FIFA's first World Cup trophy was the Coupe Jules Rimet, which was permanently awarded to Brazil after the Seleção's third win in 1970. It was later stolen, however, never to be seen again. The trophy had already been stolen once before when it was taken from an exhibition before the 1966 tournament in England. A small dog called Pickles later found it buried under a bush.

The FIFA World Cup Trophy, made of 18-carat gold for the 1974 tournament, is 36.8cm high and weighs 6.175kg. The base has space for 17 inscriptions, which will suffice until the 2038 FIFA World Cup. The original FIFA World Cup Trophy remains in the permanent possession of FIFA, whilst the champions are awarded the FIFA World Cup Winners Trophy. This trophy is retained by the champions and a new trophy is made for every edition of the event.

The first FIFA World Cup™ in 1930 was held in three stadiums – including the purpose-built Centenario in Montevideo, Uruguay. The highest number of stadiums used by a single host country was in Spain in 1982: 14 cities and 17 stadiums. In 2002, when Korea Republic and Japan were co-hosts, they each provided ten stadiums in as many cities. Ten cities in six countries have had two stadiums in one city: Guadalajara, Mexico City, Monterrey, Barcelona, Madrid, Seville, Buenos Aires, London, Paris and Johannesburg.

Twelve countries have been one-time hosts of the FIFA World Cup™, including 2002 co-hosts Korea Republic and Japan. Another four nations (Mexico, Italy, France and Germany) have had the honour of staging the event twice. Ten competitions have been held in Europe, seven in the Americas, one in Asia and one in Africa.

A total of 23 cities have twice served as World Cup venues – eight in Germany, seven in Italy and four each in Mexico and France.

Today’s World Cup format has been in place since 1986. The tournaments in 1974, 1978 and 1982 (the first one with 24 teams) had another group stage in the second phase. The knockout system after the group stage (quarter-finals) was used from 1954 to 1970. In 1998, the tournament was expanded to 32 teams.

Only in 1950 was the World Cup played according to a format that did not provide for a final. Instead, the winners of four preliminary groups qualified for a final pool. Results in this group of four effectively turned the match between Brazil and Uruguay (1-2) into the final, as only these two teams were still in with a chance of winning the tournament on the final day.

The earliest ever kick-off time was 11.30 local time for the Switzerland v. USA match in 1994. Conversely, the latest kick-off time so far has been 21.00: more than 100 FIFA World Cup™ matches have started at this time.

The first official substitution was made in the opening match of the 1970 World Cup in Mexico between the host team and the USSR. Soviet coach Gavriil Kachalin decided at half-time to substitute Viktor Serebryanikov with Anatoli Puzach.

Red and yellow cards were not introduced until 1970, although cautions and dismissals were previously listed in reports. The first player to be sent off was Peru’s Placido Galindo in the match against Romania in 1930.
Twelve yellow and four indirect red cards were totted up by the Netherlands and Portugal in a 2006 round of 16 match. In contrast, not one player was sent off during the 1950 and 1970 FIFA World Cups.

Shirt numbers were used for the first time at the World Cup in 1954. A look at which number has produced the most goals at the thirteen tournaments played since then reveals a clear picture: number 9 (256 goals), number 10 (233), number 11 (202), number 7 (140), number 8 (127). Shirt names were first used in 1994.

The shirt number 23 officially appeared for the first time at the 2002 FIFA World Cup when teams were allowed to name 23 players in their squads. Before that, however, at the 1962 tournament, the number 23 made its unofficial debut when it was worn by Uruguay’s Guillermo Escalada. This was because the number thirteen had been omitted from the Uruguay squad due to superstitious beliefs. Their squad numbers therefore ranged from 1 to 12 and from 14 to 23 as opposed to 1-22. In 1998, the number 23 made another appearance on the back of Simon Gopane, who had replaced Paul Evans (number 22), one of South Africa’s reserve goalkeepers, due to injury.

The 1994 FIFA World Cup in the USA had an unusual number of competition changes:
- three points for a win instead of two;
- introduction of a fourth official to support the refereeing trio;
- the first-ever indoor match was played at the Detroit Pontiac Silverdome;
- all squad players were allowed to sit on the bench and be considered as potential substitutes.

In 2010, South Africa became the first host country not to qualify for the second round. All previous host countries progressed past the group stage.

Italy’s first-round defeat by Sweden in 1950 was the first time that any defending champion had lost a game at the FIFA World Cup finals. 2010 was not a good year for Italy either, as the titleholders exited after finishing bottom of their group having won no matches, drawn two and lost one. However, no titleholder has ever fared as badly as France in 2002. Not only did they fail to get past the group stage, but they also became the first reigning champions not to win at least one game or score a single goal.

Over 34 million fans have attended the 772 World Cup matches played since 1930, an average of around 44,000 people per game.

The 1994 FIFA World Cup USA set an attendance record that still stands today. A total of 3,587,538 spectators watched the 52 matches, an average of almost 69,000 per game.

More than 100,000 spectators have been recorded at 17 different matches, all of them in either Rio de Janeiro or Mexico City. The all-time record was set at the Maracanã in 1950, when 173,850 fans witnessed Uruguay’s surprise defeat of Brazil.

The lowest-ever World Cup attendance is 2,000 for Chile v. France in Montevideo, Uruguay on 19 July 1930.

Football was first televised by the BBC in 1938 for the FA Cup final. The first World Cup to be filmed, however, was Switzerland 1954 thanks to developing technology and Eurovision. The revolutionary breakthroughs of the 1960s, including the introduction of action replays and communication satellites, meant that the 1970 World Cup in Mexico became the first to be seen live all around the world.
The FIFA World Cup™ has an incredible global reach – in 2006*, a cumulative audience of over 26 billion viewers was recorded for the 64 matches. *official 2010 FIFA World Cup™ figures will be available and updated in December 2010.

FIFA’s first marketing programme was launched at the 1982 FIFA World Cup™. Two of FIFA’s Partners from then are still on board: adidas and Coca-Cola. Their relationship with FIFA dates back to the 1970s.

Telstar was the first official FIFA World Cup™ match ball. It was introduced for Mexico 1970, the first tournament to be broadcast live on television, as Telstar’s 32 black-and-white panels were more visible on black-and-white televisions. Telstar was used again in 1974. The match balls since then have been Tango (1978, 1982), Azteca (1986), Etrusco (1990), Questra (1994), Tricolore (1998), Fevernova (2002), Teamgeist (2006) and Jabulani (2010).

The first FIFA World Cup™ mascot was introduced in 1966. Willie was a British lion wearing a Union Jack flag jersey sporting the words “WORLD CUP”. The following three tournaments each had boys as mascots: Juanito (Mexico 1970), Tip & Tap (Germany 1974) and Gauchito (Argentina 1978). Spain’s mascot in 1982 was Naranjito, an orange wearing Spain’s team kit. Pique, a jalapeño pepper sporting a moustache and a sombrero, was Mexico’s mascot in 1986. Italy 1990 saw the first inanimate mascot called Ciao, a stick figure with a football for a head and an Italian tricolore body. Since then, there have nearly always been animals: Striker the dog (USA 1994), Footix the cockerel (France 1998), Goleo the lion (Germany 2006) and finally Zakumi the leopard (South Africa 2010). The exception was Korea and Japan in 2002, where the mascots were Ato, Kaz and Nik, three futuristic, computer-generated creatures.

No host team has ever lost an opening match: in 2010, South Africa added the third draw to a record that also includes five wins.

The OFC became the last of today’s confederations to appear at the FIFA World Cup™ when Australia played the German DR in Hamburg in 1974, losing 2-0.

At the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, the two finalists from the previous tournament, Italy and France, were both eliminated at the end of the group stage, the first time that this had happened in World Cup history.

At the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, Honduras’ Palacios brothers Jhony (born 1986), Wilson (1984) and Jerry (1982) made World Cup history by becoming the first three brothers to be named in the same squad. Over the years, there have been many examples of teams keeping it in the family: from José Leandro Andrade and his nephew Víctor Rodríguez (world champions with Uruguay in 1930 and 1950 respectively), to the Walter brothers (world champions with Germany FR in 1954) and the ever-increasing list of fathers and sons among players and coaches.

A total of 76 teams have taken part in the World Cup finals. This includes teams who either no longer exist or have undergone a transformation. When the FIFA World Cup™ was expanded to 24 teams in 1982, five countries qualified for the finals for the first time. Since then, there have always been at least three or four new teams, including six in 2006. The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ was an exception to the trend as Slovakia were the only debutants.

Spain’s 2010 triumph meant that South America and Europe were no longer level in terms of FIFA World Cup™ victories. Instead, Europe now lead 10-9. Brazil have won five of South America’s titles, with Argentina and Uruguay on two wins each. Europe’s winning associations are Italy with four titles, Germany with three, and England, France and Spain with one apiece.
The most successful teams are those which have been in the FIFA World Cup™ the highest number of times. Taking this into account, Brazil have featured in 19 World Cups, Italy and Germany in 17 and Argentina in 15.

Brazil are the most prolific team in World Cup history in terms of goals, having scored 210, followed by Germany (206), Italy (126) and Argentina (123). Aside from goalscoring, Brazil’s World Cup track record is impressive: 19 tournaments, five titles, 97 games, 67 victories and 2.2 points per game.

Until the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, only Brazil had managed to win the World Cup outside of their own continent, first in Sweden in 1958 and again in Korea/Japan in 2002. In 2010, Spain became the first European team to do so.

Five of the 76 teams who have played in the World Cup finals have never scored a goal: the Dutch East Indies, Zaire, Canada, China PR and Trinidad and Tobago.

With regard to African World Cup history, in 1934 Egypt became the first African team to appear in the FIFA World Cup™. They played just one match against Hungary and were eliminated. Morocco were the next African participants, in 1970. The first African win came in 1978 when Tunisia beat Mexico 3-1. In 1982, Cameroon became the first African team to be eliminated undefeated after three draws. In 1986, Morocco became the first African team to qualify for the second stage.

The FIFA Statutes recognise the four British associations as separate members. But all four – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – have qualified for the same World Cup only once, in 1958, when they were spread elegantly across all four groups. Wales and Northern Ireland made it as far as the quarter-finals, but England and Scotland missed out. Wales were eventually eliminated by Pelé’s first World Cup goal, while Northern Ireland conceded four against France, including two by Just Fontaine.

Two-time champions Uruguay play with four stars on their shirts: two for their World Cup wins of 1930 and 1950, and the other two in commemoration of their two Olympic triumphs in the 1920s. This shows the importance attached to the 1924 and 1928 Olympic Football Tournaments, both of which were great successes and encouraged FIFA to launch the FIFA World Cup™ in 1930.

The most efficient team with regard to World Cup points is Ghana, who have accumulated 14 points from just nine goals in nine matches at two different World Cups (1.5 points per goal). Only the Republic of Ireland (1.4) and Croatia (1.33 points per goal) can compete in this respect.

Although many countries have been eliminated from the World Cup without being beaten in a single match, Switzerland’s record will be hard to beat. In 2006, the team kept three clean sheets in the group stage, but returned home after the round of 16 match against Ukraine when they were knocked out in a penalty shoot-out after a goalless draw.

At the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™, Germany reached the World Cup quarter-finals for the eighth consecutive time. They were also ranked in the top eight teams for an incredible 16th time in 17 participations.

On 16 June 2010, Switzerland equalled Italy’s FIFA World Cup™ record of five consecutive matches without conceding a goal. Their run was ended by Chile’s Mark González after 559 minutes. The Swiss now hold the all-time FIFA record and are nine minutes ahead of Italy (550) and 58 in front of England (501).
Germany have played a record 99 matches at the FIFA World Cup™, ahead of Brazil on 97 – a fact even more remarkable as the Germans have played in 17 editions, two fewer than the South Americans.

England are the team with the most goalless draws in World Cup history. Their match with Algeria on 18 June 2010 was their tenth 0-0 draw in 57 matches.

The Netherlands are the only team to have played three finals without winning a title. They lost 2-1 to Germany FR in 1974, 3-1 after extra time to Argentina in 1978, and most recently 1-0 to Spain in 2010.

Germany are the only team to have twice come from two goals down to win (1954 v. Hungary, 1970 v. England).

The five most frequent scorelines in international football account for 60% of all FIFA World Cup™ results. Every third World Cup game has ended either 1-0 (18.8%) or 2-1 (14.5%), whereas 11% of games have ended 2-0. Another 9.8% of games have ended 1-1, and 8.2% of all matches played to date have ended 0-0.

Eleven World Cup match fixtures have been played at least five times. Sweden v. Brazil and Germany v. Serbia (or their predecessors) top the list with seven meetings apiece.

Austria's 7-5 win over Switzerland in 1954 still tops the list of highest-scoring matches.

The three biggest margins of victory have been by nine goals. In 1954, the Magical Magyars, led by Ferenc Puskás, defeated debutants Korea Republic 9-0. In 1982, Hungary again subjected El Salvador to a similar fate by beating them 10-1. In 1974, Yugoslavia triumphed 9-0 over Zaire.

Two teams have scored five goals in a game and yet failed to win. In 1938, Poland lost 6-5 to Brazil after the match finished 4-4 at the end of normal time. In 1954, Switzerland were defeated 7-5 by Austria after leading 3-0 after nineteen minutes before a flood of goals overwhelmed Swiss goalkeeper Eugene Parlier.

To date, 22 matches have been decided by a penalty shoot-out, the first in 1982 when Germany FR beat France in the semi-finals, and the most recent in 2010 when Uruguay beat Ghana 4-2 in the quarter-finals. Germany, France, Argentina and Italy have all been involved in four World Cup penalty shoot-outs. Germany, however, are the only team to have won all four.

Only four teams have lost a match at a World Cup before going on to win the final. In 1954, Germany FR were defeated 8-3 by Hungary but they gained revenge in the final. Before Germany FR’s 1974 victory, they lost the “derby” against the German DR 1-0. Four years later, eventual champions Argentina were beaten by Italy 1-0. The latest World Cup winners, Spain, were defeated 1-0 in their opening match by Switzerland but still went on to beat the Netherlands 1-0 after extra time in the final on 11 July 2010.

55 matches have gone to extra time in World Cup history. Italy have been involved in eleven of them, Germany in nine, England in eight, France in seven, and Spain, Argentina and Brazil all in six apiece.

In 1954, Hungary scored a total of 27 goals in five matches, an average of 5.4 per game – clearly the highest-ever goal average and also the highest number of goals ever scored in a single competition by any team.
In 2002, Turkey’s Hakan Şükür scored the fastest-ever World Cup goal after just eleven seconds in the third-place play-off against co-hosts Korea Republic.

All in all, 163 goals have been scored from the penalty spot (7.4% of all World Cup goals), and there have been 36 own goals (1.6%).

A total of 48 hat-tricks have been scored in the history of the World Cup. Sándor Kocsis (1954), Just Fontaine (1958), Gerd Müller (1970) and Gabriel Batistuta (1994/1998) are the only players to have done this twice. Batistuta even did it at two different tournaments.

The fastest World Cup hat-trick was scored by Hungary’s László Kiss against El Salvador in 1982. It took him just seven minutes, three fewer than Batistuta against Jamaica in 1998.

When it comes to own goals, Ernie Brandts’ 1978 feat remains unmatched. The Dutchman initially had Italy dreaming of the final when he put through his own goal against the Azzurri, but he then scored the equaliser to put his side on the road to victory, which ultimately led to the final.

Only once in the history of the FIFA World Cup™ have two own goals been scored in the same match, during the USA’s 2002 group-stage meeting with Portugal. Jorge Costa was the first to score in his own net, putting the US 2-0 up. Later, with the score at 3-1 and 19 minutes still left to play, Jeff Agoos accidentally gave a goal back to the Portuguese. Fortunately for Agoos, the Americans held on to book their place in the round of 16 at Portugal’s expense.

The current FIFA World Cup™ goal total is 2,208. The last milestone goalscorer was the Netherlands’ Arjen Robben in 2010, and before then famous names have included Gerd Müller (800th goal in 1970), Rob Rensenbrink (1,000th in 1978), Jean-Pierre Papin (1,200th in 1986), Gary Lineker (1,300th in 1986) and Christian Vieri (1,900th in 2002).

The most goals ever scored in a final is seven, in the 1958 match between Brazil and Sweden, which ended 5-2.

In 1974, Yugoslavia defeated Zaire 9-0 with seven different players on the scoresheet. Dušan Bajević scored a hat-trick, whilst Dragan Đajić, Ivica Suriak, Josip Katalinski, Vladislav Bogićević, Branko Oblak and Ilija Petković all scored one goal each.

Only Just Fontaine (1958) and Jairzinho (1970) have scored in all six matches played by their teams. Jairzinho won the World Cup with Brazil, while Fontaine’s goals carried France to the semi-finals. In 1990, Italy’s short-lived hero Salvatore “Totò” Schillaci only narrowly failed to join the elite list of World Cup goalscorers: he scored in six out of seven games but failed to find the net in Italy’s second match.

A record ten different players scored for France in 1982 and for Italy in 2006.

6,851 players have so far featured in World Cup squads, a quarter (1,607) of whom never made it on the field.

The players with the most tournament appearances are Mexico’s goalkeeping legend Antonio Carbajal (1950-66) and Germany’s Lothar Matthäus (1982-98), who both played in five World Cups. In terms of playing time, Paolo Maldini’s 2,217 minutes in 23 matches for Italy at four World Cups is ahead of Matthäus, whose 25 matches in five World Cups remains unsurpassed.
Pelé is the only player with three FIFA World Cup™ wins to his name (1958, 1962 and 1970), although in 1962 he missed most of the games through injury, including the final. His compatriot Cafu is the only player to have played in three consecutive finals (1994-2002).

Brazil’s Ronaldo is not only the best-ever World Cup marksman with 15 goals, but also the player who has scored in the most matches (11). He is followed by Germany’s Jürgen Klinsmann (11 goals in ten different matches) and Miroslav Klose (14 goals in nine different matches). The record for a single tournament is held by Frenchman Just Fontaine, who incredibly scored 13 times in 1958. Sándor Kocsis has the best goalscoring average with 11 goals in five games.

Only on five occasions has a tournament’s leading scorer come from the world champions. Brazil’s Garrincha and Vavá were first in 1962 along with four other players, and they were followed by Argentina’s Mario Kempes in 1978, Italy’s Paolo Rossi in 1982 and another Brazilian, Ronaldo, in 2002. Most recently, in 2010, Spain’s David Villa, the Netherlands’ Wesley Sneijder and Germany’s Thomas Müller were all the top goalscorers of the tournament with five goals.

Only four of 56 players have scored in two finals: Brazil’s Vavá (1958/62) and Pelé (1958/70), Paul Breitner of Germany FR (1974/82) and Zinedine Zidane of France (1998/06).

Not many players have won an Olympic Football Tournament and a World Cup. Ten Uruguayans and three Italians, however, managed this feat during the first three World Cups in the 1930s and the Olympic Football Tournaments of 1924, 1928 and 1936. In 1954, Puskás and Kocsis were part of the Hungarian team who had previously won the 1952 Olympic title. The “Miracle of Berne”, however, prevented them from also securing a World Cup victory.

Six players have so far achieved the rare feat of both scoring and being sent off in the same game. Amongst these players are Brazil’s Garrincha in 1962 and Ronaldinho in 2002. The last player to do so was Zinedine Zidane in the 2006 final against Italy. He scored the opening goal from the penalty spot after just seven minutes but was later sent off during the second period of extra time.
Seven players have played at least one World Cup match for two different nations: Monti and Demaria (ARG 1930, ITA 1934), Santamaria (URU 1954, ESP 1962), Puskás (HUN 1954, ESP 1962), Altafini (BRA 1958, ITA 1962), Jarni and Prosinečki (YUG 1990, CRO 1998/2002). Prosinečki is the only person to have scored goals for two national teams: for Yugoslavia in 1990 against the United Arab Emirates and for Croatia in 1998 against Jamaica.

Italy’s Gianluca Pagliuca and South Africa’s Itumeleng Khune are the only goalkeepers ever to have been sent off. Pagliuca was shown the red card by German referee Krug after 21 minutes in a match against Norway in 1994. Nevertheless, Italy still won 1-0. More recently, at the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, Khune received his red card in the 76th minute of South Africa’s match against Uruguay on 16 June.

When Cameroon’s Roger Milla scored a consolation goal for the Indomitable Lions in a 6-1 trouncing by Russia in 1994, he became the oldest goalscorer in World Cup history at 42 years and 39 days. Pelé was almost a quarter of a century younger (17 years, 239 days) when he claimed his first World Cup goal against Wales in 1958.

At 17 years and 41 days, Northern Ireland’s Norman Whiteside became the youngest World Cup player of all time when he took to the field against Yugoslavia in 1982. Cameroon legend Roger Milla was almost exactly 25 years older (42 years, 39 days) when he made his last appearance in 1994.

Marcelo Trobbiani’s FIFA World Cup™ career was the shortest in the history of the FIFA World Cup™ at just one minute long, but what a minute to experience! He was an 89th minute substitute for Argentina in their 3-2 win over Germany FR in the 1986 FIFA World Cup™ final. Trobbiani is one of thirteen players to have only played one minute in a FIFA World Cup™.


“Super-sub”. Brazilian Denilson can be considered the most successful substitute in World Cup history, having come on as a replacement 11 times in 1998 and 2002, including both finals.


By saving a penalty from Óscar Cardozo in 2010, Iker Casillas became the third goalkeeper to save two penalties in the World Cup but the first to do so in two different editions after also saving Ian Harte’s spot kick in 2002. Poland’s Jan Tomaszewski (1974) and the USA’s Brad Friedel (2002) are the other two keepers to have saved two penalties.

Asamoah Gyan is the only player to ever miss two penalties in the World Cup: in 2006 against the Czech Republic and in 2010 in the quarter-final against Uruguay.

Germany’s Miroslav Klose is the player who has been substituted the most in FIFA World Cup™ history (13 times in 19 games).

A foreign coach has never managed a FIFA World Cup™-winning team.

Hungarian József Nagy became the first coach to compete against his home country when, in 1938, he coached Sweden, who lost 5-1 to Hungary in the semi-finals.
No list of famous coaches would be complete without certain names. Serbia’s Velibor “Bora” Milutinović not only coached at five World Cups between 1986 and 2002 but he also did so with five different teams (Mexico, Costa Rica, USA, Nigeria and China PR). In 2010, Carlos Alberto Parreira embarked on his sixth World Cup campaign and matched Milutinović’s list of five different teams – taking charge this time of the South African hosts following earlier assignments with his native Brazil (twice), Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. Josef “Sepp” Herberger (Germany FR), his successor Helmut Schön, Walter Winterbottom (England), Lajos Baróti (Hungary) and Henri Michel (France, Morocco, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire) all coached at four different FIFA World Cups™.

Five coaches have reached the final on two occasions: Vittorio Pozzo (Italy 1934/38), Helmut Schön (Germany FR 1966/74), Mario Zagallo (Brazil 1970/98), Franz Beckenbauer (Germany FR 1986/90) and Carlos Bilardo (Argentina 1986/90). Only Pozzo won both.

Guus Hiddink and Luiz Felipe Scolari are the only two coaches to have made it to the semi-finals with two different teams. Dutchman Hiddink did so with the Netherlands in 1998 and Korea Republic in 2002, whereas Scolari was with Brazil in 2002 and Portugal in 2006.

Helmut Schön coached Germany FR in 25 World Cup matches. He reached the final twice (1966, 1974) and the semi-final once (1970). The 1978 tournament was the only one to end in major disappointment for the coach of the then World Cup holders.

The youngest World Cup coach of all time is Argentina’s Juan José Tramutola. In 1930, aged just 27 years and eight months, he managed a team containing a number of players who were older than him. Conversely, Otto Rehhagel, coach of the Greek team at the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, claimed Cesare Maldini’s (ITA) record of being the oldest-ever World Cup coach as he was 71 during South Africa 2010.

Five fathers have coached their sons at the World Cup: Uruguay’s Ondino Viera with son Milton in 1966, Italy’s Cesare Maldini with son Paolo in 1998, and Croatia’s Zlatko Kranjčar with son Niko in 2006. In 2010, two coaches had their sons in their squad: Slovakia’s Vladimir Weiss with his son, also called Vladimir, and the USA’s coach Bob Bradley with his son Michael, who became the first player to score a goal in a World Cup while coached by his father.

French referee Joël Quiniou officiated a record eight matches between 1986 and 1994, but his record was equalled at the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ by Uruguay’s Jorge Larrionda (2006-2010) and Mexico’s Benito Archundia (2006-2010). Referees who officiated five matches in a single tournament include Benito Archundia (Mexico) and Horacio Elizondo (Argentina) in 2006, as well as Ravshan Irmatov (Uzbekistan) in 2010. Mexican referee Arturo Brizio Carter, on the other hand, holds a record for sending off seven players in the six matches that he officiated in 1994 and 1998.

Argentine’s Horacio Elizondo is the only referee to have officiated both the opening match as well as the final of a FIFA World Cup™. In 2006, he refereed Germany v. Costa Rica and Italy v. France. In 1950, England’s George Reader refereed the opening match between Brazil and Mexico, as well as the last match of the final group between Uruguay and Brazil, which is not technically considered as a final.

The Argentina v. Mexico match in 1930 was officiated by a very unusual duo – the referee was Ulises Saucedo, Bolivia’s manager, and the “linesman” was Costel Rădulescu, the coach of Romania.