

## FLASHBACK 2004: AFRICA

## The Mandela effect

## Football

AFP, Johannesburg

The ultimate African football dream came true this year with South Africa chosen as hosts of the 2010 World Cup.

It was second time lucky for the Rainbow Nation after being controversially pipped by Germany for the 2006 tournament when Oceania octogenarian Charles Dempsey abstained from the decisive third round of voting.

Last May it took just one round with South Africa winning 14 votes, Morocco 10 and Egypt 0. Tunisia withdrew at the last minute when co-hosting was barred and Libya were disqualified for technical reasons.

Nigeria were the other original contenders only to pull out early in a bidding race that turned ugly as day approached with South Africa and Morocco trading verbal blows.

Former superstar Franz Beckenbauer was the German trump card and South Africa owed their success largely to Nelson Mandela, the living legend who worked tirelessly to sway crucial votes.

Ignoring the advice of his medical staff not to travel, the man who led his country to their first democratic elections in 1994 flew to the Caribbean just weeks before the vote and waded North and Central American delegations.

But it took another meeting with a representative from the region in the Swiss city of Zurich just 48 hours before the vote to win them over and leave Morocco to reflect on a fourth failed bid.

At lunchtime on Saturday May 15 a frail Mandela was escorted into a Zurich conference centre to see world football supremo Sepp Blatter open an envelope and display the result of a bid confined to Africa under a rotational system.

Joy was unconfined. The bitterness endured by a proud nation when losing 12-11 to Germany was forgotten as Mandela, fellow Nobel prize winners FW de Klerk and Desmond Tutu and football officials celebrated wildly.

Bid committee chief executive Danny Jordaan, who had toiled tirelessly for seven years to bring the quadrennial showcase of international football to Africa for the first time, became an instant national hero.

On the field, the Tunisian national team, Enyimba International Football Club of Nigeria and Barcelona and Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o were the big winners after another year of frenetic action.

Hosts Tunisia lifted the African Nations Cup for the first time, Ziad Jaziri scoring an early second-half goal to beat Morocco 2-1 in the first final featuring teams from the north of the continent.

Frenchman Roger Lemerre created history by becoming the first coach to win two continental titles having guided France to a golden-gold success over Italy in the Euro 2000 climax.

Having suffered a humiliating first-round exit when staging the 1994 finals, Tunisia took nothing for granted and after a comfortable passage through the group phase, grinded out victories over Senegal, Nigeria and Morocco.

Cameroon, seeking a record third consecutive title, surrendered timidly to Jay Okocha-inspired Nigeria in the quarter-finals. Mali were surprise semi-finalists and poor South Africa did not even make the knockout phase.

The Super Eagles of Nigeria ended the year ranked number one in Africa followed by Cameroon, Senegal, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, South Africa, Ivory Coast, Mali and Zimbabwe.

World Cup and African Nations Cup qualifiers were combined for

sued by Ghana and DR Congo. Cameroon dreams of a fifth World Cup appearance in a row are all but over with Ivory Coast, guided by Frenchman Henri Michel and boasting a deadly strike force in Didier Drogba and Aruna Dindane, set to qualify for the first time.

Unbeaten and defensively solid Angola lead Nigeria by a point in a two-team race for Group 4 honours but have to visit West Africa while the Group 5 clash between Tunisia and Morocco could decide who travels to Germany.

Eto'o was voted African Footballer of the Year ahead of Okocha and Drogba and they are among the five finalists for the 2004 award with the Nigerian magician favoured.

Enyimba became the first club since TP Englebert of DR Congo in 1968 to successfully defend the Champions League, known as the Champions Cup until prize money was introduced and quarter-finals scrapped in favour of groups seven years ago.

Success came to the club from the south-east Nigeria town of Aba despite going seven matches without a victory before edging Etoile Sahel of Tunisia 2-1 in the second

## Carlos never wanted a transfer?

INTERNET SOURCE

Brazilian wing-back Roberto Carlos has reacted angrily to the continuous reports that he wants a transfer out of Madrid.

"I don't want to go. It's a lie. I'm very comfortable at Madrid and very happy to be here."

Carlos, who recently renewed his contract until July 2007, has been obliged to constantly defend his position this season, and speculation has reached fever pitch recently with his omission from the galacticos team. Ostensibly, Carlos is out with a muscular injury to his right leg, but the rumours persist.

"Let's clear this up once and for all," Carlos told radio station Onda Madrid.

"Just so that people don't get the wrong idea (about my injury), I am resting and recuperating because I don't want to have to operate. I've been playing with this pain for five months now and it has been bothering me."

"Why would I go? Where can I live better than I do in Spain? I'm playing in the best league in the world, for the best supporters in the world."

## Keane keen still

AFP, London

Manchester United skipper Roy Keane is keen to carry on at Old Trafford beyond 2006 when he will be 35.

Keane's contract expires in 18 months' time and a hip injury which has blighted his game over recent seasons had led many to believe he would retire then.

However, he has been back in form recently and is optimistic his Old Trafford career, which began after a move from Nottingham Forest in 1993, could run a little longer.

"I could not be happier at the club and my biggest challenge is to keep going as long as I can," Keane told the Daily Mail.

"I have another year and a half left and I intend to see that out. If I am still able to play on after that, then I hope it will be at United."

"If I feel as good as this physically in a year's time, then I will hopefully try to play on."

But Keane recognises that any decision is in the hands of United manager Alex Ferguson.

"As long as United want me, then I'm happy to stay," he added.

"I don't like looking too far ahead as things can change quickly. But if, please God, I can stay fit and feel strong and doing okay, then it's possible I could stay."

"I hope that there will be some more highlights to come in my career with this club."



PHOTO: AFP

Sevilla's Brazilian Julio Baptista (L) trying to go past Real Madrid's Guti at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

## Primera Liga

## Real's year-end misery

## Football

AFP, Madrid

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in 20 years on Wednesday.

Valencia have 32 points from their 17 games and move up to second, one point and one place ahead of Sevilla.

Espanyol slip to fourth and stay on 30 points while Real Madrid fall out of the leading quartet to fifth with 29 points.

"I think we went out for the second half knowing we had lost," added Lotina.

Real went down 1-0 for only their second home defeat of the season when Sevilla's Julio Baptista danced through the Madrid defence after 19 minutes.

Ronaldo, who started the game on the bench but came on after half time for England captain David Beckham, found the net six minutes from the whistle but the potential equaliser was ruled out because Real captain Raul Gonzalez was offside.

"What a good way to end the year. We will be able to relax over the holidays now," grinned Sevilla captain Javi Navarro.

Athletic Bilbao continued their rise up the table with a 4-0 victory over relegation-threatened Real Mallorca, the Basques' third consecutive win.

Francisco Yeste headed Athletic

in front after just six minutes and four minutes later he sent over the freekick that Santiago Ezquerro slotted home from close range.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

## TOP SIX

Spanish football league standings after Wednesday's late match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Barcelona	17	13	3	1	35	11	42
Valencia	17	9	5	3	27	12	32
Sevilla	17	9	4	4	21	18	31
Espanyol	17	9	3	5	18	12	30
Real	16	9	2	5	24	12	29
Betis	17	7	6	4	22	20	27

To make matters worse, Malaga had to play the last 11 minutes with just 10 men after Gerardo Garcia was sent off, perhaps a little unfortunately, for a clumsy tackle on Sociedad's Igor Gabilondo.

Bottom club Numancia are still without a point away from home after they went down 2-0 to Osasuna, both goals coming from Uruguayan striker Chengue Morales, who has now scored seven times in as many matches.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.

It was a miserable night for Spain's other struggling sides.

Malaga slumped to their worst defeat of the season, going down 5-1 at home to a rampant Real Sociedad.

After being held 1-1 at half-time, Darko Kovacevic put the San Sebastian side in front with his second goal of the night after 51 minutes.

Mikel Lekak and two goals from Nihat Kahveci finished off the demolition of the hapless Costa Del Sol side.

Reigning Spanish champions Valencia extended their unbeaten run to six games as they beat fellow high-flyers Espanyol 3-0 while Sevilla won their first match at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on December 22.

The hosts nearly had another on the half hour when Pablo Orbaiz hit the post but Carlos Gurgui did finally get Athletic's third midway through the second half and Yeste got his second goal of the night right on the whistle.