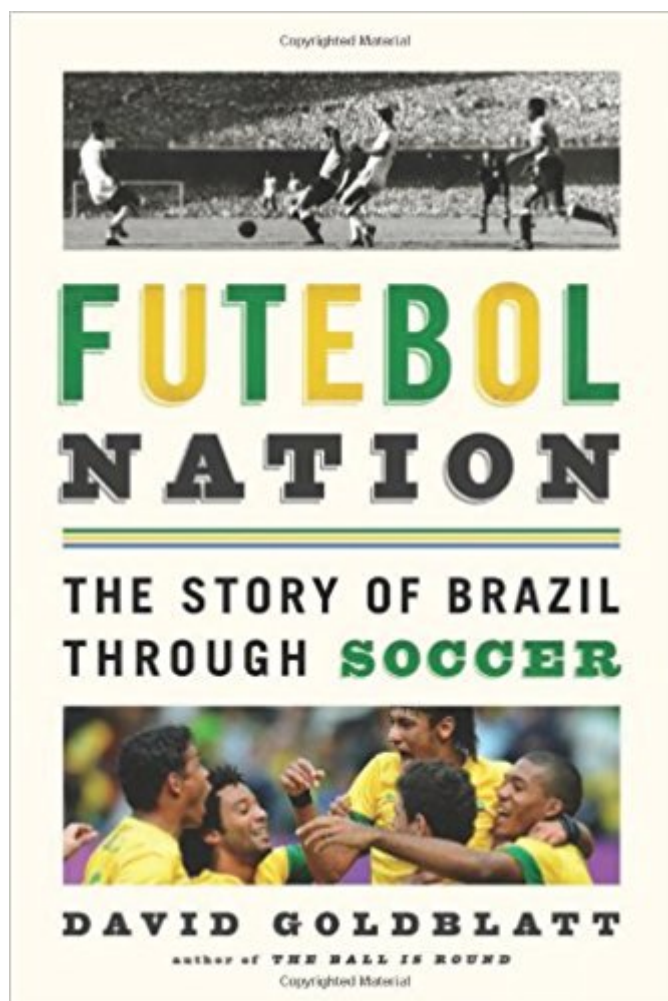


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# Futebol Nation: The Story Of Brazil Through Soccer



## Synopsis

No nation is as closely identified with the game of soccer as Brazil. For over a century, Brazil's people, politicians, and poets have found in soccer the finest expression of the nation's collective potential. Since the team's dazzling performance in 1938 at the World Cup in France, Brazilian soccer has been revered as an otherworldly blend of the effective and the aesthetic. *Futebol Nation* is an extraordinary chronicle of a nation that has won the World Cup five times and produced players of miraculous skill, such as Pelé, Garrincha, Rivaldo, Zico, Ronaldo, and Ronaldinho. It shows why the phrase *O Jogo Bonito*;the Beautiful Game;has justly entered the global lexicon. Yet there is another side to Brazil and its game, one that reflects the harsh sociological realities of the 'futebol nation.' • David Goldblatt explores the grinding poverty that creates a vast pool of hungry players, Brazil's corrupt institutions exemplified by its soccer authorities, and the pervasive violence that has seeped onto the field and into the stands. *Futebol Nation* illuminates both Brazilian soccer and Brazil itself; its brilliance, its magic, its style, and the fabulous myths that have been constructed around it; as well as its tragedies, its miseries, and its economic and political injustices. It is the story of Brazil told through its chosen national game.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In *Futebol Nation*, Goldblatt examines in absorbing detail the special place of the sport in the country's history, from the impact made by Charles Miller, the son of a Scottish father and an Anglo-Brazilian mother, who returned from his English public school in 1894 with two footballs and a

copy of the rules of the game, through the rise in the 1960s of the torcidas organizadas, the powerful supporters' groups that became a law unto themselves, to the demonstrations held in protest against lavish government expenditure on this summer's tournament in a country whose poor still live in hovels."Richard Williams, The Guardian"[A]n impressive cultural historian ... Goldblatt introduces us to a host of fishy schemes and schemers..."Toby Lichtig, The Telegraph"Goldblatt has a knack for putting football into its socio-economic context, a gift for synthesis, and frightening eloquence."Simon Kuper, Financial Times"[A] breezy, readable and nuanced primer to the centrality of football to Brazilian life."Jonathan Wilson, New Statesman"Magisterial..."Franklin Foer, New Republic"As David Goldblatt's engrossing Futebol Nation: The Story of Brazil through Soccer shows, the sport has long reflected both the best and worst of Brazil."Economist

David Goldblatt was born in London in 1965 and lives in Bristol. He shares his affections between Tottenham Hotspur and Bristol Rovers. In 2006 he published The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football. Since then he has made sport documentaries for BBC Radio, reviewed sports books for the TLS and the Guardian, taught the sociology of sport at Bristol University, the International Centre for Sports History and Culture, De Montfort University, Leicester and Pitzer College, Los Angeles, and gone swimming.

An excellent read by an author that loves his subject and documents the rise and fall of soccer. He uses the game to reflect on Brazil, and Brazil to reflect on world soccer. The current scandal within Fifa will not surprise anyone who has read this book.

A very erudite and comprehensive account of the birth of Brazil as a nation, a society and a football powerhouse from the 1890s to the 2014 World Cup demonstrations. The author knows a lot about the sport but also discusses cultural, social, political and civil society aspects of football through several generations of Brazilians. If you want to understand Brazil, this is an essential read.

I liked the fact author David Goldblatt copped to the fact he was not fluent in Portuguese and therefore pointed out his book could never come close to fully capturing the hows and whys Brazil is a futebol nation. Given that he does a pretty good job even if I did not get why having art, books, movie and songs done about soccer made any nation all that more a football nation. I also thought he needed to fill us readers in way more on who these artists were and not just give such short shrift

to so many. Additionally, the soccer in this book is mainly about Brazil's national team in World Cup Finals. It barely touches on Brazil when it plays in the Copa America let alone its club teams playing in the Copa Libertadores. Despite, for example, mentioning Corinthians is Brazil's most popular club team and saying thousands of their fans cashed in their life savings just to fly to Japan to watch their beloved take the World Club Cup in 2012, he just never explains how Corinthians got such a fan base nor why watching on TV is not enough for so many of their fans in a tournament the rest of the world outside Latin America, pretty much ignores. Putting aside these negatives, this book is a must-read right now. I found the facts about stadium building in the '70s was eerily foreshadowing the choices of venues and new stadium building for the 2014 World Cup Finals. You'll soon understand how Manaus who have no team at all in any of Brazil's pro leagues and how Fortaleza ended up hosting not only group matches but two in the knockout stages including a quarter-final despite being a minor player in Brazil soccer. Even in Brazil, Fortaleza's two clubs--CearÃ¡ Sporting Club and Fortaleza Esporte Clube--are afterthoughts even with CearÃ¡ getting to a Copa do Brasil Cup Final in 2011. Yet when you slice through it all, you're probably better off reading Alex Bellos's *Futebol: The Brazilian Way Of Life* to really learn about soccer in Brazil. *Futebol Nation* is only good for seeing what has gone on since Bellos's book came out in 2003. Warning also, *Futebol Nation* has way more on Brazilian politics than you'll ever need to know.

David Goldblatt is very modest in his acknowledgements about the shortcomings of "*Futebol Nation*," but that doesn't take away from how useful and entertaining the book is about Brazilian football, culture and history. Highly recommended.

good shape decent book

Football is life. That might have well been the title of David Goldblatt's newest work, one that takes on the enormous task of explaining the Brazilian way of football. In Brazil football is a big part of life and politics and history, part of the social fabric of an emerging nation and future global anchor. It is an obsession that has taken the huge country by storm and it has been that way for years. Goldblatt is one of the beautiful game's greatest thinkers and writers, having compiled the iconic *The Ball is Round* in 2006. That book was a massive piece of work, almost 1000 pages in length, but one that detailed the true and comprehensive history of our game. Now Goldblatt turns his attention to the wondrous footballing nation of Brazil in *Futebol Nation: The Story of Brazil through Soccer* just in time for the World Cup. Yes, World Cup titles are a dime a dozen this year,

but this one is actually different. It is completely exhaustive in detailing the history of football in Brazil. Like Spain, the country's success on the pitch is not easily explained, but rather it is a long tale, a roller coaster ride of epic proportions. Politics, the military, protests, and social issues all play a part. You'll meet the greatest stars of the Brazilian game, from the one and only Pelé to the tragic character known as Garrincha. You will see how the domestic game has been tumultuous and how the national team has developed into a worldwide fan favorite. Brazil is changing. It has become the de facto leader of South America off the pitch, developing industry and energy independence in a robust and growing economy. They are truly becoming a player on the world market in more ways than one. But one thing remains the same: football. The national team is always great and the domestic game produces great players and of course some shenanigans. Hardcore supporters and casual fans will both get something from this book as will scholars, historians, and even sociologists. It is far-reaching in audience and just an incredible text overall. This country and its people truly represent the sport of soccer, probably even more than England, where the modern game theoretically began. This book is a tribute to them and all that they bring, which puts the beauty in the beautiful game.

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