

Content guide for 1938 World Cup



The **1938 FIFA World Cup** was held in the shadow of history, as political turmoil and war threatened to overshadow the beauty of the game. It was a World Cup of absences and defiance, with Argentina and Uruguay boycotting, Spain ravaged by civil war, and Austria absorbed into Nazi Germany before the tournament even began. Yet, despite the instability, football prevailed. Italy's back-to-back triumph under Vittorio Pozzo confirmed their tactical brilliance, but the tournament also belonged to the emerging artistry of Brazil, where Leônidas da Silva's breathtaking skill and invention hinted at the future global dominance of South American football. The tournament also saw football reach new corners of the world, with the participation of Cuba and the Dutch East Indies. As the final whistle blew in Paris, the world did not yet know that it would not see another World Cup until 1950. Many of the players would soon trade their jerseys for military uniforms, and football itself would pause as war consumed the world. But the 1938 tournament left behind a legacy of resilience, skill, and the enduring power of the game, proving that even in the most uncertain times, football could unite, inspire, and provide a fleeting moment of joy before history took its course.

World map highlighting the **15 finalists** countries participating in the 1938 World Cup.

All **games and results** from the first round to the final of the 1938 World Cup + names of goal scorers and stadia, number of spectators for each game, and the teams and playing formations for the final game.

The official **FIFA poster** produced for the 1938 World Cup tournament. The poster was designed by French artist Henri Desm , and shows a player resting his foot on a ball and the ball resting on a globe exactly where France is located.

Contours of the **country of France**, the host of the 1938 World Cup.

A short round of qualifying games lead to a 16-team knockout **tournament structure** similar to the 1934 World Cup. It was the first world cup for which the hosts and the title holders qualified automatically. In protest of the decision to hold the second consecutive world cup in Europe, neither Argentina nor Uruguay participated. Spain and Japan could not participate due to the Spanish civil war and the Sino-Japanese war. Austria qualified but had to withdraw due to the annexation by Germany.

Crest of the 1938 World Cup Champions (Italy)

The pattern of the **ALLEN** OFFICIEL ball. The ALLEN was the ball made and provided by France for the 1938 World Cup. It was similar to the Federal 102 used in Italy 4 years prior, also hand sewn from 13 leather panels and with laces. However, the edges of the panels used in the Allen were more rounded, making the ball itself more spherical.

Stades Olympique de Colombes was the stadium used for the 1938 World Cup final. The stadium was build for the 1924 Olympic Games and held 45,000 spectators.

Historical notes and statistics about the 1938 World Cup tournament and the world at the time.

The Jules Rimet trophy — the World Cup trophy from 1930—1970. A 30cm tall 4 kg gold-plated sterling silver statue bearing the name of FIFA's 3rd president, and made by french sculptor Abel Lafleur in the image of the Greek goddess of victory (Nike).

The 2-3-5 formation was the most popular / used formation of the teams playing in the 1930 World Cup

Maps of war: Maps illustrating the 3 conflicts and acts of war that had a direct influence on the 1938 World Cup. Top: The Sino-Japanese war meant that Japan could not participate. Middle: The Spanish civil war caused that nation not to take part. Bottom: The annexation of Austria by Germany forced that country to withdraw despite qualifying.

Location and names of the **9 host cities** in France.

The Czechoslovakian goalkeeper **Franti ek Pl ni ka** was retrospectively chosen as the best goalkeeper of the 1938 World Cup (now called the "Golden Glove" Award).

List of the **15 finalist countries** in order of placement in the tournament

Le nida Da Silva ("The Black Diamond"), a Brazilian forward, won the Golden Boot in the 1938 World Cup. He was a small and fast and also known as "the rubber man" due to his agility. He scored 21 goals in 19 games for Brazil, and 7 in the 1938 World Cup. He was retrospectively chosen as the best player of the tournament (Golden Ball award). He played most of his professional career in Flamengo and S o Paulo.

