The basic unit of the Chinese language is the zi (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each zi has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string zi together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

This week: Words about soccer

鉅
Pronunciation: feng (Putonghua, 1st tone), fung (Cantonese 1st tone)
Basic meaning: blade, forward

锋 (radical 金 jin = gold/metal) = blade of 刀 (dao = knife), 劍 (jian = sword). 前锋 (qian feng = forward-blade) means forwards in soccer.

中锋 (zhong feng = centre forwards), 翼锋 (yi feng = wing-blade = wingers) 盤球 (pan qiu = swirl-ball = dribble), 傳球 (chuan qiu = pass-ball) past the opposite team's 中衛 (zhong wei = middle-defend = midfield defenders) and 後衛 (hou wei = back-defend = backfield defenders).
They 射門 (she men = shoot-gate/goal) or use 头錘 (tou cui = head-hammer = headers) to 入球 (ru qiu = enter-ball = score goal).

先鋒 (xian feng = early/ahead-blade) means herald/forerunner. 筆鋒尖銳 (bi feng jian rui = pen-blade-pointed-sharp) describes writers of piercing criticism.

by Diana Yue