
FIFA World Cup 2014: Football fever grips Cuba

17/06/2014



Once every four years, Cubans leave behind their passion for baseball and surrender themselves to football's charm as FIFA World Cup arrives. Cubans, who are very passionate, openly support the Latin American national teams, especially Brazil and Argentina, though many also follow the Spanish team, reports Xinhua.

The football fever is fed thanks to the live broadcast of the total 64 matches. Four of the most centric and big cinemas in Havana — Yara, Riviera, La Ramba are open to live shows of the World Cup games. Crowds of fans, especially young ones, go cheer their favourite team as if they were in some Brazilian stadium.

Many people also gather to watch the games at cafeterias and restaurants throughout the island. Cuban fans carry flags, jerseys and other souvenirs as if they are part of the cheering crowd in Brazil. In Havana's Central Park, one of the most important places to watch sports in the country, many people gather daily to discuss and make forecasts about the final.

"This World Cup has to be for Brazil," said Domingo Sanchez, who admits to know more about baseball and boxing than soccer but "I like how Brazilians play." Juan Carlos Fernandez cheers the Argentine team led by Alejandro Sabella and include football star Lionel Messi, who has lots of fans in Cuba.

"I hope Argentina will be champion again and Lionel Messi will show all his capabilities and become the tournament's top scorer," said Fernandez. With a more balanced opinion, Rene Castro says his favourite team is Spain. "Despite the surprising defeat against the Netherlands. Spain is still the champion and it will certainly recover."