
FIFA Women's World Cup

General

The 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup was staged in China PR. It had already been chosen as the host nation for the 2003 competition but had to withdraw at the eleventh hour in favour of the USA on account of the SARS epidemic. This was the second time China PR hosted the competition since the inaugural event in 1991.

In all, 22 different teams have qualified for the final competition since 1991, most of them from Europe and Asia – a fact that reflects which countries hold supremacy in women's football: UEFA (8), AFC (6), CONCACAF (3), CAF and CONMEBOL (2 each) and OFC (1).

The most experienced teams are Brazil, China PR, Germany, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, Sweden and the USA, all of whom have qualified for all five final competitions.

Matches

In 1991 and 1995, the FIFA Women's World Cup embraced 12 teams (26 matches), before the number of participants was increased to 16 (32 matches) in 1999. A total of 148 final matches have been contested to date.

The USA have played the most matches (30), closely followed by Germany and Norway (28 each). Germany, and the USA are the tournament's most successful teams: both two-time world champions USA can testify to 24 wins, 3 draws and 3 losses. Similarly impressive, Germany can boast 20 wins, 3 draws and 5 losses.

Goals

With 107 goals (3.34 per game), the 2003 FIFA Women's World Cup in the USA saw fewer balls hit the back of the net than ever before. In 2007 the average was slightly higher at 3.47, but the 1999 World Cup still holds the record for the highest goal average per game (3.84). In China PR 1991 and Sweden 1995 the average was only marginally lower at 3.81 goals per match!

Michelle Akers (USA) is untouchable at the top of the goal scoring ranks with 10 World Cup goals in one tournament (1991). Tied in second place are Heidi Mohr (GER, 1991), Sissi (BRA, 1999), Sun Wen (CHN, 1999) and Birgit Prinz (GER, 2003) with 7 goals each. Birgit Prinz (GER) heads the list of top goal scorers overall. The German fired home 14 goals between 1995 and 2007. Michelle Akers (USA 1991 - 1999) holds second place with 12 goals, and Sun Wen (CHN, 1991-2003) and Bettina Wiegmann (GER, 1991-2003) claim joint third with 11 apiece.

Thirteen footballers from seven different countries have scored hat tricks in the five editions of the FIFA Women's World Cup. Leader of the pack once more, Michelle Akers (USA) chalked up five of USA's seven goals when the States met Chinese Taipei in 1991 (USA-TPE 7-0). It was Carolina Morace (ITA), however, who completed the first ever Women's World Cup hat trick, scoring her three goals as Chinese Taipei succumbed to another convincing defeat (5-0). Also in China PR in 1991, Carin Jennings (USA) scored thrice against the mighty Germans (GER-USA 2-5), and in 1995 Norway's Kristin Sandberg and her compatriot, Ann Kristin Aarones, joined the hat trick headliners: Sandberg against Nigeria (NOR-NGA 8-0) and Aarones against Canada (NOR-CAN 7-0). In the 1999 finals, Brazilians Pretinha and Sissi both bagged three during their 7-1 victory over Mexico. In USA 1999, Sun Wen (CHN) celebrated a triple success in China's 7-0 defeat of Ghana, and Inka Grings (GER) scored her hat trick when Germany beat Mexico 6-0. Last but not least, Mio Otani (JPN) also scored thrice against Argentina (JPN-ARG 6-0) in the 2003 finals. In the 2007 edition Birgit Prinz and Sandra Smisek (GER) both scored a hat trick in their 11-0 win against Argentina and Norway's, Ragnhild Gulbrandson scored her 3 goals against Ghana (7-2).

HISTORY: In a historical overview of goals scored in the FIFA Women's World Cup, five giants of women's football head the bill: in pole position are the USA on 85 goals (averaging 2.8 goals per match), ahead of Germany on 84 (3.0), Norway on 75 (2.7), China PR on 48 (2.0) and Brazil on 46 (2.1).

The three fastest goals in the history of the competition were scored within the first minute of the match. In 1991, Swede Lena Videkull slotted home the first goal in the 30th second of her team's 8-0 victory over Japan. In 2007, Melissa Tancredi opened the scoring for Canada when she hit the back of the net in the 37th second and Lori Chalupny (USA) did the same for her team in the 54th second at the same tournament.

The highest-scoring match to date witnessed a total of eleven goals: in China 2007, Germany beat Argentina 11-0. The second highest scoring game, also in 2007, was the match between Norway and Ghana, with Norway winning 7-2.

Players, coaches, referees, spectators

The three youngest players to have participated in the FWWC are all from Korea DPR and were all under the age of 16 when they competed in 2007. YUN Hyon Hi (09.09.1992) YUN Song Mi (28.01.1992) and HO Un Byol (19.01.1992). At the opposite end of the age spectrum, Anne Smith was 40 years old when she represented New Zealand in the 1991 FIFA Women's World Cup. At 36 years and 62 days, America's Kristine Lilly became the tournament's oldest goal scorer when she slotted the ball into the back of the net in 2007, while in 2003 the Russian Elena Danilova became the youngest goal scorer in the history of the FIFA Women's World Cup with 16 years and 96 days.

Kristine Lilly (USA) is the only player to have taken part in every FIFA Women's World Cup to date.

Nine coaches have ushered their teams to two editions of this tournament: Gero Bisanz (GER), Keld Gantzhorn (DEN), Even Pellerud (NOR) and Tamotsu Suzuki (JPN) in 1991 and 1995, Ma Yuanan (CHN) and Tony DiCicco (USA) in 1995 and 1999 and Yury Bystritskiy (RUS), Marika Domanski Lyfors (SWE) and Tina Theune-Meyer (GER) in 1999 and 2003. Pellerud, DiCicco and Theune-Meyer won the title (with Norway, USA and Germany respectively). Even Pellerud became the first coach to take a second team to the final competition (Canada, 2003).

With 3,687,069 spectators in total and an average of 24,913 per game, the 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup USA holds the records for the highest crowd numbers in the history of the tournament, drawing a parallel with the 1994 FIFA World Cup USA™, which likewise remains untouchable in terms of spectator numbers!

The highest match attendance ever was recorded at the 1999 final when hosts USA secured themselves the world championship title, beating China PR on penalties in front of a throng of 90,185 football fans.

In 2007, Tammy Ogston (AUS) became the first non-European referee to officiate a Final. Until then the final had always been officiated by a European referee: Vadim Zhuk from Belarus led the 1991 final, followed four years later by Ingrid Jonsson from Sweden, in 1999 by her Swiss colleague Nicole Petignat, and in 2003 by Romanian Cristina Ionescu.

Finals

UEFA has sent six representatives to the FIFA Women's World Cup final : 1991 with Norway (vs USA), in 1995 when Norway faced Germany , in 2003 when Germany met Sweden and in 2007 Germany again when they played Brazil. The USA have reached the final twice (1991 vs Norway and 1999 vs China PR, Asia's sole finalist to date), winning both times. USA are also the only host country to have won the competition.

Birgit Prinz celebrated Germany's qualification for the final in 1995, a few months before her 18th birthday. Michelle Akers won the Women's World Cup final in 1999 at 33½ years of age, while her team mate Mia Hamm was only 19 when USA claimed the title in 1991.

The highest goal scorer has taken the FIFA Women's World Cup home on three occasions: in 1991 Michelle Akers (USA) scored ten goals, in 2003 Birgit Prinz (GER) scored seven and in 1995 Ann Kristin Aarones (NOR) scored six.

FIFA Women's World Cup final matches have seen a comparative dearth of goals so far – with an average of 2 goals per match, they provide fewer goals than fans have come to expect from other World Cup climaxes:

1991	NOR vs USA	1-2
1995	GER vs NOR	0-2
1999	USA vs CHN	0-0
2003	GER vs SWE	2-1
2007	GER vs BRA	2-0