

World Cup Trophy on its Way to Eritrea

Written by Esseyas Fsehaye
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Accordingly, the coveted World Cup trophy is expected to arrive in Eritrea, Asmara, on November 16, 2009 for a two hour visit and give local people the opportunity to see it in person and to have some historical photographs.



The African tour of World Cup trophy started its journey in Cairo, Egypt, when the FIFA president Joseph Blatter came along on the occasion of the U-20 World Cup tournament hosted in Egypt last month. The World Cup trophy has been touring in different African countries since

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then. Its historic African tour is expected to reach all 54 African countries. Its East African tour is expected to be uncorked by Uganda.

Blatter was quoted saying, "Through this event, we are really engaging football fans on a global scale, giving them the unique opportunity to have their picture taken with the most prestigious prize in world football and to embrace the excitement surrounding the FIFA World Cup."

Eritrean players who were playing under the Ethiopian national teams have made such historic achievements in the history of African football. Ethiopia, strengthened by Eritrean talented players, was one of the first African countries to play in the first FIFA World Cup qualifying competition as one of the oldest FIFA members from the African zone. Its first entrance dates back to 1962, in Chile. This would mean that Eritrea's touch thorough its dominating players in Ethiopia to such association has a more-than-half-century age.

Eritrea's long football tradition makes its starlet players pioneers of international competition in Africa before and after the birth of CAF (Confederation of African Union) in 1957. Ethiopia hosted and won the 1962 Nations Cup trophy for the first time in its long standing history, thanks to the 9 first team Eritrean players who set up the 1962 Ethiopian National team.

Lucian Vassalo, Tesfay Gebremedhin, Berhe Goitom (Patata), Etalo Vassalo, Kiflom Araya, Gilamichael Tesfamariam (wedi Mariano), Haile Tesfagaber, Tecele Kidane, Asmelash Berhe, Tsegay Tesfay, Negassi Gebremichael and Berhane Beyene were Eritreans who were part of the 1962 historic Ethiopian National team. What would the coming of World Cup trophy to Eritrea mean to these football pioneers of the nation?

The World Cup trophy will be touring to 86 countries, 54 of which are African countries, covering a total distance of 134,017 km on the occasion of 2010 World Cup. The tour held on the occasion of World Cup 2006 visited 31 cities in 29 countries, covering 102,570 km with millions of fans around the world enjoying the chance to have a closer look at football's most famous prize.