



Futebol Nation: The Story of Brazil through Soccer

David Goldblatt

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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.

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