

# World Cup off to slow start

## Vuvuzela horns making more headlines than African teams

By RAHUL VAIDYANATH  
Epoch Times Staff

The 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa has gotten off to a slow start after the first stage of round robin games, but be patient, things are just getting started.

The first measure to judge how exciting the World Cup has been, wrongly in my opinion, is the number of goals scored. Thus far after the 16 matches in the first stage of the round robin, the average number of goals scored per game is 1.56 (25 goals in 16 games).

According to the Wall St. Journal, the average number of World Cup goals has been on a downward trend for the past 60 years.

When West Germany won the World Cup in 1954, an average of 5.38 goals per game were scored. In 2006, when Italy won it all, 2.3 goals per game were scored. The 2010 World Cup is on pace to break that dubious record.

A couple of the goals scored shouldn't have even been scored. Think back to Clint Dempsey's "goal" against England last Saturday. Robert Green committed a goaltending blunder that won't soon be forgotten. Also, Algeria's goalkeeper Fawzi Chaouchi was at fault on a very savable Slovenian shot.

Some blame the new Adidas

Jabulani ball. Some blame the altitude but what's really to blame is the defensive-minded "play not to lose approach" exhibited early on. While an early loss is not fatal, it is a body blow that puts a great deal of pressure on the team going forward. A draw, however, prevents teams from putting distance between themselves, leaving all possibilities open.

**HOME CONTINENT DISADVANTAGE**  
For the African teams, a first World Cup on their continent is extremely special. With six teams involved (Algeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and South Africa), one could expect to see something remarkable as we've seen in previous competitions. The world would like to see the African nations do well.

After the African teams' first matches, their combined record is 1 win, 3 losses, and 2 draws—so much for home continent advantage. This doesn't include South Africa's dismal loss to Uruguay on Wednesday.

If the African teams aren't making headlines with their play, their vuvuzela horns have certainly compensated. Love 'em or hate 'em, the ever present buzzing sound is now part and parcel of the atmosphere.

While numerous complaints have been made about the long plastic FIFA-approved horns, they will most likely continue to be part of the World

Cup experience. Earplug suppliers are boasting enormous increases in sales.

**POSITIVES**

While the excitement on the pitch is down so far at the World Cup with a few notable dull games, there are some positives that should be mentioned.

In the first 16 games, there has only been one straight red card. And it was a harsh decision at that. Australia's Tim Cahill clattered into the legs of Germany's Bastian Schweinsteiger, and was reportedly in tears after the match, seeing his World Cup dreams shattered.

One could argue that good sportsmanship has been in evidence. Players have been good-natured and we haven't seen too many instances of pushing and shoving after the whistle blows.

The refereeing at the World Cup has been fairly consistent and has avoided major controversy. Certainly, some refs are more card-happy than others but no referee has taken control of any game with his decisions. And by and large, they have made the correct calls.

The officials missed the offside call on Slovakia's goal against New Zealand but the Kiwis fortunately equalized very late in injury time. Perhaps a higher justice prevailed?

In any case, it's far too early to pass judgment on the World Cup. Things are just getting started. Take the Swiss upset of Spain a foreshadowing of the excitement to come.



EXPECTED MORE: Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo played well but his team disappointed in a highly anticipated matchup with Ivory Coast on Tuesday. TOSHIFUMI KITAMURA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# Swiss shock Spain in World Cup

## Gelson Fernandes gives Switzerland first win over Spain in 19 internationals

By RAHUL VAIDYANATH  
Epoch Times Staff

The 2010 FIFA World Cup saw its first major upset on Wednesday in Durban as Switzerland edged Spain 1-0 thanks to some textbook defending and opportunistic scoring from the underdogs.

The Swiss struck against the run of play in the 52nd minute. Gelson Fernandes scrambled home a loose ball amid bodies flying everywhere after a long boot down the pitch from goalkeeper Diego Benaglio.

"We were a little lucky but you're always going to need a bit of good fortune if you want to beat Spain," said Fernandes on FIFA.com

The goal gave the Swiss

confidence and they nearly struck a second. Eren Derdiyok hit the post after some fine dribbling in the 74th minute.

As expected, Spain dominated the possession with the most technically talented midfield in the world. But the Swiss set up their defense around the top of the 18-yard box and hunkered down.

The game was reminiscent of Greece's Euro 2004 triumph. Not pretty stuff, but certainly effective.

But the Swiss are building a reputation for an airtight defense. Recall that in the 2006 World Cup in Germany, they never conceded a goal. They eventually lost to Ukraine in the round of 16 on penalty kicks.

Spanish goalkeeper Iker Casillas,

after the match showed his disappointment, "Nobody expected this result, nor that we would lose the match. But we have to look at the bright side. They have managed to counterattack and stand well at the back. The last straw is that the goal was a bit of star fruit [lucky]."

Swiss coach Ottmar Hitzfeld said, "I'm well aware we made history. We've never beaten Spain before and I've always said there would be a first time."

The upset is all the more notable given the Swiss were missing key attacking players Alexander Frei and Valon Behrami. Starting on the Spanish bench, just as an example of their squad quality, were Fernando Torres and Cesc Fabregas.

Andres Iniesta got the start in midfield despite concerns about his recovery from injury.

Central defender Gerard Pique had Spain's best early chance in the

24th minute with a point blank shot but Benaglio came out and closed off his shooting angle.

Spain, as Euro 2008 champions, were heavy favorites to take the trophy on July 11. Their best finish at a World Cup however is a fourth place finish in Brazil 60 years ago. Now they face an uphill battle to qualify for the knockout stages, especially after Chile's 1-0 victory over Honduras earlier in the day.

"I want to avenge this defeat and I'm up for the challenge, and that's the way we all need to feel. This is no time for feeling sorry for ourselves and cursing our bad luck," said Spanish coach Vicente del Bosque.

Spain and Switzerland were the last two teams to play their opening matches. Prior to the match the mighty Spaniards held a dominant record of 15 wins, 3 draws and 0 losses against the Swiss.


**Michael Bradley Autographed Soccer Jersey Raffle**

Hey soccer fans, with the World Cup upon us, *The Epoch Times* wants to hear from you!

We want to know who you think is going to win the World Cup and who is going to win the golden boot as the tournament's top scorer.

Please e-mail us at [response@epochtimes.com](mailto:response@epochtimes.com) with the subject World Cup: your name, age, answers to both questions, and mailing address (U.S. & Canada only) so that if you are chosen, we can send you the autographed Borussia Mönchengladbach jersey of American midfielder Michael Bradley.

Deadline for your responses is July 7 when the matchup for the final on July 11 has been set.



The random draw for the jersey will be on July 11 during the World Cup final. The result will be posted on the Web at the conclusion of the game with the jersey to be mailed to the winner immediately thereafter.

Be sure to follow the World Cup along with us at *The Epoch Times* and RV\_ETSports on Twitter.



STREET PARTY: Crescent Street was closed off for the LG Crescent Grand Prix Festival that took place from June 10-12 in Montreal, Canada. RAMIRO COLOMA/THE EPOCH TIMES

# Formula One Grand Prix fever takes over Montreal

By ARNAUD CAMU  
Epoch Times Staff

MONTREAL—Thousands last Friday walked the closed off streets of Montreal for the LG Crescent Grand Prix Festival. The city was host to the eighth Formula One Grand Prix (GP) of the year this past weekend.

Known as one of Montreal's most vibrant streets at night, Crescent Street was jam-packed with sports cars, promotional booths, and activities.

The Gilles Villeneuve Museum was showcasing an exhibit in honour of the Canadian F1 racer who died in 1982 during the final qualifying session of the Belgian GP at Zolder. From Berthierville, Quebec to Maranello, Italy, the home of Ferrari, the exhibition told in pictures and pieces of equipment the life of the man who Enzo Ferrari considered a son.

Bob Chaplin, Vice President Operations at Fastco, said his custom wheels, tires, and accessories company was hoping to get its name out by participating in the LG

Crescent Grand Prix Festival and displaying Chaplin's own 2007 Mustang Boss GT as well as custom rims.

"We're trying to get exposure," he said, and with the great turnout and weather, the experience was positive so far.

The Canadian Grand Prix in Montreal attracts tourists from all around the world. Some, like the Avila family from Mexico, are regulars.

"Last year, the Canadian GP didn't happen, so we went to [the one in] Sao Paolo, Brazil. That city doesn't celebrate the GP in the same way," said Ms. Avila. "We're glad to be back," added her husband.

The Canadian Grand Prix had been dropped for the first time since 1987 from the 2009 Formula One calendar. The first Canadian GP to take place in Montreal was in 1978 and was won by Gilles Villeneuve. The circuit was named in his honour upon his death when it was renamed Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in 1982.

Five hundred thousand festival goers were expected to take part in activities related to the Grand Prix Weekend.

# Hamilton, Button 1-2 in Canadian Grand Prix

## Third sweep for McLaren in a battle a tire strategies

By JAMES FISH  
Epoch Times Staff

When the FIA announced the Formula One refueling ban for the 2010 season, many fans believed that tire strategy would be the new key to victory.

As teams discovered, the tires supplied by Bridgestone were durable enough to last an entire race. Strategy was simple: qualify on the softer Options, switch to Primes after 15 laps, and finish the race.

Until Canada. The tires Bridgestone supplied for the Formula One Grand Prix of Montreal last Sunday had the shortest life span of any tires seen this season. The Primes went off after 15 or 20 laps and the Options a third of that. Montreal was the first race of the season where tire strategy actually made a difference.

And it was Lewis Hamilton of McLaren, rather than the usually dominant Red Bull drivers, who had the right strategy.

Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button brought McLaren its third sweep of the season, taking the top spots in the Drivers' and Constructors' championships. It was Hamilton's second win in a row.

"The race was one of the toughest races so far," Hamilton told FOX-TV, "but that's what you want, to have the hardest fight. These guys did an incredible job. Jenson did a great job and another one-two for us, so I am very happy and

proud of the team." The win gives Hamilton a three-point lead over Jenson Button, 109-106. Webber, in third, has 100 points. The victory also gave McLaren a 215-193 edge over Red Bull in the Constructors' championship.

**FI RETURNS TO CANADA**

Formula One started racing in Canada in 1967, and raced there continuously until 2008, missing only 1975 and 1987, when sponsorship troubles sidelined the event.

The 2005 Montreal race was the most watched Formula One GP in the world, and the third most-watched sporting event worldwide that year, behind Super Bowl XXXIX and the UEFA Champions League Final.

Unfortunately, too much of the race's revenues went to Formula One management and not enough toward maintenance, and after 2008, the race was canceled because the track surface was breaking up in several places around the circuit.

In August 2009, Quebec's government and the Canadian Grand Prix organizers announced a five-year contract spanning the 2010-2014 seasons. The track was repaved, and Formula One agreed to cut its sanction fee by almost half.

After the overwhelmingly positive response by Canadians to this year's race, it would seem very good days lie ahead for Formula



HEAD OF THE PACK: Lewis Hamilton leads during the Formula One Montreal Grand Prix. BRYN LENNON/GETTY IMAGES

One in Canada.

**TIRE STRATEGIES MAKE THE RACE**  
Hamilton started on Option tires, which went off after seven laps. The McLaren driver then pitted for tires, choosing the harder Prime compound.

Hamilton left the pits behind the Ferrari of Fernando Alonso. Seven laps later he passed Alonso, inheriting the lead when Sebastian Buemi pitted from first place.

Ten laps later Hamilton pitted again—and again chose hard tires. Apparently McLaren had calculated that Hamilton would get the best out of the Prime tires by pushing hard for 15 laps, then getting a fresh set to treat gently for the rest of the race.

A few laps later most of the race leaders also stopped for tires, leaving Hamilton second behind the Red Bull of Mark Webber, who was

still on his starting set of tires. Webber kept the lead until lap 50, when his tires were worn down to nothing. Hamilton passed him, and the Red Bull driver headed for the pits, but he had to take Option tires—the rules require drivers to run at least one lap on each compound. This left Webber needing to run 50 laps on tires that were only good for five.

This was not the end of Red Bull's woes. Five laps from the end, the Red Bull pits radioed Sebastian Vettel to short-shift—because they saw an engine problem developing. This ended any prospect of a Red Bull podium finish.

Speculation is Vettel's car was running out of gas. Apparently the Red Bulls calculate fuel very precisely, to achieve the lowest possible starting weight, and if the drivers pushed too hard early, they'd have to conserve later.