

## GENERAL

The FIFA U-17 World Championship was first held in 1985 and has since been held by all six confederations: Africa (1x in Egypt), Asia (2x in China PR and Japan), Oceania (1x in New Zealand), North America and the Caribbean (2x in Canada and Trinidad & Tobago), South America (2x in Ecuador and Peru), and Europe (3x in Scotland, Italy and Finland).

A total of 60 associations have taken part in the U-17 WC to date and 1993 even saw the participation of a united RCS team. Of the 23 associations that have qualified just once for the tournament, only RCS, Germany DR, Côte d'Ivoire, Korea DPR, Netherlands, Scotland, Soviet Union, Turkey and Hungary made it to the second round. In 2005, the Netherlands and Turkey met in the match for third place, with the Dutch running out 2-1 winners.

The 2005 tournament welcomed debutants Gambia, Korea DPR, Netherlands, Turkey and hosts Peru to the FIFA U-17 World Championship fold.

With three titles in the under-17 age group, Brazil lead the all-time ranking. Four out of ten tournaments have been dominated by Ghana and Nigeria (two wins each). Brazil have made it to the final on five occasions (1995, 1997, 1999, 2003 and 2005), winning three times (in 1997, 1999 and 2003). Ghana reached the final four times in a row (1991, 1993, 1995 and 1997), winning twice (1991 and 1995). Nigeria have also taken part in four finals (1985, 1987, 1993 and 2001), winning in 1985 and 1993.

The Oceanian confederation has been represented once in a U-17 WC final match: in 1999, Australia lost 8-7 to Brazil in a penalty shoot-out.

As for the number of times that teams have taken part, the USA (11x) are practically evergreens. They lead Australia and Brazil (each 10x), as well as Argentina and Mexico (each 8x), all of whom are a step ahead of the other participants.

Throughout the history of the tournament, only Brazil have successfully defended their title (1997 in Egypt and 1999 in New Zealand).

## MATCHES

After the FIFA World Cup™ and the FIFA World Youth Championship (U-20), the FIFA U-17 World Championship is the third oldest FIFA competition. The tournament has always been played with 16 teams.

Since the inaugural tournament in China PR, 352 matches have been hosted under the auspices of the U-17 WC. Brazil have contested the most matches (51), followed by the USA (40), Australia (39) and Argentina (38). The tournament's most successful teams are Brazil (33 wins, 9 draws, 9 defeats) and Ghana (23 wins, 10 draws, 3 losses).

All in all, 11 different teams have qualified for the 11 finals. A selection of 26 sides, from every confederation, has reached the semi-finals, indicating a considerably level playing field in this age group.

In 1987, 1989 and 1999 the final match was decided on penalties and on each occasion, a team from a different confederation came out on top. All other finals were decided in regular time.

Teams from the same confederation have met in the final match only once, with Ghana playing Nigeria in the 1993 U-17 final. Brazil reached the final three times in a row (1995, 1997 and 1999) and are still the only team to successfully defend their title (1999).

## GOALS

The most goals scored in a tournament was in Egypt 1997 and Finland 2003 (117 goals with the highest average of 3.66 goals per match), ahead of Peru 2005 (111 goals, 3.47 per match), Japan 1993 (107 goals, 3.34 per match) and Trinidad and Tobago 2001 (102 goals, 3.19 per match).

The tournament's top goalscorer to date is France's Florent Sinama Pongolle with nine goals in four matches (U-17 WC 2001), ahead of Marcel Witeczek from Germany FR, who scored eight goals in three games (U-17 WC 1985). In third place is David (Spain), who scored seven goals in three matches during the 1997 tournament and Ishmael Addo (Ghana), who scored seven in four matches in 1999. Only Sinama Pongolle went on to win the title with his French team-mates. Witeczek's German team lost in the final.

Sinama Pongolle and Witeczek both notched two hat-tricks in a FIFA U-17 World Championship tournament (Sinama Pongolle in 2001 against Japan and the USA; Witeczek in 1985 against China PR and Brazil). David (Spain) tallied four goals in one match when his team defeated New Zealand 13-0.

In a historical overview, Brazil have scored a total of 110 goals in the FIFA U-17 World Championship (at an average of 2.16 per match). In second and third place are Ghana with 73 goals (2.03 per match) and Nigeria with 67 (1.91). Did you know that the highest goal average nonetheless belongs to Soviet Union (3.50) who scored 21 goals in 6 matches at their only appearance at the U-17 WC? They took the trophy home from Canada in 1987, with Nikiforov and Arutyunian leading them to victory.

The two most famous players in the list of fastest goalscorers are certainly Nwankwo Kanu, who opened Nigeria's 8-0 victory over Canada in the first minute of the match, and Wilson Oruma, who repeated the trick by scoring first in Nigeria's 2-1 victory over Japan. Sergei Arutyunian (URS, 1987), Bel (BRA, 1995) and Celso (BRA, 2005) complete the list of first-minute goalscorers.

The world champions have only managed to crown one of their own as top goalscorer on three occasions: Nigeria's Wilson Oruma in 1993, Florent Sinama Pongolle for France in 2001 and Mexico's Carlos Vela in 2005.

The most goal-laden match in the U-17 WC was held in Ismailia (Egypt) in 1997, with Spain inflicting maximum damage by crushing New Zealand 13-0. However, other than sealing the Golden Shoe for David, the shower of goals reaped a meagre harvest: Spain were beaten in the semi-finals by eventual runners-up Ghana.

## PLAYERS, COACHES, REFEREES, CROWDS

From all the U-17 WC's, 67 players went on to participate in the FIFA World Cup™. Two also played in a WC final match and came out on top: Frenchman Emmanuel Petit in 1998 (France v. Brazil) and Brazil's Ronaldinho in 2002 (Germany v. Brazil). Petit took part in the U-17 WC in 1987 and Ronaldinho triumphed in the 1997 final. Just one former U-17 WC player, Petit, has scored in a World Cup final (France v. Brazil 1998).

The youngest ever player is Nigerian Peter Ogaba, who played in the FIFA U-17 World Championship in 1987 at the tender age of 12 years and 10 months.

Juan Santisteban coached Spain on six different occasions, but did not finish higher than second (1991 and 2003). Nigeria's Sebastian Brodrick-Imasuen coached teams at four different tournaments and won in 1985. Roy Rees (USA) and Les Scheinflug (AUS) also coached teams at four different tournaments but failed to win a title.

Alongside the numerous outfield players who went on to further fame and fortune are the goalkeepers who have since claimed their place in the football hall of fame: Al Deayea (KSA), Bosnich (AUS), Buffon (ITA) and Iker Casillas (ESP) all bear witness to the importance of the tournament for young goalkeepers.

Several U-17 WC coaches went on to bring their experience to bear in FIFA World Cup™ matches. Craig Brown, Scotland (U-17 1989 and WC 1998), Victor Pua, Uruguay (U-17 1999 and WC 2002) and Rene Simoes, Brazil (U-17 2001 with Trinidad & Tobago and WC 1998 with Jamaica) are the only ones to have also coached at the FIFA World Cup™.

## ***cont. PLAYERS, COACHES, REFEREES, CROWDS***

The U-17 WC has also served as a springboard for referees, some of whom officiated at important matches during subsequent World Cups – Said Belqola from Morocco was the first African referee appointed for a World Cup final (1998, France v. Brazil; he sadly passed away after a long illness in June 2002); South African Achmat Salie also officiated in this final as an assistant referee. England's Philip Sharp was also an assistant for the Germany v. Brazil final in 2002. The honour of participating in a final was also bestowed upon Costa Rican assistant referee Berny Ulloa Morera when he officiated Argentina v. Germany in 1986.

The highest accumulative audience total for a FIFA U-17 World Championship was registered in China PR in 1985 (1,231,000), at an average of 38,469 spectators per match. On six occasions, 80,000 people have formed the biggest crowd at a U-17 WC match; five times in China PR in 1985 and 1997 in Egypt for the Egypt v. Germany match.