

BACKGROUND

The world's most popular sport is all about a ball. And if the ball is not up to standard, the game itself may not be so either.

With the FIFA quality control system, all footballs now used in FIFA matches have been extensively tested and awarded either the FIFA APPROVED or FIFA INSPECTED trademarks, or the royalty free "International Matchball Standard" designation. These balls must pass an exhaustive series of laboratory tests, comprising controls for weight, circumference, pressure, sphericity, water absorption, rebound, and, in the case of the more stringent FIFA-APPROVED category, also for size and shape retention.

Producers of the world's most popular plaything have to pay a marginal licence fee for such a seal of approval from FIFA. These fees are made available through the FIFA Youth Development Fund to the non-profit SOS Children's Villages organisation. To support efforts to combat the exploitation of children in the manufacturing of footballs, FIFA gave its active backing to an international agreement in 1997, involving the sports goods industry, labour organisations, child welfare groups and other non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, licensees are required by contract to guarantee that the sourcing and production of footballs does not involve child labour.

Adidas balls are also a part of World Cup history

In 1963, when "the majority of balls were heavy, brown, and painful" - according to an extract from an adidas publication - adidas began the production of match balls. The first model at that time was called "Santiago", which was rapidly followed by various successors, which have been regularly used since 1968 in important international football events. From 1970 onwards, footballs made by the adidas have also been a part of World Cup history

CHRONOLOGY

1970:The Telstar

In the 1970 World Cup in Mexico and in 1974 in Germany, adidas provided the official football for the first time, the Telstar This ball, the first with black pentagons, quickly became the embodiment of the modern game's equipment. It was not by chance that its name occurred in a phase of ever increasing football television coverage.

1978:The Tango

The Tango became a successful model, which did not only dance at the World Cup. The Tango was also used at the Olympic Games and in the European Cup. It consisted of 32 individual sections, had no beginning and no end! Not even the experts were able to tell any more where the fast stitch had been placed on the shell

... and the Tango family

In Spain, 1982, the Tango España, the new generation of the Tango was trumps. The Tango España, made of real leather, was the head of a family whose members were specialists in particular fields. So for example the Tango Mundial was the top of the range model tested in the wind tunnel, the Tango Alicante was the special floodlight model, the Tango Malaga for hard grounds and the Tango Indoor for indoor football. The range of models was available not only in the basic white colour, but also in orange and yellow.

1986: The Azteca Mexico...

A completely new model was developed for the World Cup in Mexico. The Azteca Mexico was a hand-sewn ball, and for the first time, synthetic material, rather than leather was used to produce it. The ball consisted of an outer polyurethane wearing coat and three lower layers, which mutually complemented one another with their different "Adicron" structures. These were intended to ensure the ball's resistance, ability to retain its shape and its waterproof properties.



... and the Azteca family

The Azteca Puebla and the Azteca Acapulco were also members of the Azteca family which were naturally hand-sewn in the Azteca design.

1990: The Etrusco Unico

This ball was a high-tech product which was manufactured entirely from quality synthetic fibres. The lowest covering consisted of textiles impregnated with latex for form stability and resistance to tearing, the neoprene layer made me ball water-tight and the outer skin made of polyurethane layers was responsible for abrasion resistance and good rebound properties. The Etrusco Unico was sewn together from 32 individual sections.

1994: The Questra

The technical development for the Questra took place in the adidas centre for ball development in France, followed by test games in France, Germany and the USA with professional players, amateurs and youth teams. The design embodied adidas's theme for the World Cup: innovation and "the quest for the stars". The ball was manufactured from five different materials with a flexible but durable outer layer made from polyurethane.

1998: The Tricolore

The official match ball of the FIFA World Cup™ France 1998 featured a newly engineered hi-tech foam layer. This new foam material, called syntactic foam, had even better compression and more explosive rebound characteristics, making the ball softer and faster than its predecessor, Questra.

The first World Cup ball in colour was a revolutionary concept in ball surface design. Appropriately, the colours of revolutionary France which gave the ball its name.

2002: Fevernova - vibrant, dynamic and highly accurate

A truly revolutionary ball. Experts say that the Fevernova has set a new standard in the sport. It is the most accurate football ever produced by adidas. The improved syntactic foam layer, consisting of highly compressible and extremely durable gas-filled micro-balloons, has remarkable energy return properties and additional cushioning for enhanced control and accuracy. A three-layer knitted chassis gives the Fevernova improved three-dimensional performance characteristics, allowing for a more precise and predictable flight path every time. Extensive tests with robots in the adidas football laboratory provide proof of the unprecedented accuracy of the Fevernova.

**MATCH BALL HISTORY**

YEAR	COUNTRY	NAME	MATERIAL	DESIGN
1970	Mexico	Telstar	Leather	1st white ball with black pentagons
1974	Germany	Telstar/Chile	Leather	Chile - all white ball
1978	Argentina	Tango	Leather	1st Tango design
1982	Spain	Tango España	Leather with waterproof, sealed seams	same as 1978
1986	Mexico	Azteca	1st fully synthetic	Aztec mural within Tango triads
1990	Italy	Etrusco	Fully synthetic ball	Etruscan lion head within Tango
1994	USA	Questra	1st ball with hi-tech PU foam	Stars within Tango triad
1998	France	Tricolore	1st ball with synthetic foam	1st coloured World Cup ball
2002	Korea/Japan	Fevernova	The most accurate football ever produced by adidas	Gold (energy) with red flames