

The World Cup history and mile strokes by Kristian Holm Carlsen

Soon the FIFA world cup 2010 kicks off. As a warm up to this event it can be interesting to look back on the previous world cups, and see some of the major influences that the previous world cups have made for the development of football. So far there are in particular four world cups that have been extraordinary interesting for the development of the game. These are the world cups in 1930, 1950, 1970, and 1990. Those are covered more deeply and tactically, while the rest of the tournaments are covered briefly.

Uruguay 1930

The first world cup was hosted by Uruguay, which also won the tournament after beating Argentina 4-2 in the final. Both USA and Yugoslavia lost their semi final, but there were no third place play off before in 1934. Guillermo Stabile from Argentina became the top scorer in this tournament with eight goals. Many of the European teams refused to participate as a protest of letting Uruguay host the world cup, long travel distance, or the lack of payment to the players. Therefore there were only four European teams among the 13 teams total. The rest of the teams came from South-America, plus USA and Mexico. There teams were set up in four groups, where the winners from each group qualified to the semi final.

In this tournament there was a lot of cheating and unfair play. Like when the referee blew off the game between Argentina and France 6 minutes before the end because it looked like France would equalize. However, this was the first time to compare the teams from around the world, and it therefore gave fuel to the development of the game in tactical terms. Both Uruguay and Argentina used a 2-3-2-3 system, which gave root to the development of the WM or 3-2-2-3 system that dominate the world football from 1930-1950. In addition the system, the chaos and the level of cheating give a European coach some association to the football in Ghana today.

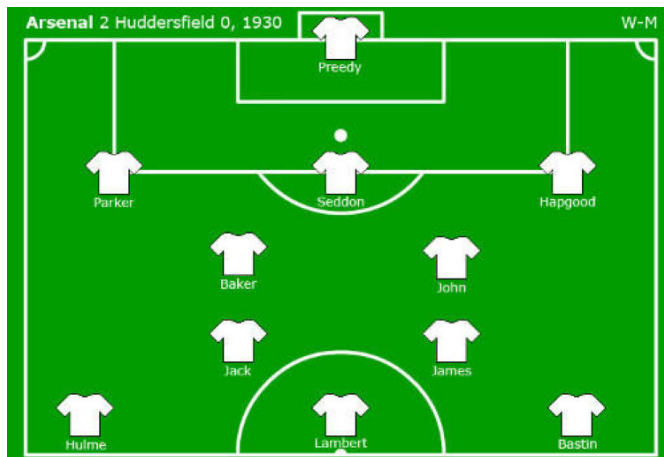


Fig. nr. 1: The WM (3-2-2-3) system dominated the world football from 1930-1950. The system has its origin from Uruguay and Argentina, which used a 2-3-2-3 system in the world cup in 1930. However, it was definitely introduced by Herbert Chapman in the 1930/31 when he was coaching Arsenal. He had great success with this system, and in England they thought this was the superior system until they lost 6-3 for Hungary at Wembley in 1953. In that game Hungary used the 4-2-4 system.

Italy 1934

Italy won the final 2-1 against Czechoslovakia after extra time, and in the bronze medal game Germany won 3-2 against Austria. This time they did not use penalty shoot out, so Italy had to play a second game against Spain to qualify for the semi final. In addition, Italy played three games, two quarterfinals and one semi final, in four days. This is also a world cup where the politics, Mussolini and the Italian fascism, influenced the tournament. 16 of the 32 registered teams refused to participate, among them Uruguay. Egypt participated and represented Africa for the first time. Oldrich Nejedly from Czechoslovakia became the top scorer with five goals.

France 1938

Italy beat Hungary 4-2 in the final and in the bronze medal game Brazil beat Sweden 4-2. The Spanish civil war, Mussolini's offence, and Hitler's war against Poland made a big mark on the tournament. Uruguay refused to participate again as a protest to the fact that many of the European teams refused to participate in 1930. Cuba and Indonesia participated for the first and last time, and also represented the Caribbean and Asia for the first time. Cuba won their first game and by this qualified to the quarterfinal where they lost 8-0 against Sweden, which had walk over in their first game. Norway also participated for the first time and lost 2-1 after extra time against Italy (as always), but they played better than the world champions... Da Silva from Brazil won the golden shoe with seven goals.

Brazil 1950

The world cup in Brazil in 1950 was a big mess from start to end, not surprisingly for someone with work experience from Brazil. Again many teams refused to participate. No team from outside America and Europe participated. Brazil lost 2-1 against Uruguay in the “final”. Sweden ended up as number three. Ademir (Menezes) from Brazil topped the scoring list with nine goals. Total 13 teams participated and they were divided into two groups of four teams, one group of three teams, and one group of two teams. To “help” Uruguay through the group stage they put them in the group of two teams together with “little” Bolivia. This time there where no knockout stages and the four best teams played against each other in a final group play. The last game was between Brazil and Uruguay, and is therefore counted as the final. However, Brazil just needed a draw to win.

The Brazilians, and many others, thought it should be impossible to lose the “final”. For this reason there was a national mourning in Brazil for a couple of days after the final. However, the fact that Brazil lost this final played a very important role in the development of international football. Due to this loss Brazil decided that the development of Brazil as a country and the Brazilian football should go hand in hand. Now the football became a part of the Brazilian political, cultural, social, and economical development, not just a sport. The result of this can be seen today by the fact that Brazil have won the world cup five times, they are always among the favourites to win it, and no country in the world produce so many professional players every year as Brazil. As a consequence of their loss in the final, Brazil also stated a new trend by introducing the 4-2-4 system that dominated the world for almost 20 years.

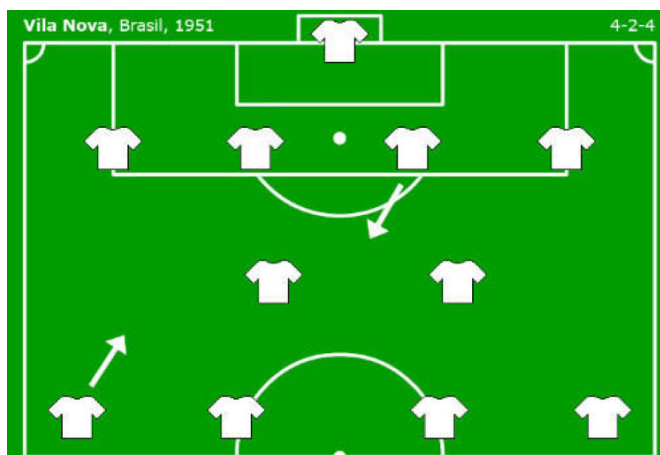


Fig. nr. 2: The 4-2-4 system that both the clubs in Brazil and the Brazilian national teams started to use after the world cup in 1950. Brazil had great success with this system and won the world cup both in 1958 and 1962. However, the system was flexible so when attacking the formation looked more like 3-3-4, and when defending the formation looked more like 4-3-3 (see the arrows).

Switzerland 1954

West-Germany won 3-2 against Hungary in the final and in the bronze medal game Austria won 3-1 against Uruguay. Again 16 teams participated and South Korea participated for the first time. They were the only team from outside America and Europe. The favourite was the famous Hungarian team with Puskas as a leading star, but they had to go home with “only” silver. However, their team scored 27 goals total in five games, which is the record for one team in a world cup. This time the 16 teams were divided into four groups of four teams. The two best from each group went to the quarterfinals and normal knock out stages. However, two of the teams in each group was sided and did not play against each other. Sandor Kocsis from Hungary scored 11 goals and was totally superior the other top scorers.

Sweden 1958

Luckily, Brazil scored Sweden 5-2 in the final, while France scored West-Germany 6-3 in the bronze final. No team from outside America and Europe participated. Just Fontane (France) scored 13 goals in this world cup which is still the record in one single tournament. Pele was the hero, and this was the first time a team (Brazil) won the world cup outside their own continent. Still Brazil is the only team who have achieved this by also winning the world cup in 2002 (South-Korea/Japan). This time we also had four equal groups and 16 teams total with group play and knock out stages.

Chile 1962

Brazil won 3-1 against Czechoslovakia in the final and Chile won 1-0 against Yugoslavia in the bronze medal game. No team from outside America and Europe participated. Pele got injured in his second game and could not play the following games, but he scored one goal. However, Brazil had enough good players to win quite comfortably, and they were for instant rolling over the best team in the world, England, in the quarterfinal. Still, there were more chaos and cheating than we are used to today. Like when Italy played against Chile in the group play. The referee in this game described this as a wild game, but he just sent two players off with red card. One of them was the Italian Ferrini, but he refused to leave the

pitch. The game was stopped for 10 minutes until the police came and escorted him out. Never had so many players shared the top scoring list, and never again had only four goals been enough to become a top scorer in the world cup. The seven players were Ivanov from U.S.S.R., Garrincha and Vava from Brazil, Sanches from Chili, Albert from Hungary, and Jerkovic from Yugoslavia.

England 1966

The tournament was set up as the three previous world cups. Finally did England win, which they should have done every time according to their supporters. They won 4-2 against West-Germany the final (after extra time). However, most people think that Geoff Hurst shot in the upper post actually never cross the goal line. No situation in the world cup history has been questioned more than this goal. To the pleasure for the English supporters, which there are far too many off compared to the quality of their football, Geoff Hurst is the only player who have scored three goals in one single world cup final. In the bronze medal game Portugal, with a fantastic Eusebio, won 2-1 against U.S.S.R. Nor-Korea participated as the only team from outside America and Europe, and they qualified for the quarterfinal after shocking their opponents with fast and “quick feet” football. They were the first team from outside America and Europe to do so, but in the quarterfinal they could not stop Portugal and Eusebio, who scored four goals in 32 minutes in that game. He also became the top scorer with nine goals total. This was the first appearance for Portugal, and they knocked out Brazil which did not qualified for the next round for the first and last time after the Second World War. After that game Pelè said that he would never participate in the world cup again. Luckily, he changed his mind.

Mexico 1970:

Up to this time the world cup had been totally dominated by teams from America (mostly South-America) and Europe. Still those teams dominate the tournament, but from this world cup more and more teams from outside these two continents started to participate. In regard, the world cup started to be a tournament for the whole world. Again a total of 16 teams participated and were divided into four groups, all with four teams. The two best in each group qualified for the knock out staged. Brazil and Pelè won 4-1 in the final against Italy, while West-Germany won 1-0 against Uruguay in the bronze final. Morocco participated for the first time and as the only team from outside America and Europe. Israel also participated for the first time and as the first team from the Arabic countries. Gerd Müller became the top

scorer with his 10 out of 14 goals total in his two world cups appearances. He is still the second on the list of goal scorers in the world cup history after Ronaldo (Il Fenomeno) with 15 goals in three world cups.

Again we saw a new tactical trend. Brazil used a flexible 4-2-3-1 (4-2-4) system that could easily be transformed into 4-4-2, 4-3-3, 4-2-4 and 4-5-1. Now all the teams played a more complete football with 11 players in attack and 11 players in defence. This also gave root to the Holland's flexible and dynamic "total football", which gave them great success in the years that came. Even more interesting was the fact that after this world cup the systems, tactics and style of play got divided into different ways of playing. Up to now all teams in the world more or less played the same way. Now some teams chose a more direct style of playing, while some teams chose a more possession oriented way of playing. Some developed towards a more classical 4-4-2 system, while other moved towards a 3-5-2 system. Some started or continued with straight man-to-man defence, while others used more zonal marking. Tactics also got more and more important, and even the best teams needed a good system and tactics if they should win. Star players in combination with a good tactic seem to be the right way in the two decades after the world cup in 1970. After this time it was also normal to play with a sweeper behind the defence who also where allowed to move forward, like Beckenbauer did in this period.

West-Germany 1974

Again a total of 16 teams participated, but there were not a knock out stage like the last world cups. Instead the two best teams from each group went to a second group play. The winner from each group went to the final, while number two in each group played for the third place. West-Germany won 2-1 against Holland in the final and in the bronze medal game Poland, which knocked out England in the qualification, won 1-0 against Brazil. West-Germany is the 6th host during the history that won the world cup. The others are Uruguay 1930, Italy 1934, England 1966, Argentina 1978, and France 1998. Australia was representing Oceania for the first time, Zaire was representing Africa for their first and only time, and Haiti also participated for the first and only time. Holland and Cruyff blended the audience with their "total" football. Gzregorz Lato from Poland became the top scorer with seven goals.

Argentina 1978

The set up was the same as in 1974 (and 1982). In the final Argentina beat Holland 3-1 (after extra time) and in the bronze medal game Brazil beat Italy 2-1. As the only team, Iran represented Asia for their first time. Tunisia represented Africa for their first time, and was the first African team that won a game in a world cup. Some people think there were some game fixing that helped Argentina through, especially the game against Peru which Argentina needed to win with four goals. They won 6-0 and Peru seemed like they did not try. More, this game kicked off later than the other game in the same group, and not as “pair” as they should. The scandal was a fact and Argentina knew how much they had to win before kick off. Kempes from Argentina became the top scorer with six goals, which also is the score for all the top scores for the next six world cups.

Spain 1982

For the first time a total of 24 teams participated, and this was the last world cup with a second group stage instead of knock out play. However, this time the best team from the four groups in the second group stage went to the semi finals. Italy beat West-Germany 3-1 in the final and Poland beat France 3-2 in the bronze medal game. Teams from all the continents were represented, and Cameroon and Algeria showed some progress for the African teams. Algeria won 2-1 against West-Germany in their first game, and this is still one of the most shocking results in the world cups. Both the African teams were knocked out on goal score. There are three other things to remember from this world cup: **1)** France with Platini and West-Germany with Rummenigge played 3-3 in a fantastic semi final, and they had to decide the winner with penalty shot out for the first time in the world cup history. **2)** This world cup also had the historical game between Austria and West-Germany where they “stopped” playing after West-Germany scored the first and only goal in the 10th minute. Since both qualified for the next round with this result, they agreed that there was no need to do more. **3)** Brazil had a fantastic team and is together with Hungary in 1954 and Holland in 1974 often considered as the best team that did not win the world cup. The top scorer was Paolo Rossi with six goals.

Mexico 1986

Again 24 teams participated divided into six groups, but the set up was new. As in the world cups in 1954, 1958, 1962, 1966 and 1970 they used group play followed by knock out play. The difference was that this time they started with the round of 16 after the group play. In that

case 16 of the 24 teams qualified for the next round. Argentina with Maradona won 3-2 against West-Germany in the final, while France with Platini won 4-2 against Belgium in the bronze medal game.

Columbia was supposed to host this world cup, but due to financial problems Mexico took over. However, because of a terrible earth quake in September 1985 where 20 000 people died, there were doubt if the tournament needed to be moved again. Luckily, Mexico managed to host a fantastic world cup with many fantastic games and all teams except Iraq and Canada went home with some points. Only teams from Oceania were left out, and Morocco was the first African team, and the second team from outside America and Europe, that qualified for the next round. As mentioned, Nor Korea was the first team from outside America and Europe that qualified for the next round in 1966. Even thou there were many games with many goals, three out of four quarterfinals had to be settled by penalty shot out. Among them the legendary game between France and Brazil where both Socrates and Platini missed their penalties. Only the historical quarterfinal between Argentina and England had a winner after 90 min. Most of us have seen Maradona's hand of God goal and his fantastic dribbling from own half. The world has perhaps never seen a player who dominated that much as Maradona did in this world cup. It is said that Lothar Mathäus, the player in the world with most world cup games, was instructed to mark down Maradona in the final. He did not succeed and after the final he just said; *I'm sorry, but he was too good for me*". However, his five goals did not give him the golden shoe. Instead England got the top scorer with Gary Lineker's six goals.

Italy 1990:

Italy was together with Mexico the second country who hosted the world cup for the second time. Many remember this world cup for the fewest average goals in the history and unfair play. One quarterfinal and both the semi-finals went to penalty shot out, and one quarterfinal went to extra time. Like in 1982, 1986 and 1994 a total of 24 teams participated, divided into six groups with the same knockout stages as in 1986. Only teams from Oceania were left out, and Egypt and Cameroon represented Africa. Cameroon broke a barrier and made hope for Africa with entertaining play and a quarterfinal for the first time for an Africa team. The quarterfinal between Cameroon and England was perhaps the most entertaining game in the tournament, and England won 3-2 after an equalizer seven minutes before the end and a goal in the first extra half. Still, this is the best performance of any African team only copied by Senegal in 2002. It is worth a comment that Norway won 6-0 against Cameroon in a friendly

game after the world cup, in Egil “Drillo” Olsen first game as the national coach for Norway. This was the beginning of Norway’s 10 years as something in the football industry after the Second World War. Many people also remember the spitting episode between Rijkaard and Völler where both were sent off the field. Interesting enough, Holland had to play against Germany because that they lost the toss-up against Ireland in the group stage.

Germany won the world cup after beating Argentina 1-0 in the final, while Italy won 2-1 against England in the bronze final. The latter is by the way the only semi final ever for the “best team” in the world, England, except from their corrupt victory in 1966. Italy also got the top scorer with Schillaci (6 goals). Argentina with their penalty expert goal keeper Goycochea won two penalty shot outs on their way to the final. Today many still consider the German’s victory as the beginning of the modern football. One of the reasons for this is that from this time the players ran in average around 10-11 km during a game. This is more or less the same distance as today, and almost twice as much as in the previous decades. Because of this increase in total distance covered during a game, we now witnessed a much higher speed of the game. After 1990 the speed of the game has increased gradually due to faster passing and more movements with high intensity, not because of an increase in total distance covered.

Besides running more, Germany also won because they had the best system and tactics. As a consequence, all teams started to focus more on tactics, systems and discipline. More, now we clearly saw the distinction between those who chose a **1)** 4-4-2/4-4-1-1/4-3-1-2 system, **2)** 4-3-3/4-5-1 system, and **3)** 3-5-2/5-3-2. Later Real Madrid picked up again Brazil’s 4-2-3-1, which in practical terms often is employed from both **1)** and **2)**. Finally, now we did see a shift towards more violating of the fair play principle, a trend that has continued and increased in power in the resent years.

USA 1994

Many had some doubt about USA hosting the world cup since football (soccer) doesn’t have that great tradition in the US. However, the world cup became a success and never had so many spectators watched the games, even taking into account that the world cup was expanded to 32 teams from 1998. The set up was the same as in the previous world cup, but this was the first time the teams got three points for winning. Brazil and Italy played 0-0 in the final, but Brazil won 3-2 after penalty shot out. This was the first final that was decided by

penalty shot out. Sweden, with Thomas Brodin and his 180° goal celebrating jump, ended up as number three after beating a Bulgarian team with the biggest hangover in the world cup history 4-0. Again, only teams from Oceania were left out, and Nigeria, Morocco and Cameroon represented Africa. Nigeria was the only African team that went to the next round, but they were knocked out in the round of 16. Saudi Arabia also made it to the next round as the first Arabic team in the history. This world cup is also remembered because of the tragic of Escobar that was shot and killed after the world cup. Most likely this happened because he was unlucky and scored an own goal for Colombia so they lost their last game and did not qualify for the next round.

Norway with the “Drillos” participated and got four points as all the teams in the “group of death”. However, with less scored goals they ended up as number four and had to return home before the knock out stages. Again it was Italia, with a fantastic Baresi in his last world cup, that send them home after winning 1-0 with 10 players. Winning with inferior numbers has been the Italian spirit all the way back from Caesar’s emporium. Maradona was also back after suspension for using cocaine. He scored a fantastic goal against Greece, and was absolutely outstanding in the game against Nigeria. But, then there were a drug test, and with trace of ephedrine this was the last time we saw him in action on the international scene. For the second time in the history (see Chile 1962), more than one player became the top scorer. Both Oleg Salenko from Russia and Hristo Stoitschkov from Bulgaria scored six goals.

France 1998

France was the 3rd country to host the world cup for the second time. The set up was the same as last time, but this time 32 teams participated. They were divided into eight groups, and the two best from each group qualified for the next round. France with an amazing Zidane won 3-0 against Brazil in the final. Croatia was a positive surprise and won the bronze medal after beating Holland 2-1 in the runners up final. Again, only teams from Oceania were left out, and Morocco, South Africa, Nigeria, Tunisia and Cameroon represented Africa, while South Korea, Japan and Saudi Arabia represented Asia. Nigeria went to the next round for the second time, but was knocked out by Denmark in the round of 16. Some other things to remember from this world cup were that Jamaica manage to get qualified for the first time, Iran played and won 2-1 against USA, and the Norwegian newspapers’ “hero”, Beckham, was sent out with a red card in the game against Argentina. Davor Suker scored six goals as the top scorer.

Norway participated again and broke a barrier. After playing draw against both Morocco and Scotland, they had to win against the Brazil in their last game in the group stage 23 of June 1998. Twelve minutes before the end they were down by 1-0. Then the biggest Viking of the all, Jostein Flo, entered the field. In the next 15 minutes Norway created six goal opportunities and scored two goals. Rekdal scored on a penalty two minutes before the end and Norway won 2-1. This was enough to give the Norwegians their most remarkable day in their history after May 8th 1945. However, they went back to reality when Italy sent them home for the 3rd time out of three possibilities after winning 1-0 in the round of 16.

Japan/South Korea 2002

This was the first world cup in Asia and also the first world cup that was hosted by two countries. As before only teams from Oceania were left out, and as much as five teams; Senegal, South Africa, Nigeria, Tunisia and Cameroon represented Africa. Senegal made it to the quarterfinal as the second African team in the history. More, Asia was represented with four teams, China, Saudi Arabia, Japan and South Korea. South Korea went all the way to the semi final. However, in the bronze final they lost 2-3 to Turkey and their fantastic one touch football. South Korea's 4th place is the best performance ever for a team outside America and Europe. However, there were some controversies refereeing in their games which many people still remember and ask question about game fixing. In the final Brazil won 2-0 against Germany, and that was the first time those two teams ever played against each other in a world cup. This is quite remarkable consider the fact that they both have 92 games total and seven finals each during the world cup history. Besides winning the world cup for the 5th time, Brazil won all their seven games, which also is a record. Ronaldo (Il Fenomeno) broke the six goals barrier, and became the top scorer with eight goals.

This was the outsider's tournament and many of the favourites had to return home before the knock out stages, among them Argentina, France and Portugal. France, the champion from 1998, did not score a single goal and ended up with no points. Senegal beat them in the first game in this tournament, and that was the 3rd time an African team beat one of the favourites in an opening (group) game. Before Algeria won 2-1 against West-Germany in 1982 and Cameroon won 1-0 against Argentina in 1990. In this tournament they also used the golden goal rule, and three games were decided by a golden goal.

Germany 2006

Germany (and West-Germany) has together with Mexico, Italy and France hosted the world cup two times. For the 2nd time the final had to be decided by penalty shot out. Italy and France played 1-1, but Italy won 5-4 after penalty shot out. Germany won 3-1 against Portugal in the runners up final. Beside the final, one of the round of 16 games and two quarterfinals were decided on penalty shot out.

With Australia included all the continents were represented. Australia also made it through to the next round for the first time for a team from Oceania. Trinidad & Tobago was the fourth team from the Caribbean that participated during the history. Africa was represented with five teams again, and most of them were newcomers. Angola, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Tunisia participated with high expectations, but only Ghana made it through to the next round where they lost 3-0 for Brazil. In that game Ghana played a very fast and physical football, and they should have won if they had learned the ABC in defence. Asia was represented with Japan, South Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

As before, there is often something to remember. This time one of the headlines was that Zidane knocked down Materazzi with his head in the final and got a red card. Last, Ronaldo scored his 15th goal in this world cup and is by then the top scorer in the world cup history. Miroslav Klose from Germany became the top scorer with five goals, which gives him 10 goals total in two world cups (2002 and 2006). Finally, England lost in the quarterfinal for the 6th out of eight times and the second time on penalty shot out. Only Brazil, Italy, Germany, and Argentina have more quarterfinals than England, so it is not strange that people still think they are the best team in the world. In addition, a total of 38 teams have made it through to the quarterfinals or the second group stage during the world cup history, among them Cuba, Wales, North Korea, Peru, East-Germany, and North Ireland.