



Go Bafana!

by Hanlie du Plessis

The Africa Cup of Nations, also referred to as the African Nations Cup (ANC), is the most important soccer competition on the African continent. It was first held in 1957. Since 1968, it has been held every two years.

In 1957 there were only three participating nations: Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. South Africa was disqualified because of the country's apartheid policies. But in 1996, after the 1994 election of a democratic government, South Africa hosted the Africa Cup of Nations, in the place of Kenya, who withdrew.

Although they were the underdogs, Bafana Bafana surprised everyone. They defeated great soccer nations such as Cameroon and Ghana! In the game against Tunisia played in Johannesburg, South Africa's Mark Williams scored two goals in the space of only three second-half minutes. South Africa beat Tunisia and sent 80 000 fans cheering once again.

Let us take a look at South Africa's Cup of Nations record since the glory of 1996. Unfortunately things have not been going well the past few years or so. But with the appointment of Carlos Alberto Parreira, we hope that Bafana can return to their former glory. Parreira was the man who led Brazil to the 1994 World Cup.

There are just over two years left until South Africa will host the World Cup. At the moment Bafana is ranked 53rd in the world and a lot of hard work still lies ahead for the team and its new manager.

At the time of going to press, Bafana had drawn their first match against Angola, breaking the dry spell.

Interesting facts about the Cup

- The nation with the most African Nation Cup wins is Egypt, who won five times
- Ghana and Cameroon have won four titles each
- Three different trophies have been awarded during the tournament's history. 