



The ESPN World Cup Companion: Everything You Need to Know About the Planet's Biggest Sports Event

David Hirshey, Roger Bennett

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Nothing unites—and excites—the sporting planet like a World Cup. For one month every four years, billions of people rearrange their lives, play hooky, and ignore their loved ones in order to watch 22 men kick a ball in pursuit of a small gold statue and athletic immortality.

On the eve of one of the most historically significant World Cup of all—the first to be held in Africa—you need a tour guide more than ever. Learned yet lively, elegantly designed, and bursting with historical photos, **The ESPN World Cup Companion** celebrates every World Cup since 1930, highlighting each era's Greatest Players, Games, Teams, Players, Rivalries, and Cult Figures. But coauthors David Hirshey and Roger Bennett relish the game for all its beauty and vulgarity, subtlety and brutality, examining every aspect of World Cup culture; here you'll find a rogue's gallery of the game's biggest divas and divers, the DNA of the world's powerhouses, the psychodrama of the penalty shoot out, the physics of the free kick, the five soccer fans you'll meet in hell, and even the art of scoring *off* the field.

The ESPN World Cup Companion captures all the sweat, blood, tears, and bad hairdos of the last 80 years. Whether you're a casual fan or a long-time aficionado of the sport, this book bridges the gap between merely watching the planet's biggest sporting event and truly understanding it.

So paint your face, hoist your vuvuzela, or just grab your trusty remote, but whatever you do make sure **The ESPN World Cup Companion** is by your side.

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