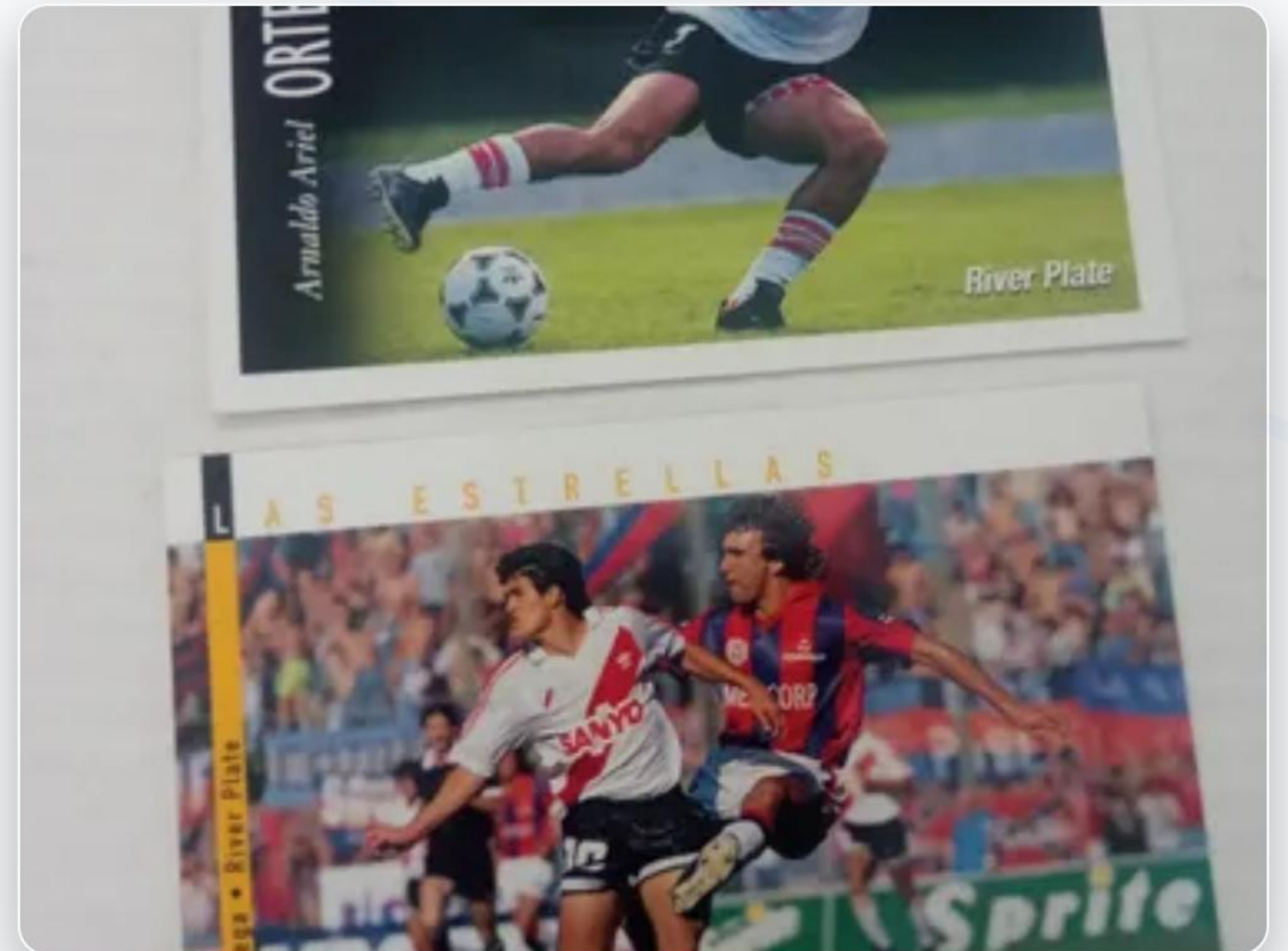
From Ledesma to Núñez

Humble origins in Jujuy and the rise of a creative talent destined to conquer the hearts of the Millionaire fans.

| The Birth of an Idol

Born in Libertador General San Martín, Jujuy, Ariel Arnaldo Ortega joined River Plate's youth system to begin one of the purest love stories in Argentine football history.

- **Professional Debut:** Occurred in late 1991 under Daniel Passarella, instantly showing an irreverent and daring style of play.
- **First Spell (1991-1996):** Established himself as an undisputed starter and served as the creative engine of Núñez's legendary attacking line.
- **Glory of America:** Led River Plate to win the historic 1996 Copa Libertadores, performing at an unforgettable level.



| A Unique Style of Play



The Unpredictable Dribble

His classic hip-sway and sudden, sharp stops left the world's best defenders flat-footed. No one mastered the fake out quite like him.



The House Specialty

His masterful chips (the "colgada") over rushing goalkeepers became a patented, trademark signature of his exquisite technical skill.



Street Football in His Veins

Ortega represented pure South American "potrero" football. He played with the cunning, mischief, and natural rebellion of the streets.



Character and Passion

A temperamental player who rose to the occasion in tough matches. Superclásicos were always his stage of greatest brilliance.



The International Journey

The challenges of European football and the magical chapters he wrote across
some of the world's most competitive leagues.

| Shirts of the World



The European Spells

Arrived at Spain's Valencia CF in 1997. Later, he shone in Italy with Sampdoria and Parma, where he secured the Italian Super Cup in 1999.



Journey to Turkey

Signed a multi-million dollar transfer with Fenerbahçe in 2002. Despite showing flashes of his immense class, adaptation issues led to an early exit.



Glory in Rosario

Returned to Argentina to defend Newell's Old Boys. Playing at an outstanding level, he led the team to win the 2004 Apertura Championship.

Goals with the Red Band



Ariel Ortega's goal distribution in official matches for River Plate reflects his stellar consistency on the domestic stage:

- AFA Domestic League: **66 Goals** (81.5%)
- International Tournaments: **12 Goals** (14.8%)
- National Cups: **3 Goals** (3.7%)

| National Team Icon

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OFFICIAL CAPS

The Heir of the Number 10

Ortega accepted the massive responsibility of wearing Argentina's number 10 shirt after Diego Maradona's suspension at the 1994 FIFA World Cup, responding with outstanding courage and class.

Throughout his international career, he represented Argentina in **3 consecutive World Cups** (1994, 1998, 2002), scored 17 official goals, and earned a Silver Medal at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.



| Spells of Eternal Love

1st Spell

1991 - 1996



Total explosion, youth debut, and undisputed Champion of South America (1996 Copa Libertadores).

2nd Spell

2000 - 2002



Stellar return from Europe. Champion of the 2002 Clausura, displaying majestic football.

3rd Spell

2006 - 2008



Pure emotion. Champion of the 2008 Clausura as the great leader and spiritual captain of the squad.

4th Spell

2009 - 2011



His final years in Núñez. Heartfelt farewells that sealed his place as an eternal hero of the club.

Thank You, Burrito!

The legacy of the last great dribbler will live forever in the collective memory of global football.



| Image Sources



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Source: Argentine National Football Team Archive

| Image Sources



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