

Attendances heading for best since US '94 – Jordaan 1 July 2010

The overall attendance at the World Cup could be the highest since the tournament was held in the United States 16 years ago, organisers said on Thursday.

With eight of the 64 matches left to play, chief executive of the local organising committee Danny Jordaan said that more than 2.69 million fans had already attended matches in South Africa.

The World Cup in the U.S. attracted a record high of 3.59 million, followed by Germany in 2006 with 3.36 million. The total attendance in France in 1998 was 2.79 million and South Korea/Japan in 2002 was 2.71 million.

"Already 2.69 million fans have been in the stadiums and with the quarter-finals, the semi-finals, the third-fourth place playoff and the final to come, we expect to go beyond three million fans in the stadiums.

"We are now playing in the biggest stadiums in Cape Town, Durban and Soccer City and those have huge capacities so we will see if we can get over three million.

"If we do, South Africa can have the highest attendance since the World Cup in the United States in 1994."

FAN PARKS

Jordaan added that attendances at Fan Parks had already topped three million because of the innovation of international Fan Parks around the world.

"In terms of the fans in the Fans Park we have already gone beyond three million because we have also introduced foreign Fan Parks for the first time.

"Look at what has happened in Mexico City, in Rio, in Berlin. The experience in the stadiums and in Fan Parks all over the world has been hugely successful."

He added that with eight matches to play, no-one could predict the winner -- and that the best was yet to come.

"The most exciting fact of this World Cup is the surprise element. What we have seen so far is that the players earmarked to be the huge stars, Wayne Rooney, Ronaldo, Kaka and so on, hardly scored a goal.

"Other players have made a huge impact, it's a question of the surprise element of this World Cup.

"The biggest moment for our country is still to come, hosting the World Cup final in Soccer City with more than 80,000 fans, with millions of South Africans watching and millions around the world.

"That is the dream of Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu and it will be an incredible experience for all of us."

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