



Preliminary Draw for the 2014 **FIFA World Cup Brazil™**

Rio de Janeiro, 30 July 2011

Statistical Kit

Status as at 30/06/2011





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Preliminary Draw history

New York, Paris, Tokyo – and Rio!

The preliminary competition for the FIFA World Cup™ will be 80 years old in June 2013. The history of the Preliminary Draw as we know it, however, goes back only twenty years. Nonetheless, the event continues to grow in importance and size every four years.

These days the draw may be a glitzy, lavishly produced event held in such impressive surroundings as the Louvre in Paris and the Tokyo International Forum and followed by people all around on the world on TV and the internet, but this is a relatively recent development.

By contrast, the draw for the preliminary competition of the 1970 FIFA World Cup™ in Mexico, less than half a century ago, constituted nothing more than an item on the agenda of a regular meeting of the FIFA organising committee in the Moroccan city of Casablanca in 1968. It must therefore have seemed revolutionary when the German organisers of the 1974

tournament decided to broadcast the draw for the subsequent qualifying competition live from TV studios in Dusseldorf in July 1971.



The pioneering step towards creating a truly global event was made, perhaps unsurprisingly, by the Americans, who held the Preliminary Draw for the 1994 FIFA World Cup™ at New York's magnificent Madison Square Garden in 1991. This marked the start of a new era for something that until then had been considered nothing more than a mundane administrative matter. Since New York, Paris, Tokyo, Frankfurt and Durban have hosted the draw – and this year Rio's Marina da Gloria will join this illustrious group.

Photo: Draw for the FWC 1978 preliminary competition at the Conquistador-Sheraton Hotel in Buenos Aires, ARG - ©FIFA archive

Preliminary Draws in the last 20 years at a glance

Date	Place and Location of Preliminary Draw	FIFA World Cup
30.08.2011	Rio de Janeiro, Marina da Gloria	2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™
25.11.2007	Durban, International Convention Centre	2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™
05.12.2003	Frankfurt, Festhalle	2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™
07.12.1999	Tokyo, International Forum	2002 FIFA World Cup Japan/Korea™
12.12.1995	Paris, Carrousel du Louvre	1998 FIFA World Cup France™
08.12.1991	New York, Madison Square Garden	1994 FIFA World Cup USA™



2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™

Durban, 25 November 2007 – Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre

Who was there: The draw ceremony featured lots of typically African entertainment and was attended by South African President Thabo Mbeki and FIFA President Joseph S. Blatter. The actual draw was conducted by FIFA Secretary General Jérôme Valcke, who was able to count on the assistance of South African legends Kaizer Motaung, Jomo Sono and Lucas Radebe as well as Ali Daei (Iran), George Weah (Liberia), Abedi Pelé Ayew (Ghana), Kasey Keller (USA) and Marcel Desailly (France).

Draw highlight: The draw served up a number of fascinating encounters, such as England lining up in the same qualifying group as Croatia again. Only four days earlier, Croatia had caused huge embarrassment to England by stopping the *Three Lions'* expected progress to the EURO 2008 finals with a shock 3-2 victory at Wembley.

2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™

Frankfurt, 5 December 2003 – Festhalle

Who was there: Desmond Tutu, the South African archbishop and Nobel Prize winner, was one of the special guests of honour at the Preliminary Draw for the 2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™, which was watched by over 3,500 guests, association representatives and media reporters from all corners of the world. The two-hour show was broadcast live to over one hundred countries under the motto "A time to make friends". Television presenter Johannes B. Kerner acted as compere throughout the programme, with FIFA Deputy Secretary General Jérôme Champagne conducting the draw on the vast stage.

Draw highlight: England, Wales and Northern Ireland – three of the four British associations in the same group!

2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan™

Tokyo, 7 December 1999 – Tokyo International Forum

Who was there: Pop star actress Hikaru Nishida and television announcer Norio Fukutome emceed the evening, which was attended by over 700 reporters from all over the world. Japanese heavyweight sumo wrestler champion Konishiki assisted the draw alongside France's FIFA World Cup™-winning coach Aimé Jacquet and many others.

Draw highlight: The Preliminary Draw for the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan™ produced several fascinating groups and fixtures between teams which had never met before. Brazil and Argentina squared off for the first time in the newly adopted South American round-robin competition, while former champions Germany and England ended up in the same group – the first time the nations had met in the qualifying stages.

1998 FIFA World Cup France™

Paris, 12 December 1995 – Carrousel du Louvre

Who was there: FIFA General Secretary Joseph S. Blatter conducted the draw with the assistance of stars from a variety of sports, such as Formula One champion Alain Prost, world-champion athlete Marie-José Percec, tennis player Yannick Noah and numerous football stars.

Draw highlight: Former champions Italy and England were drawn into same group, as were Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia.

1994 FIFA World Cup USA™

New York, 8 December 1991 – Madison Square Garden

Who was there: Former Brazilian star Pele and former German captain and coach Franz Beckenbauer helped FIFA's General Secretary Joseph S. Blatter with the draw, which was hosted by actress Barbara Eden. They were joined by US goalkeeper Tony Meola, US coach Bora Milutinovic, members of the US women's team and Abedi Pelé Ayew of Ghana.

Draw highlight: Saudi Arabia were drawn alongside 1982 finalists Kuwait, while England were paired with the Netherlands.



25 things you need to know about the preliminary competition

(Status: 28.06.2011)

- 1) The 203 teams who are competing in the preliminary competition for the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil™ have set another new participation record, topping the 200 teams that enrolled four years ago.
- 2) The first time more than 100 teams took to the field was 32 years ago when 103 teams set out to try and win one of the 24 places up for grabs at the 1982 FIFA World Cup Spain™.
- 3) The only five associations that have not enrolled for the 2014 preliminary competition are Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Guam, Mauritania and Brazil, the competition host.
- 4) The 824 matches scheduled to be played in this preliminary competition will take the all-time total number of qualifying matches way past the 6,000 mark. At the end of the last preliminary competition, the total stood at 5,630. 80% of these matches have been played since the start of the qualifiers for Spain 1982.
- 5) More than half of the matches will be played in the two biggest confederations, UEFA (53 teams) and CAF (52 entries).
- 6) The number of matches that a finalist has to play to qualify for Brazil 2014 depends largely on the format and the size of the qualifying groups, which are determined by the respective confederations and FIFA. For 2010, the Netherlands and New Zealand played eight matches while Uruguay took to the pitch 20 times.
- 7) On average, roughly 27 matches are needed to determine each of the 31 places at stake.
- 8) The 2014 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition began on 15 June 2011 and will conclude in November 2013. Thus, the qualifying campaign will last around 888 days.
- 9) The number of referees and assistant referees required to run the qualifying competition amounts to almost 1,000.
- 10) The FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition is certainly a crowd-puller. Almost 20 million fans flocked to the stadiums for the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™ qualifiers – an average of more than 22,000 per game.
- 11) Prior to 2002, both the hosts and the defending champions qualified automatically. After 2002, only the hosts qualified automatically. 1934 FIFA World Cup™ hosts Italy were the only exception, as they had to negotiate a play-off against Greece.
- 12) Sweden and Estonia contested the very first qualifying match in June 1933. The preliminary competition will therefore be celebrating its 80th birthday in mid-2013.
- 13) The Republic of Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal are the only teams to have played in all 18 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competitions to date. The 2014 qualifiers will be their 19th consecutive appearance.
- 14) Five-time world champions Brazil may be the only team to have played in every final competition, but they have only played in 11 preliminary competitions. There were no CONMEBOL qualifying competitions before World War II and the *Seleção* qualified automatically as hosts in 1950 and as defending champions in 1962, 1966, 1974 and 1998. Germany have qualified five times without playing (hosts 1974 and 2006, defending champions in 1958, 1978 and 1994).



25 things you need to know about the preliminary competition

- 15) The most successful team in the history of the preliminary competition is Germany, who have lost only two of 74 matches (both at home, to Portugal in 1985 and to England in 2001). The Germans boast an average of 2.46 points and 2.9 goals per game.
- 16) In the last 25 years (covering Italy 1990 to South Africa 2010), seven associations have always qualified for the final competition: Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Korea Republic, Spain, USA. However, only reigning world champions Spain have played in all preliminary competitions.
- 17) Mexico have played the most FIFA World Cup™ qualifying matches (141), one more than Costa Rica (140). In all, 40 associations have played at least 100 qualifying matches.
- 18) The list of teams who will play their 100th match in the upcoming qualifying campaign is topped by world champions Spain (currently 99). Two former winners, England (92) and France (91) will also have reason to celebrate. The same holds true for finalists Morocco (98), Poland (96), Canada (95), Iran (94) as well as Cyprus (94) and Saudi Arabia (92).
- 19) Central African Republic, Comoros, Myanmar and Timor-Leste have all played a mere two matches in their qualifying history and have yet to win their first game – a record they share with 19 other teams who boast more experience.
- 20) Mexico v. USA is the most common fixture in the FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition, their paths having already crossed 25 times. The other five confederations also have regular fixtures between certain teams – CONMEBOL: Colombia v. Paraguay (20 matches); OFC: Australia (now AFC) v. New Zealand (17); CAF: Morocco v. Tunisia (14); AFC: Japan v. Korea Republic (13); UEFA: Belgium v. Netherlands (12).
- 21) The all-time ranking list for the preliminary competitions also features two former finalist associations which are now defunct. The German Democratic Republic were finalists at the 1974 FIFA World Cup™, while the Dutch East Indies are nowhere to be found as they, the first Asian team in the finals, qualified for the 1938 FIFA World Cup™ without playing a single match.
- 22) Overall, 16,448 goals have been scored since 1933, an average of close to three per game (2.92).
- 23) The most prolific goalscorer in the history of the FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition is Iran's Ali Daei with 35 goals in 51 appearances. The other leading marksmen by confederation are Andriy Shevchenko (UKR, 26), Carlos Pavón (HON, 25), Hernán Crespo (ARG, 19), Vaughan Coveny (NZL, 19) and Moumouni Dagano (BFA, 18).
- 24) Ecuadorian defender Ivan Hurtado has played an incredible 73 qualifying games for his national team, the first one in July 1993 and the most recent one more than 16 years later in October 2009.
- 25) The only four players to appear in six different preliminary competitions are Dwight York and Russell Latapy (TRI, 1990-2010), Victor Mendieta (PAN, 1982-2002) and Northern Ireland's goalkeeping legend Pat Jennings (1966-1986). All except Mendieta also appeared in the final competition.



Overview of qualifying matches for the 2014 FIFA World Cup™

(Status: 28.06.2011)

African Zone (CAF)	
Round one	24
Round two	120
Round three	10
Total	154

Asian Zone (AFC)	
Round one	16
Round two	30
Round three	60
Round four	40
Round five	2
Intercontinental play-off match	1
Total	149

European Zone (UEFA)	
Round one	260
Round two (continental play-offs)	8
Total	268

North, Central American and Caribbean Zone (CONCACAF)	
Round one	10
Round two	72
Round three	36
Round four	30
Intercontinental play-off match	1
Total	149

Oceanian Zone (OFC)	
Round one	6
Round two (group stage of the 2012 OFC Nations Cup)	12
Round three	12
Intercontinental play-off match	1
Total	31

South American Zone (CONMEBOL)	
Round one	72
Intercontinental play-off match	1
Total	73

Total number of matches

824

→ For the draw format and draw procedure please refer to fifa.com



Association entries and slots by zone for the 2014 Preliminary Competition

	Member Associations	Participants	Drawn in Rio	Eliminated before the draw	Slots
African Zone	53	52	52	0	5
Asian Zone	46	43	20	23	4.5
European Zone	53	53	53	0	13
North, Central American and Caribbean Zone	35	35	30	5	3.5
Oceanian Zone	11	11	11	0	0.5
South-American Zone	10	9	-	-	4.5+1 (host)
Total	208	203	166	28	31+1 (host)

Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Guam & Mauritania and competition host Brazil only MAs not to enrol in the 2014 FIFA World Cup preliminaries

Qualifiers by zone

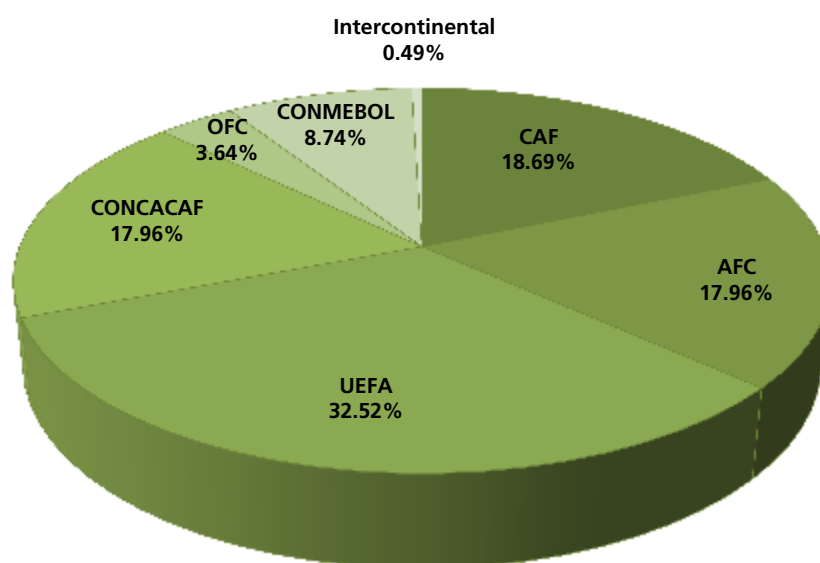
	2014**	2010°	2006
African Zone	154	144*	190*
Asian Zone	149*	202	134
European Zone	268	268	282
North, Central American and Caribbean Zone	149*	109*	110*
Oceanian Zone	31*	38*	37*
South-American Zone	73*	90*	90*
Total	824	853°	847

* includes 1 intercontinental play-off match

** includes matches played by Kiribati and Tuvalu, two non FIFA members

° includes matches played by Tuvalu, a non FIFA member

Qualifiers by zone for 2014 in %













Entries for the FWC 2014 preliminary competition

African Zone		
Members: 53;	Participants: 52;	Slots: 5
Algeria (ALG), Angola (ANG), Benin (BEN), Botswana (BOT), Burkina Faso (BFA), Burundi (BDI), Cameroon (CMR), Cape Verde Islands (CPV), Central African Republic (CTA), Chad (CHA), Comoros (COM), Congo (CGO), Congo DR (COD), Côte d'Ivoire (CIV), Djibouti (DJI), Egypt (EGY), Equatorial Guinea (EQG), Eritrea (ERI), Ethiopia (ETH), Gabon (GAB), Gambia (GAM), Ghana (GHA), Guinea (GUI), Guinea-Bissau (GNB), Kenya (KEN), Lesotho (LES), Liberia (LBR), Libya (LBY), Madagascar (MAD), Malawi (MWI), Mali (MLI), Mauritius (MRI), Morocco (MAR), Mozambique (MOZ), Namibia (NAM), Niger (NIG), Nigeria (NGA), Rwanda (RWA), São Tomé e Príncipe (STP), Senegal (SEN), Seychelles (SEY), Sierra Leone (SLE), Somalia (SOM), South Africa (RSA), Sudan (SUD), Swaziland (SWZ), Tanzania (TAN), Togo (TOG), Tunisia (TUN), Uganda (UGA), Zambia (ZAM), Zimbabwe (ZIM)		
<i>Did not enrol:</i> Mauritania (MTN)		
Asian Zone		
Members: 46	Participants: 43	Slots: 4.5
Afghanistan (AFG), Australia (AUS), Bahrain (BHR), Bangladesh (BAN), Cambodia (CAM), China PR (CHN), Chinese Taipei (TPE), Hong Kong (HKG), India (IND), Indonesia (IDN), Iran (IRN), Iraq (IRQ), Japan (JPN), Jordan (JOR), Korea DPR (PRK), Korea Republic (KOR), Kuwait (KUW), Kyrgyzstan (KGZ), Laos (LAO), Lebanon (LIB), Macau (MAC), Malaysia (MAS), Maldives (MDV), Mongolia (MNG), Myanmar (MYA), Nepal (NEP), Oman (OMA), Pakistan (PAK), Palestine (PLE), Philippines (PHI), Qatar (QAT), Saudi Arabia (KSA), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRI), Syria (SYR), Tajikistan (TJK), Thailand (THA), Timor-Leste (TLS), Turkmenistan (TKM), United Arab Emirates (UAE), Uzbekistan (UZB), Vietnam (VIE), Yemen (YEM)		
<i>Did not enrol:</i> Bhutan (BHU), Brunei Darussalam (BRU), Guam (GUM)		
European Zone		
Members: 53	Participants: 53	Slots: 13
Albania (ALB), Andorra (AND), Armenia (ARM), Austria (AUT), Azerbaijan (AZE), Belarus (BLR), Belgium (BEL), Bosnia-Herzegovina (BIH), Bulgaria (BUL), Croatia (CRO), Cyprus (CYP), Czech Republic (CZE), Denmark (DEN), England (ENG), Estonia (EST), Faroe Islands (FRO), Finland (FIN), France (FRA), Georgia (GEO), Germany (GER), Greece (GRE), Hungary (HUN), Iceland (ISL), Republic of Ireland (IRL), Israel (ISR), Italy (ITA), Kazakhstan (KAZ), Latvia (LVA), Liechtenstein (LIE), Lithuania (LTU), Luxembourg (LUX), FYR Macedonia (MKD), Malta (MLT), Moldova (MDA), Montenegro (MNE), Netherlands (NED), Northern Ireland (NIR), Norway (NOR), Poland (POL), Portugal (POR), Romania (ROU), Russia (RUS), San Marino (SMR), Scotland (SCO), Serbia (SRB), Slovakia (SVK), Slovenia (SVN), Spain (ESP), Sweden (SWE), Switzerland (SUI), Turkey (TUR), Ukraine (UKR), Wales (WAL)		
North, Central American and Caribbean Zone		
Members: 35	Participants: 35	Slots: 3.5
Anguilla (AIA), Antigua and Barbuda (ATG), Aruba (ARU), Bahamas (BAH), Barbados (BRB), Belize (BLZ), Bermuda (BER), British Virgin Islands (VGB), Canada (CAN), Cayman Islands (CAY), Costa Rica (CRC), Cuba (CUB), Curaçao (CUW), Dominica (DMA), Dominican Republic (DOM), El Salvador (SLV), Grenada (GRN), Guatemala (GUA), Guyana (GUY), Haiti (HAI), Honduras (HON), Jamaica (JAM), Mexico (MEX), Montserrat (MSR), Nicaragua (NCA), Panama (PAN), Puerto Rico (PUR), St. Kitts and Nevis (SKN), St. Lucia (LCA), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (VIN), Suriname (SUR), Trinidad and Tobago (TRI), Turks and Caicos Islands (TCA), USA (USA), US Virgin Islands (VIR)		
Oceanian Zone		
Members: 11	Participants: 11	Slots: 0.5
American Samoa (ASA), Cook Islands (COK), Fiji (FIJ), New Caledonia (NCL), New Zealand (NZL), Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa (SAM), Solomon Islands (SOL), Tahiti (TAH), Tonga (TGA), Vanuatu (VAN)		
South American Zone		
Members: 10	Participants: 9	Slots: 4.5+1 (host)
Argentina (ARG), Bolivia (BOL), Chile (CHI), Colombia (COL), Ecuador (ECU), Paraguay (PAR), Peru (PER), Uruguay (URU), Venezuela (VEN)		
<i>Host:</i> Brazil (BRA)		



Numbers Game - a forecast

<p>5-10</p> <p>Number of teams that stay unbeaten (and not all of them will qualify!)</p>	<p><15</p> <p>Age of youngest player</p>	<p>200+</p> <p>Teams not only enrolling but actually playing</p>	
<p>8</p> <p>Lowest number of matches needed for one finalist</p>		<p>250-300</p> <p>Coaches</p>	<p>50</p> <p>Hat tricks</p>
	<p>25%</p> <p>Goals scored by shirt numbers, 9-10-11</p>	<p>800-1000</p> <p>Referees and assistants</p>	<p>824</p> <p>Matches in total</p>
<p>50+</p> <p>Highest number of players used by single team</p>	<p>2,200-2,500</p> <p>Goals overall</p>	<p>40</p> <p>Highest goal total for team</p>	
<p>3,300</p> <p>Yellow cards</p>		<p>7000-8000</p> <p>Match balls (multiple ball system)</p>	<p>15-20%</p> <p>Matches ending 1-0, 2-0 or 2-0</p>
	<p>5,700-5,800</p> <p>Players</p>	<p>40-45</p> <p>Age of oldest player to appear in preliminary competition</p>	<p>20 million</p> <p>Spectators overall</p>
<p>23,000</p> <p>Average attendance overall</p>	<p>110,000</p> <p>Highest attendance for one match</p>	<p>80,000</p> <p>Average attendance of biggest crowd pulling team</p>	
<p>4,500</p> <p>Flights for match officials</p>		<p>27,000</p> <p>Flight legs for match officials</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Highest number of matches needed for one finalist</p>



Attendance figures for the last three preliminary competitions

Year	Attendance	Average	Teams	Games
2010	19.3 million	22,700	200	853
2006	18.7 million	22,000	194	847
2002	17.4 million	22,300	193	777

Previous FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competitions at a glance

Year	Team entries	Teams played	Drop-outs	Automatically qualified	Spots at stake	Newcomers	Matches ¹	Goal Ø
2010	206	200	6	1 ²	31	3	853	2.75
2006	198	194	3	1 ³	31	2	847	2.91
2002	199	193	3	3⁴	29	25	777	3.16
1998 ⁵	174	168	4	2	30	31	643	2.99
1994	147	130	15	2	22	16	497	2.91
1990	116	103	11	2	22	3	314	2.34
1986	121	110	9	2	22	11	308	2.60
1982	109	103	4	2	22	8	306	2.60
1978	107	95	10	2	14	15	252	2.87
1974	99	90	7	2	14	23	226	2.74
1970	75	68	5	2	14	8	172	3.15
1966	74	51	21	2	14	6	127	3.09
1962	56	49	5	2	14	8	92	3.53
1958	55	46	7	2	14	17	89	3.83
1954	45	33	10	2	14	17	57	3.65
1950	34	19	13	2	11	6	26	4.65
1938	37	21	14	2	13	7	22	4.36
1934	32	27	5	0 ⁶	16	3	26	5.42
1930	<i>No preliminary competition played - 13 participants qualified without playing</i>							

¹ Includes matches played by Tuvalu (non official FIFA member)

² Hosts South Africa participated, too as the African preliminaries served also as CAN 2010 qualifiers

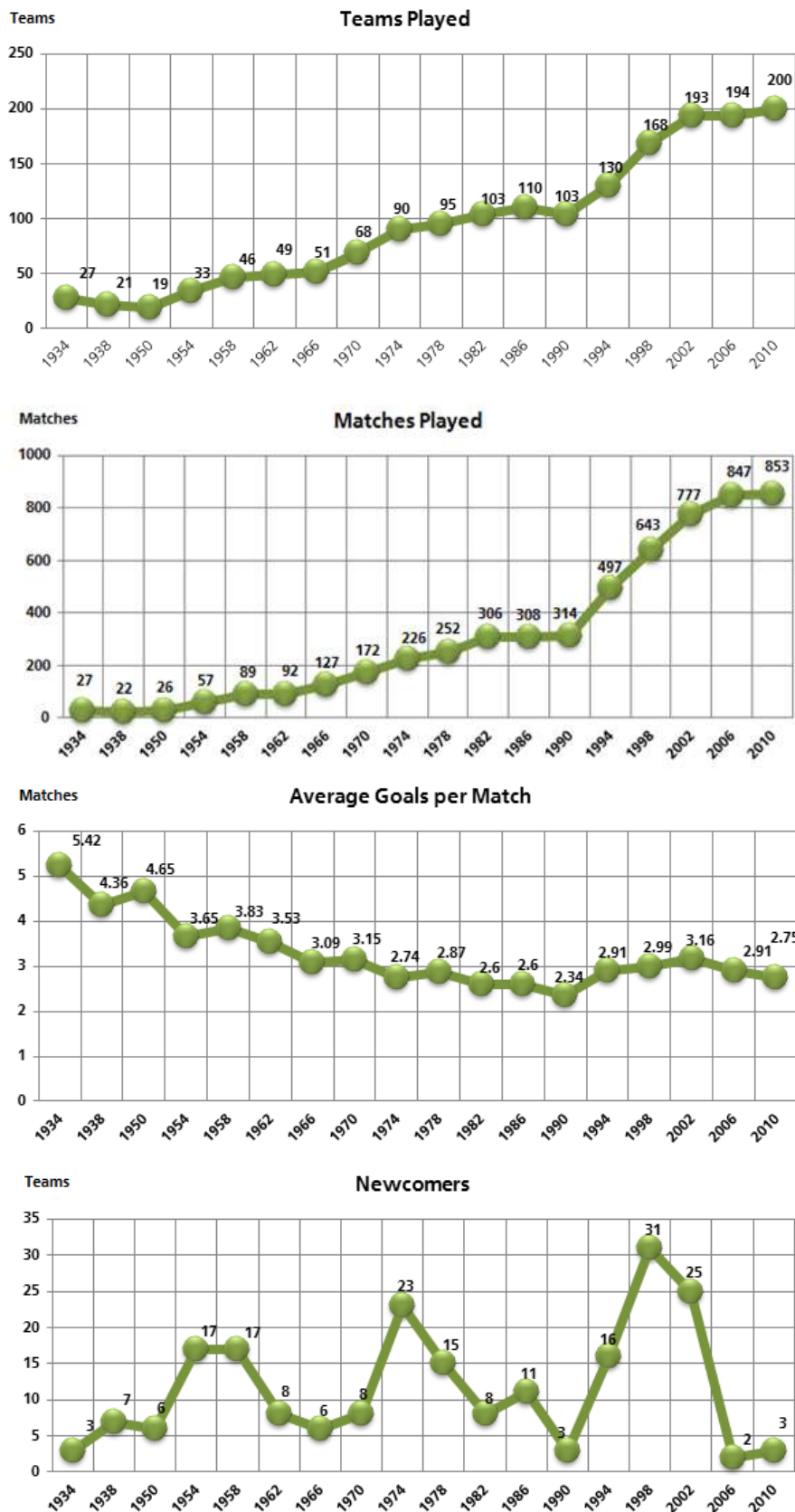
³ After 2002 defending champions also had to qualify

⁴ Qualified ex officio: defending champions France and the two hosts

⁵ Qualified ex officio between 1938 and 2002: defending champions and hosts

⁶ Defending champions Uruguay declined to participate, hosts Italy also had to qualify

Preliminary competition graphics





Memorable FIFA World Cup™ qualifiers

14.10.2009 (FWC 2010)

USA – Costa Rica 2:2

A brace by Brian Ruiz gives Costa Rica a lead of 2-0 and they look sure to qualify until a goal from Michael Bradley in the 71st minute followed by an injury-time equaliser from Jonathan Bornstein brings the USA level. Costa Rica must eventually bow out in an intercontinental play-off match with Uruguay.

20.06.2004 (FWC 2006)

Angola – Nigeria 1:0

Angola's late winner proves to be a huge handicap for the Super Eagles' qualifying campaign, which they ultimately fail to overcome. Angola reach the finals along with Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Ghana. Tunisia are the only representatives of Africa's "old guard" to make it.

11.04.2001 (FWC 2002)

Australia – American Samoa 31:0

The Oceania qualifiers see a new goalscoring record, not only for World Cup qualifiers but all full international matches. Archie Thompson scores 13 times to set another all-time best.

29.10.1997 / 15.11.1997 (FWC 1998)

Croatia – Ukraine 2:0 / Ukraine – Croatia 1:1

The World Cup play-offs bring together two "new" European nations. Croatia emerge the winners and go on to cause a stir in the finals in France.

28.10.1993 (FWC 1994)

Japan – Iraq 2:2 / Saudi Arabia – Iran 4:3

Drama in Doha: Iraq's equaliser and a Saudi Arabia winner, both in the last minute of their respective games, astonishingly deny Japan a finals spot in the USA.

17.11.1993 (FWC 1994)

France – Bulgaria 1:2

Drama in Paris: Emil Kostadinov's last-gasp winner sinks French hopes of World Cup qualification, sparking comparisons with 1961 when Bulgaria also saw off France in a decisive qualifier.

03.09.1989 (FWC 1990)

Brazil – Chile 2:0

One of the most infamous chapters in World Cup history is written when Chilean goalkeeper Roberto Rojas feigns injury after claiming to have been hit by a firework and leaves the pitch covered in blood. When Rojas's deception is later uncovered, he is handed a lengthy ban and his association is thrown out of the FIFA World Cup™.

20.11.1985 (FWC 1986)

Netherlands – Belgium 2:1

In one of international football's classic derbies, the Netherlands have their ticket to the World Cup finals snatched away five minutes before time when Georges Grun scores the crucial away goal that gives Belgium a spot in Mexico at the expense of their neighbours.

10.01.1982 (FWC 1982)

New Zealand – China PR 2:1

In a dramatic play-off, China come close to qualifying for the finals for the first time, but are ultimately overturned by World Cup finals debutants New Zealand.

09.03.1977 (FWC 1978)

Brazil – Colombia 6:0

The Maracana attracts a record crowd of 162,764 as Zico and co. hit the Colombians for six.



Memorable FIFA World Cup™ qualifiers continued

17.10.1973 (FWC 1974)

England – Poland 1:1

Goalkeeper Jan Tomaszewski is Poland's hero after making a series of miraculous stops at Wembley to secure his country's first appearance in the finals since 1938.

26.10.1969: 1970

Morocco – Sudan 3:0

Morocco beat Sudan, who would later go on to win the African Cup of Nations, to become the first African team to reach the finals after going through the preliminary competition by means of an internal African elimination round – Egypt qualified in 1934 after playing against the team representing Palestine (at the time a British mandate - Hitachduth Eretz Yisraelit Lakadur Regel).

21.11.1965 / 24.11.1965 (FWC 1966)

Korea DPR – Australia 6:1 / Korea DPR – Australia 3:1

In a dazzling debut on football's biggest stage, Korea DPR celebrate a pair of victories over Australia in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, to qualify for the finals in England.

15.10.1961 (FWC 1962)

Israel – Italy 2:4

In an interesting twist, Jose Altafini takes the field for Italy four years after winning the World Cup with Brazil under the name of Mazzola.

15.01.1958 (FWC 1958)

Northern Ireland – Italy 2:1

A match that came about under strange circumstances and resulted in Italy's only ever failure to make it through the World Cup preliminary competition. Northern Ireland's success is followed by Wales two weeks later, thus completing a full quartet of British qualifiers for the World Cup finals in Sweden.

14.02.1954 (FWC 1954)

Paraguay – Chile 4:0

More than twenty years after Europe's first ever World Cup qualifying match, South America finally follows suit. Paraguay and Chile contest the ground-breaking fixture.

11.12.1949 (FWC 1950)

Yugoslavia – France 3:2 AET

The first ever match to go into extra time, this dramatic play-off in Florence is decided by Cajkovski's winning goal five minutes from the end.

05.10.1937 (FWC 1938)

Austria – Latvia 2:1

Despite qualifying for the finals in France, Austria do not take part in the event after the nation is annexed by Germany.

11.06.1933 (FWC 1934)

Sweden – Estonia 6:2

The first qualifying competition match in FIFA World Cup™ history. Estonia are outplayed by Sweden. History repeats itself, when four years later, almost to the very day, the small Baltic nation is again eliminated from the World Cup qualifiers by the same opponents.

1930 No preliminary competition



Ever presents – Republic of Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal

Historically, the most familiar faces in World Cup preliminary competitions have invariably come from Europe. Three of them (Republic of Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal) have contested each one of the 18 preliminary competitions to date. Their feat is almost matched by Switzerland and Sweden, although both were spared the preliminaries when they qualified automatically as hosts in 1954 and 1958 respectively. Similarly, Finland (1954) along with Belgium, Bulgaria and Greece (all 1950) have only missed one qualifying competition each.

Some of the world's leading football nations, including England (14+2), France (15+3), Germany (12+5), Italy (14+4), Mexico (14+2) and Spain (16+1) have appeared in the qualifiers almost as frequently, but all bypassed the preliminaries on occasions when they were handed a guaranteed spot in the finals as holders or hosts. Five-time World Cup winners Brazil first took part in a preliminary competition in 1954, after hosting the tournament in 1950. The Argentines, for their part, did not participate until October 1957, making their entrance with a defeat to Bolivia in La Paz, although this result did not ultimately prevent their qualification for the finals.

Number of appearances in the FWC preliminary competitions (1934-2010)

Team	App.	Remarks
Republic of Ireland	18	All preliminary competitions from 1934 to 2010
Luxembourg	18	All preliminary competitions from 1934 to 2010
Portugal	18	All preliminary competitions from 1934 to 2010
Sweden	17+1	Qualified as hosts in 1958
Switzerland	17+1	Qualified as hosts in 1954
5 associations	17	Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Serbia (Yugoslavia)
Czech Republic	17	One of the two successors of the football association of Czechoslovakia since 1998.
Spain	16+1	Qualified as hosts in 1982
Hungary	16+1	No qualifying matches in 1954
USA	16+1	Qualified as hosts in 1994
France	15+3	Qualified as hosts in 1938 and 1998, as defending champions in 2002
Italy	14+4	Qualified as hosts in 1990, and as defending champions in 1938, 1950 and 1986.
Uruguay	14+3	Qualified as defending champions in 1934 (but did not take part) and in 1954, no qualifying matches in 1950.
Germany	12+5	Qualified as defending champions in 1958, 1978 and 1994 and as hosts in 1974 and 2006. <i>The former German DR took part in nine preliminary competitions, the Saar in one (1954).</i>
Brazil	11+7	No qualifiers for South America in 1934 or 1938; qualified as hosts in 1950 and as defending champions in 1962, 1966, 1974 and 1998

Table includes all teams that have played in at least 17 preliminary competitions or could have done had it not been for their automatic qualification for the final tournament.



Preliminary Statistics 1934-2010

Number of occasions qualified for the finals

Team	Q	Remarks
Italy	14 (+3)	Did not participate in 1930, qualified as defending champions in 1938 and 1986 and as hosts in 1990, eliminated in qualifiers in 1958
Germany	12 (+5)	Did not participate in 1930, excluded from World Cup finals in 1950, qualified as defending champions in 1958, 1978 and 1994 and as hosts in 1974 and 2006
Mexico	11 (+3)	No qualifying competition in 1930, eliminated in qualifiers in 1934, 1938, 1974 and 1982, qualified as hosts in 1970 and 1986, banned in 1990
Spain	12 (+1)	Did not participate in 1930, excluded from World Cup finals in 1938, qualified as hosts in 1982, eliminated in qualifiers in 1954, 1958, 1970 and 1974
Brazil	11 (+8)	No South American qualifying competition in 1930, 1934 or 1938, qualified as hosts in 1950 and as defending champions in 1962, 1966, 1974 and 1998
England	11 (+2)	Did not take part in the World Cup prior to World War II, eliminated in qualifiers in 1974, 1978 and 1994, qualified as hosts in 1966 and as defending champions in 1970

Teams that have contested 110+ FIFA World Cup™ qualifiers

Team	MP	W	D	L	Points	Avg. pts
Mexico	141	92	28	21	304	2.16
Costa Rica	140	68	34	38	238	1.7
USA	122	59	30	33	207	1.7
Paraguay	120	56	24	40	192	1.6
Uruguay	118	52	33	33	189	1.6
El Salvador	118	53	23	42	182	1.54
Colombia	118	41	37	40	160	1.36
Czech Republic	117	66	23	28	221	1.89
Portugal	117	59	30	28	207	1.77
Honduras	116	57	28	31	199	1.72
Bolivia	116	33	21	62	120	1.03
Trinidad & Tobago	115	46	25	44	163	1.42
Luxembourg	114	3	4	107	13	0.11
Belgium	113	60	22	31	202	1.79
Peru	113	31	28	54	121	1.07
Chile	112	44	26	42	158	1.41
Northern Ireland	112	36	30	46	138	1.23
Finland	111	28	17	66	101	0.91
Switzerland	110	46	30	34	168	1.53

Teams to reach 100 matches in the 2014 preliminary competition (status before the 2014 FWC preliminary competition): Spain 99 matches, Morocco 98, Poland 96, Canada 95, Cyprus & Iran 94, England & Saudi Arabia 92, France 91, Japan 88



Top goalscorers

Goals	Player	MP	Goal Ø
35	Ali DAEI, IRN	51	0.69
28	Karim BAGHERI, IRN	29	0.97
27	Kazu MIURA, JPN	25	1.08
26	Andriy SHEVCHENKO, UKR	40	0.65
25	Carlos PAVON, HON	37	0.68
24	Carlos RUIZ, GUA	30	0.8
23	Jared BORGETTI, MEX	24	0.96
21	Paulo WANCHOPE, CRC	37	0.57
20	Stern JOHN, TRI	45	0.44
19	Vaughan COVENY, NZL	19	1.00
19	Hernan CRESPO, ARG	33	0.58
19	PAULETA, POR	24	0.79

Fastest goal

Sec	Player	Match	Date
9"	Davide GUALTIERI, SMR	SMR-ENG 1:7	17.11.1993

Players with most participations

No.	Player
6	Russell LATAPY, TRI 1990-2010

Highest attendances

Attendances	Date	Venue	Match	Result
South American Zone (CONMEBOL)				
162,764	09.03.1977	Rio de Janeiro, BRA	Brazil – Colombia	6:0
North, Central American and Caribbean Zone (CONCACAF)				
120,000	11.04.1993	Mexico City, MEX	Mexico – Honduras	3:0
Asian Zone (AFC)				
120,000	19.09.1997	Tehran, IRN	Iran – Saudi Arabia	1:1
120,000	24.08.2001	Tehran, IRN	Iran – Saudi Arabia	2:0
European Zone (UEFA)				
107,556	13.10.1965	Glasgow, SCO	Scotland – Poland	1:2
African Zone (CAF)				
85,000	05.09.2004	Kinshasa, COD	Congo DR – South Africa	1:0
Oceanian Zone (OFC)				
84,656	20.11.2001	Melbourne, AUS	Australia – Uruguay	1:0

Biggest-margin victories

Result	Match	Date
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6	Dwight YORKE, TRI 1990-2010
6	Victor MENDIETA, PAN 1982-2002
6	Pat JENNINGS, NIR 1966-1986

Most matches played

Matches	Player	Year
73	Ivan HURTADO, ECU	1994-2010
57	Roberto PALACIOS, PER	1994-2010
52	Nolberto SOLANO, PER	1998-2010
51	Ali DAEI, IRN	1994-2006
	Javier ZANETTI, ARG	1998-2010
49	Amado GUEVARA, HON	1998-2010
48	Juan JAYO, PER	1998-2010
47	Vitalijs ASTAFJEVS, LVA	1994-2010
47	Dennis LAWRENCE, TRI	2002-2010
46	Ian GOODISON, JAM	1998-2010
46	Dwight YORKE, TRI	1990-2010

Highest-scoring draws

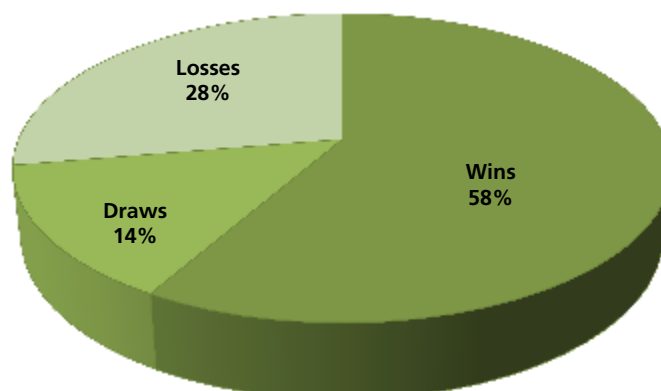
Result	Match	Date
4:4	Ireland Republic – Belgium	25.02.1934
4:4	Guatemala – Costa Rica	28.08.1960
4:4	Uganda – Guinea	08.04.2000



African Zone (CAF)		
9:1	Congo DR – Djibouti	23.04.2000
8:0	Libya – Sao Tome e Principe	16.11.2003
8:1	Malawi – Djibouti	31.05.2008
7:0	Tunisia – Malawi	26.03.2005
Asian Zone (AFC)		
19:0	Iran – Guam	24.11.2000
0:17	Maldives – Iran	02.06.1997
16:0	Tajikistan – Guam	26.11.2000
European Zone (UEFA)		
12:0	Germany FR – Cyprus	21.05.1969
11:1	Hungary – Greece	25.03.1938
1:11	Liechtenstein – Macedonia FYR	09.11.1996
0:10	Finland – Soviet Union	15.08.1957
10:0	Norway – San Marino	09.09.1992
North, Central American and Caribbean Zone (CONCACAF)		
13:0	Bermuda – Montserrat	29.02.2004
12:0	El Salvador – Anguilla	06.02.2008
11:0	Mexico – St. Vincent / Grenadines	06.12.1992
11:1	Trinidad and Tobago – Antigua and Barbuda	10.11.1972
0:10	Dominica – Mexico	19.06.2004
10:0	Grenada – US Virgin Islands	26.03.2008
Oceanian Zone (OFC)		
31:0	Australia – American Samoa	11.04.2001
0:22	Tonga – Australia	09.04.2001
0:15	American Samoa – Vanuatu	29.08.2007
South American Zone (CONMEBOL)		
8:0	Brazil – Bolivia	14.07.1977
7:0	Bolivia – Venezuela	22.08.1993

Win rates of home matches

Not including matches played on neutral grounds



Most frequent head-to-heads

Match	Head-to-heads
African Zone (CAF)	
Morocco – Tunisia	14
Morocco – Senegal	11
Guinea – Tunisia	8
Morocco – Zambia	8
Nigeria – Ghana	8
Algeria – Egypt	8
Nigeria – Tunisia	8
Guinea - Kenya	8
Oceanian Zone (OFC)	
Australia – New Zealand	17
Fiji – New Zealand	9
European Zone (UEFA)	
Belgium – Netherlands	12
France – Republic of Ireland	12
Spain – Serbia	11
France – Serbia	11
Denmark – Greece	10
England – Poland	10
Luxembourg – Switzerland	10
Bulgaria – France	9
Germany – Finland	9

Match	Head-to-heads
Asian Zone (AFC)	
Korea Republic – Japan	13
Iran – Syria	10
Japan – Korea DPR	8
Kuwait – Saudi Arabia	8
Australia – Korea Republic	8
Kuwait – Iran	8
North, Central American & Caribbean Zone (CONCACAF)	
Mexico – USA	25
Costa Rica – Guatemala	19
Costa Rica – Honduras	19
Canada – Mexico	18
Costa Rica – USA	16
Costa Rica – Mexico	16
Mexico – Honduras	16
South American Zone (CONMEBOL)	
Colombia – Paraguay	20
Chile – Ecuador	19
Argentina – Bolivia	16
Bolivia – Uruguay	16
Colombia – Peru	16
Ecuador – Uruguay	16
Chile – Peru	16



The preliminaries – triumphs, drama, heroes

The FIFA World Cup™ preliminaries are inextricably linked with the history of world football and have produced their fair share of anecdotes, drama, heroes and scandals. It is well worth looking back at the history of the preliminary competition, the triumphs and the enormous effort required, in terms of both logistics and administration, to determine the qualifiers for the final competition. For the first time, qualification will be contested by more than 200 associations this time round, with each playing an average of eight matches over a two-year period.

2010 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

A new FIFA World Cup™ qualifying record was set as no less than 853 matches were played across six confederations to determine the 31 teams who would join hosts South Africa. The number of spectators also made for positive reading: almost 20 million fans, or 23,000 per match, filled the stadiums and set a new attendance record for a FIFA World Cup™ qualification campaign. Down in number, however, were the amount of goals scored: 2,344 goals, or 2.75 per match, was the lowest total since the qualification campaign for Italy 1990.

All former FIFA World Cup™ winners also booked their tickets for South Africa 2010: Brazil, Argentina, Germany, England and Italy all came through the group stage unscathed, while France and Uruguay had to overcome tricky play-off ties to ensure their passage to the finals. Australia's decision to switch confederations from the OFC to the AFC led to a surprise or two, not least the fact that OFC representatives **New Zealand** were able to qualify for their first FIFA World Cup since 1982. In South America, perennial powerhouses Brazil and Argentina both qualified along with Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, although the Argentinians were hardly convincing, requiring a late Mario Bolatti strike in their final match against Uruguay to make absolutely sure. CONCACAF were represented in South Africa by the USA, Mexico and **Honduras**.

Spain, Netherlands and England dominated proceedings in the UEFA zone. There was also plenty of excitement in Africa, where the final qualification place had to be settled by a hastily organised play-off after **Algeria** and Egypt finished level on points and goals at the end of the group stage. The Algerians eventually emerged victorious with a 1-0 victory in a decider played in the Sudanese capital Omdurman. Cameroon, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana also qualified from their respective groups. Tunisia, having contested the last three consecutive FIFA World Cup™ tournaments, missed out this time round.

2006 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

A total of 198 teams registered for the preliminary competition, but after three withdrawals, that number was reduced to 194 for the kick-off. Those 194 teams set a new record, as did the number of matches (847) and the total number of spectators (18.6 million).

The preliminary competition for the 2006 FIFA World Cup™ proved to be Australia's last as a member of the OFC. In the end, they saw off the challenge of the surprise packages, the Solomon Islands, without too many problems. The AFC qualifiers threw up few surprises, with **Korea Republic** qualifying for the sixth consecutive time. Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, reached their fourth successive World Cup and Japan their third.

In the CONCACAF zone, Costa Rica firmly established themselves as the third major power in the region behind Mexico and the USA. Familiar faces also qualified from South America. **Brazil** (thanks to ten goals from Ronaldo) and Argentina (with seven goals from Crespo) shared the honours at the top of the table. Paraguay made it to their third successive World Cup after finishing level on points with another qualifier, Ecuador. There were surprises, however, in Africa. Of the quartet of teams that qualified for the 1998 and 2002 World Cups, it was, somewhat surprisingly, only Tunisia who managed to complete their hat-trick, while Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa as well as 2002 quarter-finalists Senegal were eliminated and had to make way for newcomers **Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo**.

In Europe, the Netherlands emerged from a very strong group along with the **Czech Republic**, the latter requiring a play-off against Norway before sealing their first-ever qualification as an independent nation. Of the other traditional European powerhouses, only Russia and Belgium failed to reach the finals. Spain struggled for long periods and needed a play-off victory over Slovakia to seal their passage to Germany.



2002 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

199 teams registered to take part in the 2002 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition, although only 193 of them actually played in the 777 games contested. More than 17 million spectators filled the stadiums for the games - a new record in itself. Some of the big guns also found the going tough in the early rounds.

In the CONCACAF zone, outsiders **Costa Rica** stunned everybody by dominating the competition from start to finish. The USA qualified with matches in hand while favourites Mexico even went into the last match unsure of their destiny, but eventually made it safely over the finishing line. However, the confederation champions Canada did not even make it as far as the decisive final round. In South America, **Argentina** were the top dogs, and left their opponents trailing in their wake. Second place went to Ecuador, just ahead of Brazil, who on the other hand, struggled like never before, eventually finishing third to qualify. Australia's successful year was not crowned in the play-off game against **Uruguay**, *La Celeste* finally returning to the world stage after 12 long years in the wilderness.

The AFC witnessed a keenly fought battle for the two automatic places, which were finally secured by China PR and Saudi Arabia, the latter living up to their billing as group favourites. In China, scenes of unbridled joy greeted the news that the national team had qualified for the first time ever. Iran could not repeat their success of 1997, and finally bowed out against the Republic of Ireland in the play-off round. In Africa, it was a case of "as you were", with four of the qualifiers from 1998 (Cameroon, Tunisia, South Africa and Nigeria) coming through with flying colours once again. **Senegal** outshone seasoned campaigners such as Egypt and Morocco on their way to the greatest triumph in the nation's footballing history.

In Europe, the major surprise was sprung by the **Netherlands**. The Dutch team was full of international stars, but they only finished third in their group, missing out altogether. **Poland**, a force in world football in the early seventies, announced their return with a glut of goals from a nationalised Nigerian, Emmanuel Olisadebe. Germany, previously untouchable in qualifying rounds, were stunned by arch-rivals **England**, with Sven-Göran Eriksson's men triumphing 5-1 in Munich. In the end, Germany came through the play-off round against Ukraine unscathed. Belgium qualified for the sixth consecutive time, and **Turkey** succeeded for the first time in 48 years.

1998 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

This time round all previous records were shattered: 174 entries (with 168 actually playing), 643 matches and over 15 million spectators.

Iran captured the headlines as the surprise team: they were trailing 2-0 in an AFC/OFC play-off in Australia but, to the consternation of 85,000 spectators in the Melbourne Cricket Ground, they pulled level and secured qualification. Already qualified were Korea Republic, now becoming regulars, and Saudi Arabia for the second time in a row. Earlier on, Iran had beaten the Maldives by the widest margin in World Cup history, running out 17-0 winners. Karim Bagheri scored seven of the total, also a new record.

In the European zone, play-offs were arranged between the second-placed teams in the groups for the first time. Norway, Italy, Spain, Germany and Romania came through undefeated, but even five wins and three draws was not enough to take Italy to the top of their group, which was won by England. Not unexpectedly, **Croatia** eliminated Ukraine, thus ensuring that one of Europe's new countries would be making a first appearance.

No fewer than 72 matches were played in South America, where the preliminary competition was held for the first time in a single group. The teams coming out on top were Argentina, Paraguay, Colombia (for the third time in succession) and Chile. Reigning World Champion Brazil qualified automatically.

In the CONCACAF zone, favourites Mexico and the USA were successful, encountering few problems along the way. Third place went to newcomers **Jamaica**, the *Reggae Boyz* thus confirming the progress they had made over the previous few years. In Africa, it was the established teams that made the running; qualifiers Nigeria, Cameroon, Tunisia and Morocco had all made it to the finals on previous occasions. The only new name was **South Africa**, but their success was hardly a surprise, in view of their victory in the Africa Cup of Nations in 1996.



1994 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

A field of close to 150 countries, nearly 500 matches and once again more goals than in the past twenty years - these were the figures of the biggest World Cup preliminary competition since its inception in the 1930.

Two of Europe's big names failed to make the finals: **England** conceded an embarrassing goal after a few seconds in their final match in San Marino and although they won 7-1 in the end they were unable to overtake the Netherlands in the group, who qualified along with group winners Norway. In Group 6, France looked to be heading comfortably for the top spot two matches before the end, but lost surprisingly at home to Israel and were then beaten away by **Bulgaria**.

In South America, the only team to come through convincingly were **Colombia**, who remained undefeated in their group and finished ahead of Argentina. In the other group, Brazil and Bolivia only managed to secure definite qualification in their very last matches. Argentina were forced to qualify via a play-off against OFC winners Australia.

In Africa, **Nigeria** (for the first time), Morocco and Cameroon qualified, but all three had close battles against the second-placed teams in their groups. In a dramatic final round in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and South Korea qualified while Japan let a safe-looking qualification slip away from them by conceding a last-minute goal to Iraq. After slipping up in Costa Rica and El Salvador, **Mexico** earned their passage by beating their closest rivals Canada.

1990 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

Italia 90 also attracted well over 100 entries for the preliminary round, although the total was slightly down on last time (103).

The first qualifying match was in the Caribbean as usual, where Trinidad and Tobago defeated Guyana 4-0 on 17 April 1988. By an odd coincidence, it would also be Trinidad and Tobago who would play the last game in the preliminary round twenty months later. With a World Cup place within their reach, the island team lost against the USA in Port of Spain. The only goal of the match was scored by Paul Caligiuri and it earned the **USA** their first World Cup appearance for 40 years. Costa Rica (under coach Bora Milutinovic) won the other CONCACAF place (with Mexico being banned from taking part).

Europe's breakdown this time was into four groups with five teams and three groups with four; basically the top two teams in each group would qualify, with the exception of the poorest second team from the groups of four. A defeat in their last match against Romania put Denmark in this unfortunate position, and so the tournament was deprived of one of the most attractive sides of the 1986 competition. **England** and **Germany FR** both ended up second in their groups and that was enough. There were few other surprises, except for the case of France, for whom a 1-1 against Cyprus in Nicosia on 22 October 1988 came back to haunt them and saw **Scotland** finish a point ahead in the final ranking.

An unpleasant episode marred the South American preliminaries; during the match between Brazil and **Chile**, a firework landed close to the Chilean goalkeeper Rojas, who then feigned injury. His team refused to continue the match – they were a goal down at the time. But the scheme was quickly seen through, and the result was a long suspension for those involved and a ban for Chile from the 1994 FIFA World Cup™.

The usual long and drawn-out African qualifiers saw **Egypt** qualify for the first time since 1934, as well as Cameroon (who had been undefeated in 1982 in Spain). In an evenly matched battle between six teams in the final round in Asia, Korea Republic and UAE both emerged undefeated, with the Arabs' record of one win and four draws being enough to get them through.

1986 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

Once again there was a record number of entries (110), and fewer than ten withdrawals this time.

From the three European groups of four, only the top team qualified directly. **Scotland** were one of the runners-up in these groups and had to play off against the OFC champions Australia. A 2-0 win at Hampden Park and a no-score draw down under saw the Scots through. A further place in the finals went to **Belgium**, whose outstanding team featuring Gerets, Scifo, Ceulemans and Vandenberg eliminated the Netherlands on away goals in a fantastic play-off. Nine months later, they would again impress in Mexico. **England** were the only team in the European zone to come through undefeated and their most notable triumph was an 8-0 win over Turkey in Istanbul.

The qualifying teams from South America included three previous World Cup winners: Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina, with **Paraguay** earning their place thanks to a clear home win over Chile in a play-off, their first success since 1958. The one available CONCACAF place (in addition to hosts Mexico) deservedly went to **Canada**, who were undefeated in all eight of their matches.

In the Africa zone, the format this time was a knockout competition, with home and away matches. **Morocco and Algeria** won all their home matches and qualified. In Asia, it was **Iraq** who secured their country a place in the World Cup final competition for the first time. **China's** exit was almost tragic; despite four wins in six matches and a goal difference of 23-2, they suffered a totally unexpected home defeat against Hong Kong and lost the chance of playing Japan in the second round.

1982 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

The first qualifying competition to feature more than 100 teams and more than 300 matches.

Of all the teams that had ever won the World Cup, the only one missing the first tournament with 24 teams was Uruguay. **Peru** came through, and together with the undefeated Brazil and Chile completed the South American line-up. In Europe, qualification for all four British teams for the first time since 1958 looked a strong possibility. Wales just missed out in their group, with Czechoslovakia taking second place from them on goal difference, behind the dominant **Soviet Union**. **Scotland** and **Northern Ireland** left Sweden and Portugal in their wake. **Germany FR's** record was impeccable – eight wins and a goal difference of 33-3 putting them five points clear of Austria.



The African qualifiers saw Cameroon and Algeria come out on top, with both of these teams destined to hit the headlines during the final competition in Spain. In the final round of the CONCACAF qualifiers in **Honduras**, the host team secured first place and denied favourites **Mexico** their place in the final round with a goalless draw in the final match. El Salvador won one more game and one more point than Mexico and earned the second ticket to Spain. China PR had never come as close to qualifying for a World Cup as they did on 10 January 1982, but they were thwarted in the last minute: **New Zealand** won the play-off between the two teams, who were level on points, and accompanied Kuwait, the group winners, to Spain.

Photo: Germany FR v. Bulgaria 4:0, 1982 FWC preliminary competition, Dusseldorf. Karl-Heinz Rummenigge (FRG) scores - ©FIFA archive



1978 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

The number of entries passed the 100 mark for the first time (even if the actual total fell back to two figures after various withdrawals).

Among the most prominent teams not to survive the qualifiers were **Uruguay**, who were eliminated in the South American preliminaries. **England** lost only once in their six matches, against Italy in Rome, but the Italians went through thanks to a better goal difference.

After almost 50 games in the Africa zone and a 4-1 win over Egypt, **Tunisia** earned their ticket to Argentina. They were probably the most fortunate of all, having overcome their very first opponent, Morocco, on penalties (4-2) after two drawn matches. In the Asia/Oceania zone, **Iran** set the pace, recording four convincing wins in the first phase and earning six wins in the final elimination round.

1974 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

The impressive statistics for the 1974 World Cup preliminary round showed 99 entries and over 200 qualifying matches for the first time, in the course of which a number of big-name European teams were knocked out.

England faced **Poland** in their final match at Wembley, and a draw for the visitors was enough for them to earn qualification for the final round. The performance of Poland's goalkeeper Jan Tomaszewski has entered football's book of legends. After a draw in their first play-off match against Chile, the **Soviet Union** refused to travel to the Chilean capital for the return fixture for political reasons, and so, in accordance with the regulations, Chile were awarded victory.

In the North and Central America zone, a sensation occurred: playing at home in Port-au-Prince, **Haiti** took full advantage of the moment to overcome Mexico. In Africa, **Zaire** came through and qualified as the first sub-Saharan team for the World Cup final round. There was also a premiere in the Asia/Oceania zone. **Australia** played two matches against both Iran and Korea Republic, coming out on top and earning the OFC its first-ever appearance in the World Cup.

For the first time in the history of the FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition, the average number of goals dropped below three.

1970 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

Even though the number of entries showed no increase over 1966, the number of teams actually rose by one-third! The qualifying matches for the 1970 competition encompassed the whole world for the first time, with a total of 170 matches being played, involving 168 teams across the continents.

No fewer than half of the quarter-finalists from 1966 fell by the wayside in this hotly contested elimination round (**Portugal Hungary**, winners of the Olympic title in Mexico in 1968, **Korea DPR** and **Argentina**). A sad note was written in the history of the World Cup, when Honduras and El Salvador, between whom relationships had been hostile for several months, found themselves opposed to each other in a play-off match which ended in a bloody three-day battle. After this regrettable incident, it was El Salvador who qualified, after having played a total of ten matches.

In Africa, the format began to evolve into its present form, with knockout matches at the start and then group games in the decisive stage. **Morocco** became the first African team to qualify for the World Cup finals by means of an internal African elimination round. Egypt qualified in 1934 after playing against the team representing Palestine (at that time a British mandate – Hitachduth Eretz Yisraelit Lakadur Regel).

1966 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

The course of world history (following the increasing pattern of de-colonialisation) was echoed clearly in the increasing number of entries for the World Cup in England, which passed the seventy mark for the first time.



Photo: Italy - Scotland 3:0, 1966 FWC preliminary competition, Naples - ©FIFA archive

The number of recently independent states was the major factor behind this enlargement, which ended disappointingly from a sporting point of view. The fact that only one place was available for two entire continents led to a **mass withdrawal**. At the end only one applicant was left, but what a surprise they provided!

Little or nothing was known about the **Korea DPR** team. Three dozen players had apparently been assembled in 1962 in order to build up a strong national team in a systematic manner. They played a number of friendly matches, but little was heard about them in the West. Yet wins by 6-1 and 3-1 over Australia in the play-off matches gave a hint of how the North Koreans would perform in England.

Surprisingly, 1962 runners-up **Czechoslovakia** were eliminated in the UEFA qualifiers.

1962 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competition

The number of entries only just surpassed the last competition, yet fewer than 100 matches were needed in the qualifying round to determine which 14 teams would get through.

There was only one British representative this time round – **England**. Scotland had come close, but had lost a play-off against Czechoslovakia in Brussels. 1958 runners-up **Sweden** suffered the same fate in a close battle with Switzerland. **France**, winners of the bronze medal in Sweden in 1958, did not manage to overcome Bulgaria in the group games, injuries to Kopa, Fontaine and Piantoni weakening the team, and they had to play a decider against the same opponents in Milan. A French own goal settled the outcome in favour of Bulgaria.

No team of the African and Asian entries managed to qualify. The best African and Asian teams from their preliminary rounds, **Morocco and Korea Republic**, were beaten in play-off matches by Spain and Yugoslavia. Mexico was once again the team to qualify from CONCACAF, despite losing their opening match against Costa Rica.

1930 to 1958 FIFA World Cup™ preliminary competitions

No qualifying matches were required for the **1930** World Cup finals in Uruguay. Indeed, given the global economic crisis at the time and the long voyage required, FIFA and the local organisers were happy to assemble a field of any kind for the event. In the end, 13 teams took part.

Three years later, the first-ever World Cup qualifier was played in Stockholm. In a passionate game, held in mid-June, Sweden managed to see off Estonia 6-2 in a battle of the Baltic. In all, 27 teams entered the **1934** preliminary competition, contesting a total of 27 matches.

The preliminary competition for the **1938** World Cup was affected by the unstable political climate on the eve of World War II. The number of participating associations fell to 21 as a result and, in Austria, one of the teams that had qualified for the finals in France actually disappeared from the sporting map.

The fresh beginning immediately after the War had as big an impact on world football as on any other domain. A total of 19 associations took part in the qualifiers for the **1950** tournament. England won the British qualifiers to take their place in the finals in Brazil, yet their performances in South America did not bring the success they had hoped for.

The **1954** qualifiers saw a German domestic encounter when Germany FR curiously had to play the Saar, a region of the country that had gained independence shortly beforehand. Twenty years later, Saar coach Helmut Schon would lead the West Germans to the World Cup title.

Four years on, more than 50 matches were required to determine the 14 teams that would join the holders and the host nation in the **1958** final competition hosted by Sweden. This was also the last time that all four British associations managed to qualify for the World Cup.



All-time overview of the preliminary competition

(Status prior to the 2014 FWC preliminaries)

Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Avg. Pts.	Part.
Mexico	141	92	28	21	376	104	2.16	15
Costa Rica	140	68	34	38	243	153	1.7	15
USA	122	59	30	33	203	151	1.7	16
Paraguay	120	56	24	40	165	133	1.6	15
Republic of Ireland	119	47	36	36	170	141	1.49	19
Colombia	118	41	37	40	132	127	1.36	15
El Salvador	118	53	23	42	193	136	1.54	11
Uruguay	118	52	33	33	156	119	1.6	17
Czech Republic	117	66	23	28	234	97	1.89	17
Portugal	117	59	30	28	206	124	1.77	18
Bolivia	116	33	21	62	144	216	1.03	15
Honduras	116	57	28	31	211	130	1.72	12
Trinidad and Tobago	115	46	25	44	169	151	1.42	13
Luxembourg	114	3	4	107	54	381	0.11	18
Belgium	113	60	22	31	216	131	1.79	17
Peru	113	31	28	54	118	159	1.07	14
Chile	112	44	26	42	162	143	1.41	14
Northern Ireland	112	36	30	46	123	137	1.23	16
Finland	111	28	17	66	120	265	0.91	17
Switzerland	110	46	30	34	164	135	1.53	17
Bulgaria	109	53	22	34	181	149	1.66	17
Ecuador	109	34	27	48	123	157	1.18	13
Serbia	108	65	26	17	231	93	2.05	17
Turkey	108	38	20	50	146	165	1.24	15
Sweden	107	67	17	23	219	94	2.04	17
Norway	106	37	26	43	143	149	1.29	16
Romania	106	58	21	27	192	108	1.84	15
Venezuela	106	18	14	74	87	259	0.64	11
Australia	105	60	26	19	286	83	1.96	18
Netherlands	105	67	22	16	241	76	2.12	16
Russia	105	66	22	17	207	70	2.1	15
Scotland	105	54	23	28	167	112	1.76	17
Greece	104	40	22	42	125	155	1.37	17
Austria	103	50	23	30	178	114	1.68	16
Korea Republic	103	62	30	11	199	65	2.1	13
Argentina	102	59	24	19	181	96	1.97	12
Hungary	102	49	23	30	181	129	1.67	17
Israel	102	33	29	40	137	149	1.25	19
Denmark	100	47	23	30	170	120	1.64	13
Guatemala	100	35	28	37	145	128	1.33	13
Wales	100	30	20	50	129	144	1.1	17
Spain	99	66	22	11	226	70	2.22	16
Morocco	98	46	32	20	131	71	1.73	12
Poland	96	49	16	31	182	115	1.7	16
Canada	95	36	29	30	122	116	1.44	13



Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Avg. Pts.	Part.
Cyprus	94	11	10	73	74	266	0.46	13
Iran	94	56	24	14	201	69	2.04	11
Brazil	92	56	25	11	199	59	2.1	11
England	92	62	19	11	226	60	2.23	14
Saudi Arabia	92	53	22	17	173	72	1.97	9
France	91	52	19	20	180	74	1.92	15
Japan	88	47	20	21	173	70	1.83	12
Nigeria	88	48	24	16	151	70	1.91	12
Tunisia	88	47	23	18	151	68	1.86	12
Italy	87	61	19	7	181	51	2.32	14
Albania	84	11	11	62	53	164	0.52	10
Iceland	84	16	15	53	83	191	0.75	11
Zambia	84	40	16	28	128	78	1.62	11
China PR	82	53	11	18	172	54	2.07	9
Malta	82	1	9	72	25	247	0.15	10
Jamaica	80	32	20	28	95	100	1.45	9
Egypt	78	41	18	19	136	71	1.81	12
Qatar	78	36	16	26	125	82	1.59	9
Kuwait	77	41	11	25	135	72	1.74	11
Haiti	76	32	15	29	123	109	1.46	12
Bahrain	74	26	22	26	82	77	1.35	10
Germany	74	55	17	2	213	56	2.46	12
Algeria	73	32	21	20	95	72	1.6	11
Cameroon	71	44	15	12	122	53	2.07	11
United Arab Emirates	71	31	16	24	112	78	1.54	7
New Zealand	70	36	13	21	169	75	1.73	12
Iraq	69	35	16	18	157	73	1.75	9
Korea DPR	69	32	17	20	99	65	1.64	8
Ghana	67	32	17	18	98	55	1.69	11
Thailand	65	18	12	35	89	116	1.02	10
Guinea	64	31	10	23	100	78	1.61	10
Cote d'Ivoire	63	33	20	10	115	55	1.89	9
Hong Kong	63	19	12	32	78	115	1.1	11
Indonesia	63	18	15	30	79	113	1.1	11
Syria	62	27	15	20	137	69	1.55	12
Congo DR	61	28	13	20	101	72	1.59	8
Cuba	60	20	17	23	83	91	1.28	10
Panama	58	13	10	35	57	124	0.84	9
Uzbekistan	58	27	13	18	123	72	1.62	4
Suriname	57	17	13	27	85	96	1.12	12
Zimbabwe	57	21	14	22	59	71	1.35	9
Estonia	56	11	8	37	46	127	0.73	7
Kenya	56	18	12	26	60	82	1.18	10
Sudan	56	15	15	26	53	84	1.07	10
Latvia	55	15	12	28	65	92	1.04	6
Angola	53	23	18	12	71	48	1.64	7
Lithuania	53	13	11	29	43	80	0.94	7
Togo	53	19	12	22	62	70	1.3	8



Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Avg. Pts.	Part.
Singapore	52	15	8	29	57	88	1.02	9
Malawi	51	12	13	26	52	77	0.96	8
Faroe Islands	50	5	3	42	26	139	0.36	5
Liberia	49	13	10	26	34	73	1	8
Curacao	48	10	14	24	33	95	0.92	14
Ukraine	48	23	17	8	65	36	1.79	4
German DR	47	22	8	17	87	65	1.57	9
Malaysia	47	14	12	21	58	71	1.15	10
Senegal	47	18	15	14	64	43	1.47	10
Congo	46	15	8	23	46	63	1.15	7
Oman	46	19	12	15	89	47	1.5	6
San Marino	46	0	2	44	8	205	0.04	5
Burkina Faso	45	18	7	20	66	66	1.36	6
Slovakia	44	23	10	11	82	47	1.8	4
Gabon	43	17	7	19	49	51	1.35	6
Libya	43	16	9	18	50	49	1.33	8
Armenia	42	4	12	26	30	83	0.57	4
Fiji	42	18	7	17	87	82	1.45	7
Jordan	42	15	8	19	54	54	1.26	7
Slovenia	42	16	12	14	55	50	1.43	4
St. Vincent / Grenadines	42	12	4	26	58	116	0.95	5
Belarus	40	11	9	20	48	60	1.05	4
FYR Macedonia	40	9	9	22	49	71	0.9	4
Kazakhstan	40	11	6	23	59	81	0.98	4
Liechtenstein	40	2	4	34	18	121	0.25	4
Azerbaijan	38	3	7	28	12	74	0.42	4
Bosnia-Herzegovina	38	15	7	16	58	50	1.37	4
Croatia	38	23	12	3	75	33	2.13	4
Georgia	38	8	9	21	40	65	0.87	4
Moldova	38	2	8	28	19	75	0.37	4
Yemen	38	10	9	19	47	60	1.03	7
Sierra Leone	37	8	7	22	27	57	0.84	8
Bangladesh	36	7	3	26	26	86	0.67	7
Benin	36	10	5	21	36	77	0.97	6
Chinese Taipei	36	3	1	32	18	151	0.28	7
South Africa	36	22	5	9	43	29	1.97	5
Solomon Islands	33	15	6	12	91	68	1.55	5
Andorra	32	1	2	29	12	109	0.16	3
Lebanon	32	11	9	12	58	43	1.31	5
Ethiopia	31	6	8	17	34	54	0.84	10
India	31	8	9	14	34	64	1.06	6
Macau	31	3	1	27	13	148	0.32	7
Madagascar	31	10	7	14	36	41	1.19	7
Namibia	31	5	6	20	24	75	0.68	5
Vanuatu	31	10	3	18	65	72	1.06	5
Vietnam	31	6	2	23	21	68	0.65	6
Turkmenistan	30	13	3	14	50	43	1.4	4
Uganda	28	9	4	15	29	49	1.11	7



Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Avg. Pts.	Part.
Barbados	27	8	4	15	27	55	1.04	6
Rwanda	27	6	6	15	23	38	0.89	4
Sri Lanka	27	3	5	19	19	67	0.52	5
Antigua and Barbuda	26	6	4	16	28	69	0.85	8
Bermuda	26	10	7	9	60	38	1.42	5
Mali	26	11	5	10	39	34	1.46	3
Pakistan	26	0	2	24	11	112	0.08	6
Tanzania	25	4	10	11	24	31	0.88	8
Botswana	24	5	4	15	18	38	0.79	4
Mozambique	24	5	5	14	22	38	0.83	6
Nepal	24	2	2	20	15	87	0.33	5
Tahiti	24	8	5	11	29	56	1.21	5
Maldives	22	5	2	15	28	95	0.77	4
Kyrgyzstan	21	8	2	11	28	34	1.24	4
Cape Verde Islands	20	7	3	10	19	26	1.2	3
Guyana	20	3	2	15	16	45	0.55	8
Niger	20	6	3	11	15	33	1.05	5
St. Kitts and Nevis	20	8	3	9	43	36	1.35	4
Tajikistan	20	10	4	6	47	17	1.7	4
Dominican Republic	19	6	3	10	23	37	1.11	6
Puerto Rico	17	2	3	12	13	49	0.53	7
Gambia	16	5	4	7	14	22	1.19	6
Mauritius	16	1	2	13	12	44	0.31	6
Tonga	16	6	0	10	18	70	1.12	4
Grenada	15	5	2	8	39	33	1.13	5
New Caledonia	15	8	4	3	37	15	1.87	2
Burundi	14	5	2	7	10	17	1.21	4
Cambodia	14	0	2	12	5	54	0.14	3
Laos	14	1	2	11	6	76	0.36	2
Lesotho	14	0	3	11	6	33	0.21	5
Mauritania	14	1	2	11	7	33	0.36	5
Palestine	14	4	2	8	19	27	1	3
St. Lucia	14	5	0	9	18	28	1.07	5
Cook Islands	13	0	0	13	4	54	0	4
Swaziland	13	2	3	8	5	28	0.69	5
American Samoa	12	0	0	12	2	129	0	3
Belize	12	1	2	9	8	35	0.42	4
Brunei Darussalam	12	0	0	12	2	57	0	2
Dominica	12	2	3	7	12	35	0.75	4
Nicaragua	12	0	1	11	5	32	0.08	5
Samoa	12	4	0	8	23	37	1	3
Aruba	10	1	1	8	12	31	0.4	4
Bahamas	10	2	3	5	10	35	0.9	3
Chad	10	3	1	6	10	15	1	3
Equatorial Guinea	10	2	0	8	7	17	0.6	3
Mongolia	10	0	1	9	4	44	0.1	3
Montenegro	10	1	6	3	9	14	0.9	1
Papua New Guinea	10	4	2	4	22	19	1.4	2

Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Avg. Pts.	Part.
Seychelles	10	0	2	8	6	26	0.2	3
Djibouti	9	1	1	7	5	40	0.44	2
Philippines	9	0	1	8	2	39	0.11	2
Cayman Islands	8	0	2	6	3	19	0.25	4
Guinea-Bissau	8	1	2	5	5	13	0.62	4
Somalia	7	0	2	5	1	15	0.29	4
Anguilla	6	0	1	5	2	27	0.17	3
British Virgin Islands	6	0	2	4	4	27	0.33	3
Turks and Caicos Islands	6	1	0	5	2	24	0.5	3
Montserrat	5	0	0	5	2	33	0	3
US Virgin Islands	5	0	0	5	1	35	0	3
Afghanistan	4	0	0	4	1	18	0	2
Eritrea	4	0	2	2	0	7	0.5	2
Saar	4	1	1	2	4	8	1	1
Sao Tome e Principe	4	1	0	3	2	13	0.75	2
Central African Republic	2	0	0	2	1	4	0	1
Comoros	2	0	0	2	2	10	0	1
Guam	2	0	0	2	0	35	0	1
Myanmar	2	0	0	2	0	11	0	1
Timor-Leste	2	0	0	2	3	11	0	1
Western Samoa	2	1	0	1	2	2	1.5	1
Yemen PDR	2	0	1	1	4	7	0.5	1



Photo: England - Romania 0:0, FWC preliminary competition 1982, London. Laurie Cunningham (ENG) tries to find his way past two opponents - ©FIFA archive