

FIFA World Cup 1974

THE FINAL TOURNAMENT

The 1974 World Cup provided a tournament in which strong supposition finally became fact. At any time, at least up till the final stages got underway, West Germany stood as everyone's favourites to win, and form also decreed that when a World Cup winning goal was required, it would be Gerd Muller who supplied it.

So that was the way it happened. But the race for the new FIFA trophy was more of the kind when the favourite makes his burst over the last few yards than when he leads from start to finish. For the hosts fashioned such unconvincing form at the outset of the finals that Holland looked more suited to the world crown. At times both Helmut Schoen and his players looked incapable of withstanding the crushing pressure on them to succeed; on the field Schoen muddled with a variety of permutations; off it rumours spread that Beckenbauer, nominally captain and Schoen's lieutenant, was taking the decisions of a general. And defeat in a prestigious political match against East Germany only aggravated the sores in the home team's camp.

Yet Schoen's cocktail of selection found the right blend in time. He stood by Wolfgang Overath, such an influence in midfield in the World Cups of 1966 and 1970, though the terraces clamoured for the recall of Gunter Netzer. He stood by his belief in two wingers, though it meant persevering with Jurgen Grabowski, who only flirted with his best form, and Bernd Holzenbein whose youthful enthusiasm did not always compensate for his international inexperience. He stung more effort out of the swaggering Uli Hoessner by dropping him, and, in introducing the defensive strength and midfield power of Reiner Bonhof, he produced a player who, though he played just half of the tournament, became one of its outstanding individuals.

In Munich on July 7 that blend proved too strong for a Dutch side in a final that combined all the chillingly brilliant technique shown in many of the matches in the finals with the passion and tension that had not been present so often. Indeed from the first match it had been more a competition for the purist than for the man on the terrace. The excellence of the control of defenders and attackers alike allied to the belief in patience in the construction of the play severely rationed goalmouth action.

Absolutely typical was the opening match between Brazil, the holders, and Yugoslavia in Frankfurt. The third consecutive competition began with a goalless draw in which misses by Jairzinho for Brazil and Oblak, Petkovic, and Acimovic for Yugoslavia were rare highlights in a battle of attrition which had the coaches purring and the fans whistling. The weather, too, fired its opening capricious volleys, for the rain which fell was to darken the entire three and a half weeks and the Germans had used a computer to select the dates as the most likely to be dry!

The Brazil-Yugoslavia result held great domestic significance because of Scotland's involvement in Group 2. The Scots, at odds with themselves, the

Press, and West German officialdom during their run-in to the finals, had to begin their challenge against the unknowns from Zaire. Willie Ormond, recognising the need to score with goal difference a vital determining factor, gambled on the sharpness of Denis Law, but though Scotland won 2-0, hindsight showed that the margin was not sufficiently great. Zaire, excitingly athletic on the ball but naive and disorganised off it, twice threatened Harvey's goal but Kakoko and Kidumu squandered their opportunities. The blunt instrument of Lorimer's right foot was not so wasteful as Jordan set up his chance; a beautifully controlled knockdown header was met by a frightening volley that flashed past Kazadi. The African keeper was still stunned six minutes later when he allowed a Jordan header to slip through his hands over the line. But though 58 minutes remained, Scotland could not score again; it was to cost them a place in the Second Round.

Four days later in Gelsenkirchen, Yugoslavia were not so impotent. They led 6-0 at half-time and scored three more in the second half against a Zaire side so demoralised that Ndaye attacked the Colombian referee and was sent off. Kazadi was withdrawn after 20 minutes and no sooner had Tubilandu replaced him than he was picking the ball out of the net for the fourth goal.

Simultaneously in Frankfurt, the only victory Scotland could score over Brazil was in moral terms. After Brazil had fired the opening shots, Scotland dominated the game with a display of character inspired by a virtuoso Bremner performance. But the new Brazil, as hard and rugged as their predecessors were skilled, did not yield, and Scotland, for all the efforts of Jordan, lacked the penetration their midfield domination deserved. The goalless draw meant that Scotland had to beat Yugoslavia to be sure of qualifying; a draw would raise the question of goal difference. And if Brazil beat Zaire by three goals they would edge out Scotland.

As the two matches unrolled side by side the odds for a long while favoured Scotland. Incredibly Brazil, without a goal in their first two games, struggled to add to a 13th minute score from Jairzinho. Scotland began more positively against Yugoslavia, and Jordan shot against Maric with the best chance of the first 45 minutes. The half-time scores—Brazil 1, Zaire 0 and Scotland 0, Yugoslavia 0, meant that the Scots were through if there were no further goals in either game.

Brazil were still struggling to break down the massed African defence when 22 minutes into the second half Rivelino produced the first memory of Mexico with a violent scoring shot from 25 yards. And then within two minutes events on the two grounds ended Scotland's hopes. First Kazadi flopped over a gentle cross-shot from Valdomiro to give Brazil their vital third goal. Scotland now had to beat Yugoslavia. But suddenly a bolt from the blue-shirted Yugoslavs ended with Karasi, a substitute brought on to help ensure a draw, heading firmly past Harvey. Jordan's equaliser in the dying seconds gave some reward to a young striker who had proved his ability in the highest class and enabled Scotland, unbeaten, to hold their heads high. But Brazil and Yugoslavia went through from Group Two.

Group One was, as expected, a tale of the two Germanys, and surprisingly it was East Germany, supported by 3000 carefully selected supporters who were allowed to cross the Berlin wall on special trains, who proved the more impressive. Arguably the fittest side in the competition, their defensive strength mustered around skipper Bransch was supported by direct running forwards.

East Germany overcame some strong physical resistance to beat Australia, but had similar problems with Chile, only gaining a draw. West Germany were more in tune when they met the Australians, but they fell away after a strong opening in which Overath struck back at some of his doubters with a faultless half an hour which included a glorious goal from outside the penalty area and Cullmann heading in a Hoeness cross. Muller's first goal of the competition provided the only major event in the second period.

Chile had already drawn with Australia—a match that was held up by torrential rain, a minor demonstration, and then by a strange refereeing decision that allowed Richards of Australia to remain on the field for five minutes after receiving a second yellow card before the linesman pointed out the referee's mistake—and thus it was certain that East Germany and West Germany would appear in the second round before the two teams met in a match that had as much to do with politics as it did with football. Cynics might suggest that it suited West Germany to be beaten because it put them in the slightly weaker second round group—a possibility had only football been at stake. The match, played in Hamburg, was the first encounter between the halves of this divided nation, and thirteen minutes from time Jurgen Sparwasser struck in characteristic East German fashion. Following a sharp break from defence he carried the ball quickly into the West Germany penalty area, and when Maier committed himself unnecessarily he shot hard into the roof of the net. Memories of West Germany losing a game in the preliminaries before winning the World Cup in 1954 had little consolation in this context.

Group Three lived up to its promise of being the most open of the four. On the days of its final series of matches, it was still possible for any one of its four teams to qualify. Holland, apparently shrugging off their disputes with the Dutch FA over payment, began convincingly enough in a tough encounter with Uruguay. Rep scored twice in between dodging some furious South American tackling which culminated in the sending off of Montero-Castillo. But Sweden, showing no discomfort from fielding a somewhat elderly side only half of which were full-time professionals, held both the Dutch and Bulgarians to goalless draws, while Uruguay kept alive a slim hope with a draw against Bulgaria. But Uruguay, semi-finalists in 1970, could not contain Sweden, whose previous lack of goals had stemmed from missing chances rather than from not creating them. The tall Edstroem, a class apart in the air, revealed a deftness of touch with his left foot, scoring twice, while the pace and enthusiasm of Sandberg's running brought a third goal. Holland, too, recovered a taste for goals against Bulgaria: Neeskens thundered in two first-half penalties, and Rep and substitute de Jong doubled that total. Krol's own-goal would be the only time the 33-year-old Jongbloed would be beaten until the final.

Group Four happily did not live to expectations; there was little of the anticipated violence in the clashes between Poland, Argentina, and Italy. If the form of Poland eased the hurt of their dismissal of England, it was the Argentinians who captured the hearts. If their self-control stemmed from a political order, to ensure the 1978 World Cup would take place in their country, it was nonetheless welcome and it was heightened by some delightful football.

Italy had begun as if determined to emulate their feat of 1966 when they lost to North Korea. Now they conceded their first goal for thirteen internationals to, of all countries, Haiti before sanity prevailed and they scored three times themselves. Their draw with Argentina, presented to them by Perfumo's own

goal, meant that a draw with Poland in their third game would take them easily into the next round. But their ageing side could not re-establish the impregnability of their defence, and Poland contrived two brilliant pieces of finishing.

Thus eight teams remained in the competition—not to contest the quarter-finals as on previous competitions—to compete in two Groups on a league basis, the winners of each to contest the World Cup final.

Group A totally belonged to Holland. They began by destroying Argentina in the best display of attacking football in the competition. Cruyff, Krol, Rep, and Cruyff again scored the goals, but those moments were just the icing on a very sweet-tasting cake. There was a completeness about their attacking play that defied marking; every outfield player looked at home in an offensive position and there was little percentage in tight-marking Cruyff when defenders had similar goal-senses and were given the licence to exploit them. East Germany, for all their defensive poise, were equally powerless against the Dutch and Holland needed only a draw against Brazil to be in the final.

Brazil had regained some of their reputation, but they were now about to lose it again and more besides. A Rivelino free-kick had beaten East Germany, and two thrilling goals, from Rivelino again and Jairzinho, had undone Argentina even though Brindisi had become the first man to beat Leao in the competition. But now in Dortmund, the World Champions set out to hang on to their title with some calculated thuggery. Ze Maria showed his intentions with a rugby tackle on Cruyff; Mario Marinho assaulted Neeskens off the ball; and the gifted Luis Pereira persisted with a policy of physical intimidation until a scything chop on Neeskens saw him sent off. Holland, though no angels, kept their heads, and responded with two goals of the very highest class.

Group B produced a tussle between West Germany and Poland, and again though there was no official semi-final the two teams eventually met with a final place at stake for the winner. The hosts struggled for 38 minutes against Yugoslavia until they again had cause to be grateful to a long range goal from Paul Breitner. With the goal came composure and, with Yugoslavia showing little stomach for the fight, a comfortable win. Muller's persistence in the goal area brought him a second goal after Overath's superb through pass had freed Hoeness, who was on as a substitute after being dropped in the original selection for lack of effort.

Poland enjoyed a share of good fortune in beating Sweden. Lato chipped in another goal to give them the lead but only Tomaszewski saved them when he turned aside a penalty taken by Tapper. Deyna did not fail when he was presented with a similar chance against Yugoslavia, and though Karasi equalised, Lato's finishing power again settled the match in Poland's favour—this time with a delicate header from Gadocha's corner.

But the best football came when Sweden met West Germany in torrential rain in Dusseldorf. After 26 minutes Edstroem again exhibited his undoubted class with a looping volley which required the most perfect timing; Maier's flailing arm was no more than a gesture. But in the second half the character of the Germans brought them two goals in a minute, from Overath and from the splendid Bonhof, both after Gerd Muller had battled in the area for an opening. Two minutes later Sweden were level through Sandberg, but Muller, twirling like a top, made a goal for Grabowski and then, stumbling to the ground, won a penalty which Hoeness converted.

The venue but not the rain changed for the West Germany-Poland match.

In Frankfurt the kick-off was delayed for half an hour while the groundsmen mopped up water like at a Test Match in Manchester. But on a bog of a pitch quite unworthy of such an occasion both teams improvised brilliantly. Lato might have scored twice for Poland in the first half, and Hoeness should have given West Germany the lead in the second—but Tomaszewski held his poorly placed penalty.

But for the home crowd it was a short-lived sadness; Bonhof burst aggressively into the penalty area and as he was tackled the ball rolled to Muller. Extracting the very maximum time from the situation he set his sights and scored right-footed.

So to West Germany versus Holland on the Munich pitch which was home to six of the German side. No World Cup final could have begun more dramatically. There had hardly been a touch on the ball by one of the home players when Hoeness aimed a tackle and brought down Johann Cruyff a yard inside the penalty area; Englishman Jack Taylor's first decision of the match was to award Holland a penalty—a judgement as bold and brave as it was correct. Neeskens smashed his shot into the centre of the goal as Maier plunged optimistically to his right.

The World Cup had waited through nine finals for its first penalty, but it was only another 25 minutes before its second. Then as the competitive character of the Germans began to overcome the effects of that stunning opening, Holzenbein, playing as an orthodox left-winger, was allowed to slice deep into the Dutch penalty area. It was Jansen who at last accepted the responsibility of making a tackle, and he was out of range; Holzenbein seemed happier to fall to the ground than to brush aside what must have been a minimal contact and accept the challenge of shooting at goal. Jack Taylor duly awarded the penalty and Breitner, given the task after Hoeness's aberration against Poland, scored emphatically.

Immediately Jongbloed was in action again, making a thoroughbred save from Vogts that gave the lie to those who suggested that his selection was based entirely on his willingness to charge out of his goal to act as a new kind of 'sweeper'. But just before half-time Muller manufactured the product he has almost patented. A forward run by Bonhof from midfield took him wide on the right where he received the ball; and the power of his stride eased him past Krol. As he pulled the ball back from the bye-line Muller had come in a little too close to the goal so that it arrived slightly behind him—a problem that would have defied most other strikers in the world. But Muller checked, turned, controlled, pivoted back and shot past Jongbloed.

If West Germany had surged back to dominate the latter stages of the first half, they could not re-assert themselves in the second. Without ever finding the touch that had heightened their previous matches, Holland made enough chances to have given the game another twist. Rep missed badly twice; Maier saved instinctively from a spectacular Neeskens volley; the substitute Rene Van der Kerkhof blazed wide in front of goal.

So Helmut Schoen, second in 1966 and third in 1970, was at last a winner. Sadly the Dutch side is unlikely to play together again with so many of its stars engaged in foreign football and with a new manager. For so many of the millions who watched the World Cup their's was a complete team, but on the day they were caught out by the one type of player that they lacked. Because, true to form, Gerd Muller won West Germany the World Cup.

GROUP 1

Berlin, June 14, 83,168

West Germany (1) 1 Chile (0) 0

West Germany: Maier; Vogts, Breitner, Schwarzenbeck, Beckenbauer, Cullmann, Grabowski, Hoeness, Muller, Overath (Holzenbein), Heynckes. Chile: Vallejos; Garcia, Quintano, Arias, Figueroa, Rodriguez (Lara), Caszely, Valdes (Veliz), Ahumada, Reinoso, Paez. Scorer: West Germany: Breitner (16 mins.); Ref: D. Babacan (Turkey).

Hamburg, June 14, 18,180

East Germany (0) 2 Australia (0) 0

East Germany: Croy; Kische, Bransch, Weise, Watzlich, Irmischer, Pommerenke, Sparwasser, Lowe (Hoffmann), Streich, Vogel. Australia: Reilly; Utjesenovic, Wilson, Schaefer, Curran, Richards, Rooney, Mackay, Warren, Alston, Buljevic. Scorer: East Germany: Curran (o.g.) (57 mins), Streich (70 mins); Ref: Y. N'Diaye (Senegal).

Hamburg, June 18, 35,000

West Germany (2) 3 Australia (0) 0

West Germany: Maier; Vogts, Breitner, Schwarzenbeck, Beckenbauer, Cullmann (Wimmer), Grabowski, Heynckes (Holzenbein), Overath, Muller, Hoeness. Australia: Reilly; Utjesenovic, Wilson, Schaefer, Curran, Richards, Rooney, Mackay, Campbell (Abonyi), Alston, Buljevic (Ollerton). Scorer: West Germany: Overath (12 mins), Cullmann (34 mins), Muller (53 mins); Ref: M. Camel (Egypt).

West Berlin, June 18, 30,000

East Germany (0) 1 Chile (0) 1

East Germany: Croy; Bransch, Kische, Weise, Watzlich, Irmischer, Seguin (Kreische), Sparwasser, Hoffmann, Streich, Vogel (Ducke). Chile: Vallejos; Garcia, Figueroa, Quintano, Arias, Paez, Valdes (Yavar), Reinoso, Socias (Farias), Ahumada, Veliz. Scorer: East Germany: Hoffmann (55 mins); Chile: Ahumada (68 mins); Ref: A. Angonese (Italy).

Hamburg, June 22, 60,000

East Germany (1) 1 West Germany (0) 0

East Germany: Croy; Kurbjuweit, Bransch, Weise, Kreische, Watzlich, Lauck, Sparwasser, Irmischer (Hamann), Kische, Hoffmann. West Germany: Maier; Vogts, Schwarzenbeck (Hotiges), Beckenbauer, Breitner, Hoeness, Overath (Netzer), Cullmann, Grabowski, Müller, Flohe. Scorer: East Germany: Sparwasser (77 mins); Ref: R. Barreto (Uruguay).

Berlin, June 22, 16,000

Chile (0) 0 Australia (0) 0

Chile: Vallejos; Garcia, Quintano, Figueroa, Arias, Paez, Valdes (Farias), Caszely, Ahumada, Reinoso, Veliz (Yavar). Australia: Reilly; Utjesenovic, Wilson, Schaefer, Curran (Williams), Richards, Rooney, Mackay, Abonyi, Alston (Ollerton), Buljevic. Ref: J. Nandar (Iran).

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
EAST GERMANY	3	2	1	0	4	1	5
WEST GERMANY	3	2	0	1	4	1	4
Chile	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Australia	3	0	1	2	0	5	1

GROUP 2

Frankfurt, June 13, 61,500

Brazil (0) 0 Yugoslavia (0) 0

Brazil: Leao; Nelinho, Luis Pereira, Mario Marinho, Francesco Marinho, Wilson Piazza, Rivelino, Paulo Cesar (L.), Valdomiro, Jairzinho, Leivinha. Yugoslavia: Maric; Buljan, Katalinski, Bogicevic, Hadziabdic, Muzinic, Oblak, Acimovic, Petkovic, Surjak, Dzajic. Ref: R. Scheurer (Switzerland).

Dortmund, June 14, 30,000

Scotland (2) 2 Zaire (0) 0

Scotland: Harvey; Jardine, McGrain, Bremner, Holton, Blackley, Dalglish (Hutchison), Hay, Lorimer, Jordan, Law. Zaire: Kazadi; Mwepu, Mukombo, Bwanga, Lobilo, Kilasu, Mayanga (Kembo), Mana, Ndaye, Kidumu (Kibonge), Kakoko. Scorer: Scotland: Lorimer (26 mins), Jordan (32 mins); Ref: G. Schuilenburg (W. Germany).

Frankfurt, June 18, 62,000

Brazil (0) 0 Scotland (0) 0

Brazil: Leao; Nelinho, Luis Pereira, Mario Marinho, Francesco Marinho, Wilson Piazza, Rivelino, Paulo Cesar (L.), Jairzinho, Mirandinha, Leivinha (Paulo Cesar (C)). Scotland: Harvey; Jardine, McGrain, Holton, Buchan, Bremner, Hay, Dalglish, Morgan, Jordan, Lorimer. Ref: A. Van Gemert (Holland).

Gelsenkirchen, June 18, 35,000

Yugoslavia (6) 9 Zaire (0) 0

Yugoslavia: Maric; Buljan, Katalinski, Hadziabdic, Bogicevic, Petkovic, Oblak, Acimovic, Surjak, Bajevic, Dzajic. Zaire: Kazadi (Tubilandu); Mwepu, Mukombo, Bwanga, Lobilo, Kilasu, Ndaye, Mana, Kembo, Kidumu, Kakoko (Mayanga). Scorer: Yugoslavia: Bajevic (3) (7, 29 and 69 mins), Dzajic (13 mins), Surjak (16 mins), Katalinski (21 mins), Bogicevic (34 mins), Oblak (59 mins), Petkovic (62 mins); Ref: O. Delgado (Columbia).

Frankfurt, June 22, 55,000

Scotland (0) 1 Yugoslavia (0) 1

Scotland: Harvey; Jardine, McGrain, Holton, Buchan, Bremner, Dalglish (Hutchison), Hay, Morgan, Jordan, Lorimer. Yugoslavia: Maric; Buljan, Hadziabdic, Oblak, Katalinski, Bogicevic, Petkovic, Acimovic, Bajevic (Karasi), Surjak, Dzajic. Scorer: Scotland: Jordan (89 mins); Yugoslavia: Karasi (81 mins); Ref: A. Archundia (Mexico).

Gelsenkirchen, June 22, 30,000

Brazil (1) 3 Zaire (0) 0

Brazil: Leao; Nelinho, Luis Pereira, Mario Marinho, Francesco Marinho, Wilson Piazza (Mirandinha), Rivelino, Leivinha (Valdomiro), Paulo Cesar (C), Jairzinho, Edu. Zaire: Kazadi; Mwepu, Mukombo, Bwanga, Lobilo, Kibonge Tshinabu (Kembo), Mana, Ntumba, Kidumu (Kilasu), Mayanga. Scorer: Brazil: Jairzinho (13 mins), Rivelino (67 mins), Valdomiro (79 mins); Ref: N. Rainea (Romania).

FINAL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
YUGOSLAVIA	3	1	2	0	10	1	4
BRAZIL	3	1	2	0	3	0	4
Scotland	3	1	2	0	3	1	4
Zaire	3	0	0	3	0	14	0