History of the FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competition (by year)

Recap FIFA World Cup™ 1966 World Cup Preliminary Competition

YEAR	TEAM ENTRIES	DID NOT PLAY	QUALIFIED*	TEAMS PLAYED°	MATCHES	GOALS	Ø
1966	74	21	2	51	127	393	3.09

**Qualified ex officio: defending champions Brazil and hosts England*
°14 teams qualifying by preliminary competition

Background FIFA World Cup™ 1966 World Cup Preliminary Competition

The course of world history (following the pattern of ever more de-colonialisation) was echoed clearly in the increasing number of entries for the World Cup in England, which passed the seventy mark for the first time. The number of recently independent states was the major factor behind this enlargement, which ended disappointingly from a sporting point of view. The fact that only one place was available for two entire continents led to a mass withdrawal. At the end only one applicant was left, but what a surprise they provided!

Little or nothing was known about the Korea DPR team. Three dozen players had apparently been assembled in 1962 in order to build up a strong national team in a systematic manner. They played a number of friendly matches, but little was heard about them in the West. Yet wins by 6-1 and 3-1 over Australia in the play-off matches gave a hint of how the North Koreans would perform in England.

In Europe there were a few upsets in the qualifiers; two semi-finalists from 1962 were eliminated, Czechoslovakia (Portugal won that group) and Yugoslavia (France). With a rejuvenated team, Hungary had little difficulty in overcoming the German DR and Austria. England were automatically qualified as hosts - and, as in 1962, they were the only representative from the United Kingdom.

From South America came the three most fancied teams, Argentina, Colombia and Chile, along with Brazil, of course, who were coming to defend their title. Once again Mexico were the CONCACAF representatives, sailing through their qualifying matches undefeated and bringing their long-serving goalkeeper Antonio Carbajal to his fifth World Cup.

Facts & Figures FIFA World Cup™ 1966 World Cup Preliminary Competition

Seldom failing in confidence, England had a strong sense of self-belief going into these qualifiers. With their new team manager, Alf "the General" Ramsey, England began preparations for the tournament they were to host and eventually win. Ramsey's claim that "we will win the 1966 World Cup" was a prophecy that the English team were only too happy to fulfil.

Innovations in the run-up to the 1966 World Cup included the introduction of doping controls, and a prohibition on the naturalisation of players, two issues that had had negative repercussions during the last tournament.

Several smaller nations withdrew, but the bigger nations were still very much in the game: Spain's national squad was given a boost by a rejuvenated Real Madrid, and the Germans reaped the rewards of the new Bundesliga national league, as well as the introduction of full-time professional football.

History of the FIFA World Cup Preliminary Competition (by year)

Entries FIFA World Cup™ 1966 World Cup Preliminary Competition

- **Europe 31+2** Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, Finland, France, German DR, Germany FR, Greece, Hungary, Ireland Republic, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Soviet Union, Wales, Yugoslavia + Israel, Syria
- *Withdrawal*: Syria

- **South America 10** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

- **CONCACAF 10** Costa Rica, Cuba, Dutch Guyana, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles, Trinidad and Tobago, USA
- *Entry not accepted:* Guatemala

- **Africa/Asia/Oceania 21** Algeria, Australia, Cameroon, French Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Korea DPR, Korea Republic, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, UAR
- *Withdrawal*: Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Korea Republic, Sudan, Tunisia and UAR
- *Entries not accepted:* French Congo and the Philippines
- *Not admitted*: South Africa.

No. of Teams participating for the first time in the Preliminary Competition: 6
Albania, Australia, Jamaica, Korea DPR, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela

Remarks:

- South Africa was banned for violating the anti-discrimination charter. The ban remained in effect until 1992 when the newly-formed South Africa Football Association was finally accepted by FIFA. With Korea Republic also withdrawing, only two teams were left in the entire zone: Australia and Korea DPR.
- Venezuela had already entered 1958, but withdrawn again without playing a match.
- In 1960, the Football Federations of Egypt and Syria had formed a joint association. Egypt entered the 1960 and 1964 Olympic Football Tournaments (as well as the 1962 and 1966 World Cup preliminary competitions) under the name of UAR (United Arab Republic)
- Dutch Guyana has been called Surinam since 1975.
- French Congo was later referred to as Congo.
- Czechoslovakia split up into the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993. After the split, the politically separated countries still fielded a joint team, the RCS (Representation of Czechs and Slovaks), for the 1994 remaining qualifying matches. First entered separately as Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1998.
- Yugoslavia has been called Serbia and Montenegro since February 2003.

Finalists FIFA World Cup™ 1966: 16

Argentina	Brazil (C)	Bulgaria	Chile
England (H)	France	Germany FR	Hungary
Italy	*KOREA DPR*	Mexico	*PORTUGAL*
Soviet Union	Spain	Switzerland	Uruguay

Legend
NEWCOMERS TO FINALS in upper case italics
(C) Defending champions, qualified automatically
(H) Host country, qualified automatically