

THE SUMMER OF

TOTAL FOOTBALL

The 1974 World Cup



Neil Fredrik Jensen

THE SUMMER OF

TOTAL FOOTBALL

The 1974 World Cup

Neil Fredrik Jensen



Contents

About the author	7
Acknowledgements	11
A defining moment.	13
1. WM74: The end of innocence	17
2. Imperfect favourites	38
3. The British contingent	58
4. Fairly secret army.	77
5. Tomatoes again.	95
6. Samba no more.	112
7. Brazilians in blue.	131
8. Beckenbauer and Cruyff: Their time.	144
9. The Rinus Factor.	163
10. Clockworkers.	180
11. Trouble solved at home.	198
12. All that glitters is apparently orange	216
13. The Final: Honours and heartbreak	231
14. What it all meant.	247
15. The 16	261
Bibliography	316

WM74: The end of innocence

WHEN PELÉ was hoisted above the joyous crowds on the pitch of the Estadio Azteca in Mexico City on Sunday, 21 June 1970, he wasn't just saying farewell to the FIFA World Cup, a competition he had graced and illuminated since he was a teenager, he was, in many respects, also waving goodbye to the turbulent decade of the 1960s. Admittedly, the 1970s were six months old, but given the iconic status of the Brazilian superstar, a man who had been the poster child of international football for more than ten years, there was something very fitting about Pelé bowing out just as the most socially transformational of modern times had come to an end. Just a few months earlier, The Beatles, one of the 1960s' most influential cultural signposts, had announced their split in somewhat acrimonious fashion, so the world seemed a little bent out of shape, but Pelé and Brazil provided many reasons to be cheerful in the summer of 1970. And then, in the aftermath of that final, he disappeared from the world stage.

Football would never be the same as it was in those halcyon, far-off days; Brazil not only played with gay abandon, they also represented the end of a form of footballing ideal. It was not, as some believed it might

be, the start of something wonderful and influential; after all, it was nigh on impossible to coach the kind of improvisational skills players like Pelé, Roberto Rivelino, Jairzinho and the rest of Pelé's Brazilian golden boys had taught themselves in the streets and on threadbare pitches. Moreover, this came at a time when coaches were preaching a safety-first style that dovetailed with the infamous 'avoid defeat at all costs' approach peddled by Italian clubs, among others.

The spirit of Brazilian football would never be replicated in the same way and we would never again see Pelé, Carlos Alberto, Tostão, Clodoaldo, Felix and Gerson in a World Cup. In fact, the classic line-up that won the 1970 World Cup only played together four times – three games in Mexico and another at the end of September 1970. This is not totally surprising, as World Cup teams normally dispersed once their job was completed; the competition has generally been the end of a two- or three-year cycle.

Brazil's national team, from 1970, tried to mimic the technical, methodical and more physical style of Europe's top nations, working against their natural instinct to entertain crowds and flex their virtuosity – something that just did not come easily to them. Their own style, a fluid formation that had evolved into 4-3-3 but was able to switch to 4-2-4 when needed, was rarely favoured by safety-first coaches, largely because they saw it as defensively vulnerable. Pelé's role was pivotal in Mexico and, from 1970 right up until early 1974, he came under intense pressure to appear in another World Cup. As he said in his autobiography, persuasion came from multiple directions; from new president Ernesto Geisel, whose regime was hardline and oppressive, from FIFA president-elect João Havelange and from the 1970 coach Mário Zagallo.

The World Cup returned to Europe in 1974. In July 1966, while England were in the process of winning the Jules Rimet trophy, the FIFA congress decided upon the venues for the 1974, 1978 and 1982 World Cups. West Germany and Spain came to an agreement; Spain would politely withdraw from the 1974 bidding in exchange for West Germany standing aside for Spain to comfortably secure 1982. Surprisingly, Spain had never been hosts – perhaps because they had to endure two wars in the 1930s and 1940s. They had, however, hosted the fledgling European Championship final phase in 1964 and they had created Europe's first 'super club' in the form of Real Madrid.

Germany had always been desperately keen to win hosting rights. The country had bid for both 1962 and 1966 and, before the Second World War, the Nazi regime had their eyes on the 1938 World Cup. The city of Munich, in April 1966, had already been given the 1972 Olympics, beating off the challenge of Madrid, Montreal and Detroit. Just as Mexico had pulled off a coup in securing the 1968 Olympics and 1970 World Cup, Munich would be the home for both 1972 and 1974.

In the aftermath of Mexico 70, the football landscape changed in Europe. England, for example, appeared to be in slow, stubborn decline just two years after their World Cup quarter-final defeat against West Germany. In 1972, the Germans tore them apart in the last eight of the European Championship, which, like the World Cup, was a French invention. That competition, eventually won by a vibrant West Germany in Brussels, was the zenith for an exciting team featuring Franz Beckenbauer, Sepp Maier, Gerd Müller, Uli Hoeneß and Gunter Netzer. Their movement, pace and precision made Sir Alf Ramsey's

England side appear pedestrian and almost old fashioned. West Germany were arguably the second best team in Mexico, but looked slightly exhausted by the time they reached the semi-finals against Italy. With some younger additions, they now had a powerful, much-feared team who were peaking at the right time. Here was a team who could look the 1954 World Cup winners in the eye but, despite their track record, they had to work hard as the 1974 tournament unfolded to win over the hearts and minds of the public in the way Sepp Herberger's victorious side in Bern had.

Meanwhile, over in the Netherlands, Dutch football was in the ascendancy. In 1969, Ajax had reached the European Cup Final, losing 4-1 to AC Milan. It was a final too soon for the emerging Johan Cruyff and his teammates. In Rotterdam, meanwhile, their domestic rivals Feyenoord were also becoming very visible under their Austrian coach Ernst Happel and a year later, became the first Dutch side to win a European prize when they surprisingly beat Celtic, the favourites, 2-1 in the final. Ajax were back in 1971, winning the European Cup by overcoming Greece's Panathinaikos 2-0 at Wembley. Cruyff, rapidly becoming Europe's most coveted player, won the Ballon d'Or in 1971, earning twice as many votes as second-placed Sandro Mazzola of Italy.

Clubs from Italy, Portugal and Spain dominated European club football when UEFA established its first competitions. Their top clubs had been participating in a form of dress rehearsal for some time. Between 1949 and 1957, the Latin Cup had brought together the champions of Spain, Portugal, Italy and France. AC Milan and Real Madrid were the most successful clubs but the venture struggled financially, despite some raucous crowds.

Nevertheless, it seemed to give these clubs an advantage when UEFA started its European Cup competition. Elsewhere in Europe, the Mitropa Cup, which involved central European clubs, mostly from the defunct Austro-Hungarian empire, had long preceded UEFA's efforts. The Mitropa was a popular competition that attracted crowds and a level of passion that occasionally spilled over, creating some bitter rivalries.

Pan-European football was a perfect unifying tool for post-war Europe. Although rivalries sometimes became violent on the field of play, sporting nationalism was far more healthy than armed conflict. The Latin clubs effectively owned the European Cup until Celtic and Manchester United won the competition in 1967 and 1968 respectively. The top names in Europe were from the big industrial cities, such as Madrid, Lisbon and Milan, but when Ajax comprehensively disposed of Benfica in the 1969 quarter-final play-off in Paris, people began to recognise that a power shift might be in its early stages. Certainly, the rise of the Dutch club sides provided a refreshing alternative to the stifling catenaccio of the Italian technicians that choked the life out of so many big occasions.

The establishment, old order figures of post-war football management, which included the likes of Matt Busby, Jock Stein, Helenio Herrera, Nereo Rocco and Sir Alf Ramsey, were being challenged by new ideas. Leading the way were Dutch coach Rinus Michels and his disciples. Michels became known for two important and highly influential developments in 1970s football: the so-called Total Football demonstrated by the Ajax Amsterdam team of 1970-1973; and attacking pressure football that utilised a 4-3-3 formation and gave opponents as little space as possible.

European club football was getting stronger on a broader basis and was dovetailing nicely with the international game; there was remarkable similarity between Ajax and the Dutch national team, and West German football was heavily influenced by Bayern Munich and Borussia Mönchengladbach, who were enjoying an intense rivalry that would define the Bundesliga struggle of the 1970s. Although there was no doubting how innovative the new football was, European teams still struggled when they came up against South America's best teams in the Intercontinental Cup. Real Madrid, Benfica, Celtic and Manchester United were all unable to beat the Copa Libertadores champions, but Feyenoord and Ajax, in 1970 and 1972 respectively, managed to overcome the challenge of Argentina's robust gangs of *jugadores*, Estudiantes and Independiente.

Interestingly, European football was seen as too aggressive by many South Americans, with many remembering the way Pelé had been kicked out of the 1966 World Cup by Bulgaria, Hungary and Portugal, with Pelé himself initially vowing he would never play in the competition again. It was clearly becoming a more scientific game, less reliant on virtuosity and delicate skills and more dependent on the team ethos and an economy of effort. By the time Brazil turned up in West Germany to defend their title, they were no longer the great entertainers of 1970 and had started to develop an attitude of self preservation.

Before the World Cup, Munich was the venue for the 1972 Olympics, which brought tragedy to the world's TV screens as Palestinian terrorists from the Black September Organisation murdered 11 Israeli athletes in cold blood. This was a tipping point for many as it was all so real and the images of balaclava-wearing gunmen would forever define the world's perception of terrorism in the 1970s.

Germany took half a century to probe the security failures surrounding the massacre, including the flawed rescue attempt, but the tragedy set the tone for the 1974 World Cup, with high levels of security and a mood of extreme caution. In February of that year, the West German police arrested members of the Red Army Faction (also known as the Baader-Meinhof gang), who were thought to be planning to launch a rocket attack when East met West Germany in Hamburg. Police chief Peter Hanisch soon outlined the strict approach for West Berlin, which included body searches, a ban on alcohol at games and no political slogans permitted inside the stadiums.

Tension was exacerbated by the upcoming trial of members of the Baader-Meinhof gang, including Ulrike Meinhof and Andreas Baader. This was destined to be held against a backdrop of heavy security and the West German government did not want to create an even more intimidating atmosphere during the World Cup, so proceedings were delayed until September 1974.

On the eve of the World Cup, West German police were still arresting Palestinian extremists suspected of a terror plot involving the Israeli embassy and a World Cup stadium. Helicopters were forever buzzing in the skies above West German cities during the competition. Even the host team's training camp was so heavily guarded it resembled an unwelcoming high security prison, which did nothing for the morale of the players. The Olympics had shown, most vividly, that major events, be they sporting, social or political, could be used by dissident groups to further their causes through the use of blackmail, extortion and highway violence. Everybody had to be vigilant and this inevitably created unease at every major gathering.

Obviously, the tragedy of Munich 1972 overshadowed and stained what were intended to be 'the cheerful games' but, on the football front, the emergence of an exciting Poland team was highly promising for the forthcoming World Cup. The Olympic football competition was dominated by the Soviet Union and its acolytes, but an average of more than 20,000 watched the Olympic football matches and the goals-per-game (3.55) was much higher than the World Cup. Poland won gold by beating Hungary in the final, while the bronze was secured by East Germany after their victory over the USSR. Poland's success, probably overlooked by England, proved to be significant, for they demonstrated in the World Cup finals that exciting and innovative football could be found behind the Iron Curtain.

Poland played England twice in 1973 in their World Cup qualifying group and picked up three points out of a possible four. The English media underrated Poland for no other reason than they were not from western Europe and, therefore, not on the radar of the football experts. Football writers had been pencilling in young players for Munich 1974 such as Chelsea's Alan Hudson, West Ham's Trevor Brooking, Kevin Keegan of Liverpool and Southampton's Mick Channon. They also expected an England win in the vital final game at Wembley but, despite dominating for 90 minutes, they could only scramble a draw. There were shockwaves in London, but equally, everyone was suddenly asking about Poland and star names like Kazimierz Deyna, Grzegorz Lato, Jerzy Gorgoń and Robert Gadocha. FIFA, meanwhile, was undoubtedly calculating how much money would be lost without one of UEFA's top football countries and commercial markets. Given England also missed out in 1978, a generation of players were destined never to

appear at the World Cup. Keegan, for example, managed just 27 minutes in 1982. Qualifying for a World Cup could be quite precarious; between 1966 and 1974, only five nations played in all three World Cups – West Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, Uruguay and Brazil.

Although England were the most notable casualty from 1970, of the 16 teams who played in Mexico, only six returned for 1974, the aforementioned five ever-presents plus Sweden. In Europe, Belgium had rather unluckily been knocked out in a group featuring their neighbours, the Netherlands, after two 0-0 draws. Belgium had some fine players, but to this day, they still claim a legitimate goal was mistakenly ruled out in Amsterdam which would have eliminated their hosts.

Romania had been clumsy in their group, drawing 1-1 in Finland early on and, although they beat East Germany, the draw proved fatal as the DDR ended on top by a single point. Similarly, Czechoslovakia were the victims in Scotland's group of three, drawing in Denmark where the Scots had won 4-1. The two countries beat each other on their home ground, so it was the results against the Danes that were decisive. The USSR, who refused to face Chile in a play-off as the stadium in Santiago had been used to torture dissidents during a coup, also fell by the wayside.

Peru, who had charmed audiences in Mexico in 1970, failed to reach the finals this time, missing out in a two-team group with Chile after Venezuela had withdrawn. Mexico were also surprise non-qualifiers, losing out to Haiti. Argentina were back after being absent in 1970 and Yugoslavia, a highly-rated, under-performing side, were starting to win recognition after eliminating Spain. Interestingly, there was no representative from the Iberian peninsula, as Portugal had also fallen by the wayside,

beaten to top spot by a workmanlike Bulgaria. Portugal still had the great Eusébio of Benfica in their ranks, but he was ageing and also far less effective owing to injuries, the years of combat with a long list of uncompromising defenders taking their toll. The 1973/74 season yielded less than 20 goals for the great man for the first time since he established himself in the Benfica side.

Hungary, no longer comparable to the great golden team of the 1950s, but nevertheless still respected for their history, failed to get to the finals for the second consecutive World Cup. Their best players from the post-Puskás era – Ferenc Bene and Flórián Albert to name but two – were ageing and no longer quite as effective as they had been in the mid-1960s. They were unbeaten in their qualifying group but drew too many games.

Although England were also sitting at home licking their wounds, Scotland were carrying the flag for the United Kingdom. Everyone's second favourites were the Netherlands, although much depended on their talisman, Cruyff. The men of mystery for 1974 were Haiti, Zaire and Australia. There was to be no new North Korea among this trio.

But this was what World Cups were all about in the age of analogue communication. The rest of the world knew little about foreign players and the sense of the unknown made it all the more interesting. While European competition gave everyone a glimpse of Real Madrid, Inter Milan and others, there was no way a team from Poland or East Germany was ever going to be brought to the attention of the West's football fanatics.

Similarly, African football was very much an unknown quantity, even though Morocco had won some friends in Mexico in 1970, becoming the first African nation

to play at the World Cup since Egypt in 1934. In 1974, Zaire qualified and went home early, but the African confederation would play a vital role in the unseating of Sir Stanley Rous as FIFA president.

Jão Havelange had his eye on the job and, in 1972, he arranged a 20-team competition in Brazil to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Brazil's independence. It was known as *MiniCopa* and was, effectively, an unofficial World Cup to demonstrate Havelange's organisational abilities. To some extent, it also undermined FIFA. He then embarked on a lengthy and cunning election campaign that took in 86 member nations, enlisting help from none other than Pelé, who was used to press flesh and connect with FIFA's emerging football countries.

Havelange was successful by promising more places at future finals for the Confederation of African Football (CAF). The consummate networker was making the right noises for his audience, but Rous, an old-school administrator steeped in Corinthian ideals, had refused to campaign, preferring to let his record speak for itself. Rous had made a mistake that would deter people in Africa from supporting him. While nobody doubted his commitment to the FIFA cause, Rous had sought support for apartheid-era South Africa in hosting a sports and music cultural event. To so many, Rous seemed to be a colonial figure from the past who was detached from many of the modern developments of the game. The South Africa affair was poor judgment on his part and his address to UEFA also caused some controversy: 'I appeal to you to vote for me because it is Europe versus South America and we want Europe to retain the leadership of football.' This went down badly in Brazil – perhaps understandably – and Sylvio Pacheco of the Brazilian Sports Federation accused Rous ('my old friend')

of attempting to divide football. For the first time in FIFA's history, a president's position was being seriously challenged.

When the presidential poll, comprising 139 votes, was completed, Rous was left crestfallen as Havelange won the day before 'a smoky amalgam of the world's press, radio and television'. Havelange tried to soften the blow by suggesting FIFA name a new World Cup trophy after Sir Stanley, but the former referee declined the offer. He also refused a pension, claiming his role had been an unpaid position. Rous left with no small amount of dignity, but Havelange's arrival heralded a new, hard-nosed and commercialised era, one that took advantage of his complex business and social network.

Havelange, who had outsmarted his predecessor, was soon beating the drum for a bigger, more inclusive World Cup. Initially, he wanted the 1978 finals to feature 20 teams, but that was an expansion too early. FIFA forged closer links with corporates, including with adidas, which provided 12 of the 16 finalists' kits along with the adidas Telstar Durlast balls that became synonymous with early 1970s football, and Coca-Cola, which began its long association with the competition in 1974. The role of adidas and the relationship between Havelange and Horst Dassler was instrumental in shaping the World Cup and the commercialisation of FIFA. The only countries wearing a different brand of kit were Australia, Scotland, Brazil and East Germany. The Netherlands team also wore the iconic three-stripped shirts – all except Cruyff, who had his own deal with adidas's big rival, Puma, resulting in the number 14 wearing an orange shirt with only two stripes on the sleeves.

Dassler helped Havelange devise a plan for sponsorship and commercial partnerships for the future of the World

Cup. A list of commandments decreed that only the biggest companies would be entitled to sponsor the competition and that only one from each sector would be designated a major sponsor. Furthermore, FIFA would have total control over the relationship, but it would also be obliged to use an intermediary to act as administrator of the process. Dassler established International Sports and Leisure (ISL), the company FIFA sold administrative rights to for a fixed sum, and ISL proceeded to make deals with each sponsor. ISL also dealt with TV rights. Dassler, despite never having an official position in the organisation, will go down in history as one of the most important men in the FIFA story.

Everything about the 1974 World Cup was of its time, as much as 1970 had bookended the optimism of the 1960s. West Germany was rapidly developing into the quintessential modern state, with rebuilt towns and cities, interesting architecture and a spirit of quiet social revolution. Although, from an economic perspective, most people were cautious – memories of the hyper-inflation of the 1920s and post-war environment were still fresh – the country had less inflation, less unemployment and more foreign exchange reserves than most of its neighbours.

West Germany was at the heart of the new Europe and the climate, organisation and stadiums would benefit teams from the home continent – at least that's what many South Americans felt, totally disregarding the possibility that the same factors on the other side of the world would also give the likes of Brazil and Argentina an advantage. Before the Olympics and World Cup were held in Mexico in 1968 and 1970, there were major concerns about the impact high altitude would have on the health of sportsmen and women.

Mário Zagallo, who had remained Brazil coach since his 1970 success, recognised his country had a far weaker side than in Mexico and also remembered how they struggled in England in 1966. 'This will be the most difficult World Cup we have ever faced,' he predicted. He was not wrong.

Brazil had tried to get a flavour of what they might experience when they embarked on an extensive tour of Europe in the summer of 1973, beating West Germany in Berlin, the USSR in Moscow and Scotland in Glasgow but losing to Italy in Rome. As it turned out, the weather in Germany a year later was unseasonably appalling.

When the World Cup draw was made in Frankfurt's Sendesaal des Hessischen Rundfunks on 5 January 1974 with the assistance of an 11-year-old choirboy from Berlin named Detlev Lange, Brazil were still bemoaning the many problems they had to solve before the summer – a familiar game of kidology. Even at this stage, the stay-at-home Soviets were complaining about the situation with Chile, demanding the South Americans pay them compensation over the play-off that never was. They also insisted on a second game on neutral territory, but it was to no avail. Bearing in mind the Cold War was in full flow, would FIFA have relented if it was any other country protesting?

The draw enabled the media to start mulling over the various qualities of the qualifiers, but the big news was group one, in which West and East Germany had been drawn together along with Chile and Australia. It would be the meeting of the divided Germany; the west, with its supposed decadence, and the east, the captive socialists who peered enviously over the Berlin Wall at their seemingly hedonistic cousins.

The most intriguing group was surely the one that included Olympic champions Poland, resurgent Argentina, Italy and Haiti. Scotland's group, including Brazil, Yugoslavia and Zaire, was also attractive.

The favourites were West Germany (5/2) with Brazil (7/2) close behind. The Netherlands were a generous 14/1 along with their group rivals Uruguay. Clearly, the bookmakers had little knowledge of how football was developing at the time, although the journalists who had seen Ajax and Cruyff in their pomp knew this was a team whose time was about to come.

The 1974 World Cup saw a change of format, with a second group stage replacing the traditional quarter-finals and semi-finals. The rationale was apparently to create more meaningful matches but, ultimately, this may have merely been an attempt to maximise revenue generation. The competition would also see a new trophy presented to the winners. The Jules Rimet trophy, a relatively modest bauble and one representative of the inter-war period, had been awarded permanently to Brazil in recognition of their third world title. Unfortunately, it went missing in 1983 and was reputed to have been melted down by criminals in Brazil. Ahead of the 1974 tournament, FIFA received 53 designs for a new trophy and the Italian sculptor, Silvio Gazzaniga, won the commission. It was made from 13.61lb of 18 carat gold by Bertoni of Milan and was 1970s objet d'art at its most ostentatious.

It wasn't the only aspect of WM 74 that reminded the global audience that the World Cup was rapidly evolving. If the Estadio Azteca in Mexico was a brutalist statement, the Olympic Stadium in Munich, the centrepiece of the World Cup, was a demonstration of German boldness. Even today it is a startling creation, other-worldly and confident. They

say nothing dates quicker than the vision of the future and the Olympic Stadium is, indeed, a clear reflection of the 1970s, but there is still something incredibly striking and ambitious about the whole Olympic park. Simon Inglis, in his book *The Football Grounds of Europe*, describes the main arena, with its perspex roof as a '21st century Bedouin tent'.

The project, the most ambitious ever seen in West Germany, didn't always go as smoothly as the Munich city authorities would have liked. For a start, the cost of the roof almost trebled to US\$100m and the design competition was scrapped and reinstated. The architects, Behnisch & Partners, won the mandate with a daring design that attempted to merge the new construction with the existing landscape. They also involved Frei Paul Otto, a former Second World War pilot and an architect with a reputation for being occasionally eccentric.

The Munich arena was influenced by the eastern European 'earth stadiums', arenas of the inter-war and post-war periods that blended with the landscape rather than conspicuously imposing themselves. This was a big contrast to the 1936 Olympics when the huge and uncompromising granite Berlin stadium dominated the environment. To some it was 'a design to symbolise the new democratic and optimistic West Germany'. To others, it looked like an attempt to imitate the skyline of the Alps. The writer Owen Hatherley, in his book *Trans-Europe Express*, calls the Olympic Stadium 'one of the 20th century's most beautiful structures'.

Work began in June 1969 and included the use of a rubble-strewn military airfield at Oberwiesefeld, which was cleared and reinvented as the Olympic village, which included nine venues, an artificial lake and accommodation. It is one of the most successful Olympic projects, although

the scheme had its critics, notably because it was a fairweather stadium; there was precious little cover for the 75,000 spectators. This implied the creators were not particularly interested in covering all requirements; this was a sporting arena that had to be admired – take it or leave it. Almost half a century later, the stadium and its surroundings, while clearly a product of its time, still has the ability to leave one gasping in awe.

Munich was one of nine venues for the World Cup; Hamburg and Hanover in the north; Gelsenkirchen, Dortmund and Düsseldorf in the west, Frankfurt and Stuttgart further south and, over in the middle of the DDR, West Berlin, the frontier city. Of the selected cities, only Dortmund didn't have a Bundesliga representative in 1973/74, the season which saw Bayern Munich become the first German winners of the European Cup, ending a four-year spell of Dutch pre-eminence. Bayern, whose players were at the heart of the West German national team, had taken over from an Ajax side who had lost Cruyff to Barcelona in the autumn of 1973. With the European Championship in West German hands after their 1972 victory, it did appear that their time was coming as the leaders of the European game.

Naturally, the venues for 1974 needed plenty of work on their stadiums. Munich, of course, had its ready-made final location, but up and down West Germany, construction projects were a costly necessity. Two new stadiums were built; the Parkstadion in Gelsenkirchen and the Westfalenstadion in Dortmund, giving Schalke 04 and Borussia Dortmund new homes.

Gelsenkirchen wasn't exactly a well-known city to the rest of the world, but its club, Schalke 04, were renowned as being one of Germany's best supported – their average

crowd in 1974 was 42,000 – but largely underachieving football institutions. There had been talk of erecting a landmark, 100,000-capacity arena in the Ruhr area for some time, using waste from local coal mines, but, in the end, the Parkstadion emerged with a crowd limit of around 70,000. It served Schalke well between 1973 and 2001, but when fans from the visiting nations realised they were playing in Gelsenkirchen, many had to investigate exactly where the city was located.

That wasn't the case for Dortmund and the Westfalenstadion. The city was well known not just for its heavy steel industry, but also its brewing heritage. Dortmund was a replacement for Cologne, which was forced to withdraw from the project. Dortmund had to be prudent, however, as the city treasury couldn't afford a grand design and the state wouldn't help them meet the funding requirements. The building started in 1971 but, a year later, Borussia Dortmund were relegated, a somewhat timely demotion given the local authority's financial limitations; if BVB had gone down a year or two earlier, they might have been reluctant to commit anything at all.

It should be noted that World Cup preparations were in process just as the global economy was tipping into a downturn, especially among those countries that relied on oil imports. The UK also went into recession in 1973, which continued into 1974. Dortmund's situation could have been compared to the dilemma faced by Chelsea Football Club in London. They were building a major new grandstand, but the economic climate delayed its completion by a year, by which time the club were spiralling into a financial crisis that would become an existential threat.

Other stadiums were refurbished or completely rebuilt. The Waldstadion on the outskirts of Frankfurt benefitted

from an overhaul, while the Volksparkstadion in Hamburg received a new cantilever roof. One of the most eye-catching refurbishments was the Rheinstadion in Düsseldorf, which was what Simon Inglis called ‘the marriage of technology and design, creating an exciting alternative to the more common fare of soulless concrete bowls’.

Over in West Berlin, the Werner March-designed Olympiastadion had DM26m spent on two roofs, much to the disgust of admirers of totalitarian architecture.

With everything seemingly in place, the opening ceremony in Frankfurt on 13 June couldn’t come soon enough, but the weather was far from kind to the organisers. Pelé and Uwe Seeler, heroes from 1970, came out to greet the crowd, trophies in hands. Pelé was dressed in a period piece white safari suit that would have been more appropriate for a CONMEBOL-hosted event. He possibly wished he had decided to play in one last World Cup rather than head to the USA as a football missionary with the New York Cosmos.

The hosts put on a show that was a clumsy combination of the Munich Oktoberfest, the Eurovision Song Contest and the popular TV show of the time, *It’s A Knockout*; essentially, it was a pageant full of stereotypes and clichés. There were clog dancers from the Netherlands, bagpipes from Scotland, Polish ballet, flag-waving Florentines, flutes from the Andes, folk music from Australia, in the form of Mulga Bill’s Bicycle Band, and voodoo dancers from Zaire, complete with a witch doctor. From East Germany came one Frank Schöbel, a popular singer favoured by the establishment as a form of propaganda tool among young people. Schöbel, who was incredibly nervous about the reaction he might receive from the West German crowd, wanted to sing a self-penned song, *Der*

Fußball is rund wie die Welt (the football is as round as the world), but instead was instructed to opt for *Freunde gibt es überall* (there are friends everywhere).

High in the stand, there was a musical ensemble of the type legendary German bandleader James Last might have provided, some members wearing dinner suits and bow ties. In 1974, this was how the international community came together; happy, smiling faces, with national costume the order of the day. It was wonderfully dated and a little gauche, but somehow far less tedious and more accessible than the pyrotechnics and virtue signalling of 21st century sporting events.

And then there were speeches, including West German football association chief Hermann Neuburger and outgoing FIFA president Rous. The scene was set and to witness the tenth World Cup there were 1,700 journalists, 1,400 TV and radio commentators, 350 photographers and 250,000 visitors to West Germany. Brazil and Yugoslavia opened the contest in the Waldstadion and, needless to say, the game ended goalless, a tradition that dated back to 1966 and extended right up to 1978. It was clear that Brazil, who no longer had their 'blessed triangle' of Pelé, Gerson and Tostão, were not the force of 1970, even though the emphasis was still on skill and individualism. The problem was, Brazil just didn't have the same depth of talent they enjoyed in Mexico four years earlier.

The game also revealed that Yugoslavia, coached by Miljan Miljanić, were a skilful and savvy team who needed to be watched carefully. Even before a ball had been kicked, the pundits who knew about the qualities of Yugoslav football were predicting they would top their group and that second place would be contested between

Brazil and Scotland. Brazil, as if weighed down by their history, seemed tentative and a little nervous.

After witnessing the benchmark tournament that was the 1970 World Cup – a colourful, sunshine competition won by a team of yellow-clad supermen – a very different form of entertainment was about to unfold over the course of a rather wet summer in West Germany. Unlike in Mexico, this would very much be a European World Cup that demonstrated, for at least the next four years, the balance of power had shifted to the old world.