

## FIFA World Cup 2010 Report

The 2010 FIFA World Cup was an opportunity for ministry that was not to be missed. This event, held every 4 years, has the largest attendance for a sporting event in the world. For 2010 South Africa was the host country. According to the S. A. government the 2010 FIFA World Cup drew 2 million visitors. People from all over the world gather to watch good football/soccer. Not only do people come from the 32 countries that have a team in the tournament, but people also come from remote and unrepresented countries who want to increase the sport in their country.

Sports Impact was involved on the ground over nineteen days. To save costs we arrived after the tournament had begun and we left before the quarterfinals had finished. For more impact, great care should be given at these events to best target games that will interest the people “working” the tournament (as this increases ease of conversation) and countries where the gospel is seldom heard. In 2010 we targeted North Korea, and Muslim nations. We may not like the leadership of their countries, but we love the



people for the gospel’s sake. We can never underestimate the opportunity for the ministry to continue on in our absence. We have left our leftover tracts with those from other doctrinally sound groups who have used all of their tracts and were happy to distribute ours (approximately 18,000 total in Arabic, English, Korean, and Portuguese).

Sports Impact had a problem with receiving our tracts for use this time. Not only did we fail to get our tract translated into Afrikaans, French, German, Italian, & Spanish, but we also failed to get the tracts we did have through customs until three days before we had to leave the country. Had we not hand carried some tracts in, and been able to borrow more tracts from other ministries, we would have been severely short. Because of the generosity of others we were able to distribute over 9,100 tracts personally. This distribution took place at over 13 games – seven of which we were able to watch in the stadium. To attend that many games we drove over 5,327 kilometres (3310 miles). The contacts we made to borrow tracts ended up giving us contacts that would be able to continue distributing our tracts (with our follow-up card intact) at the semi finals and finals - as they had run out of the 130,000 tracts they had printed. Others wanted some of our tracts because we had languages other than English available (like the Korean churches) and ours were better focused in gospel presentation.



While we did not keep a tally on oral presentations of the gospel, the gospel was spoken many times. The important thing was that the Word of God was declared. I personally did not lead someone to Christ on the spot – the moment I talked with them.

However, I know that others did! I'm sure of at least six such salvation decisions. Many people we talked with were in "the spirit of the game" and were more interested in reading the booklet later. Others were drunk and we knew it was best to encourage them to read it after sobering up.

We were blessed in many ways. Among the best of the blessings are fellow missionaries we met. We spent time with people from other mission agencies that were equally concerned about evangelism. Some of these fine servants of the Lord are doing a great work in the Lord's fields! We have been enriched by time with God's people from all over the world. We were also blessed by our time with ABWE missionaries. While this is not essential, it is precious for all involved. They love the country they serve in, and that passion pours out on us, and it inspires us to share the Word.



Other items of note from the ministry time in South Africa are as follows: Flights between distant cities can give time on the plane for witnessing. This was effectively used between Johannesburg and Cape Town. While this would have been a 12-hour drive, it was only a two-hour flight. We met agnostics, undisciplined believers, and even people who do not know what they believe. With tracts in hand we eagerly gave them an opportunity to draw near to God as He drags them to Himself.

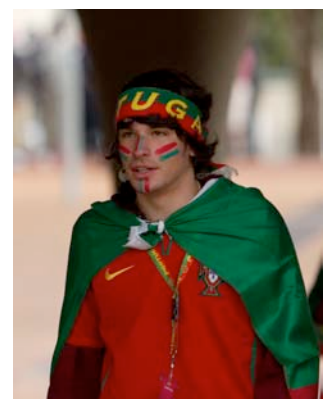
The local people can't be neglected! While the host country plays a large role in the background and receptivity of the locals, they need the gospel preached to them as well. Many from Europe and America were uninterested in our tracts. However, many South African's received them gladly. It would be fabulous to see God do a work of local revival



through the many locals who went out to a game and received the Word while there. Along this same line – use all opportunities available to spread the Word. Luke's favourite experience was during a three-hour traffic jam when he and Todd jumped out of the car and began giving out hundreds of tracts to those who were also stuck on the freeway. God only knows the results, but many people's days were brightened when we handed them something

free during their suffering. Luke would emphasize that busses should not get neglected in this effort. Children on several buses were eager to receive something about soccer!

Those involved in Sports Impact talked through several things that might help this ministry. Here are some of our thoughts. The best tract distribution is after games (though pre-game works to some degree), during daylight (at night people are less likely to take time to talk), and on main paths. The cold weather hindered conversations. Warmer cities are the places that will give opportunities to talk with people in the park an hour or more after the distribution is all done. This depends largely on the host country, so live with and enjoy what you have to work with.





Don't hide from police. If they want a tract happily give it to them. While at times it is their job to move you, they resist you more when they think you are trying to hide something from them. Always be polite, gracious, and out of the way. Do not block traffic or people from moving through an area. This will always force them to do their job and remove you. Also, don't flaunt your distribution in front of them. FIFA is hard on the police. We should be a kind and sound voice of grace that seeks to make their job easy.

Lastly in the blessings section of this report, father and son time was priceless for Mr Entner & Mr Douglas. It was of major impact on our sons to be involved in evangelism along side their fathers. It is a sound part of training our sons in "the way God would have them to go." The special things – like the games we saw and the safaris were also memories for a lifetime!



An observation or two are also in order for this report. The 4-door midsize truck we rented worked well. In Germany we had small subcompact cars that did not fit us, and travelling with our luggage was almost impossible. Add boxes of tracts to the mix and we found ourselves taking several trips to the same location. The truck had luggage space! It also helped with hauling tracts and gave us affordable options on safari (saving us about \$1200 per person). On the negative side the truck was bumpy (4x4 ride), gave us only moderate fuel economy and was bigger to park around crowded stadiums.

Lastly I would like to mention in this report some ideas for future ministry. While we may find that some of these are possible and others are not, all the ideas are worth considering. They are likely to make such a ministry easier, better or both.



Print tracts in the host country. We had a major problem with shipping, customs, and logistics. If the host country can print the tracts, most of the problems we faced would be avoided. Dave Crandall (from Answers in Genesis and their Olympic outreach) mentioned that this is his future intent for Olympic games outreach. Of course I learned this too late for this event. The expense of shipping and customs surpassed that of printing and binding. Therefore, even if printing in the host country is more expensive, it may still be cheaper and easier in the long run.

More languages are better. Note the languages of the top teams and get at least those. For us, not having Spanish was a big detriment to our ministry. Every FIFA World Cup should at least have English and Spanish. Then consider the other

languages that the group wants to target. You don't have to speak these languages to be involved, but a few "greeting words" help. We were one of the few groups to produce a tract in multiple languages. The fact that our English was the same quality of our Arabic, Korean or Portuguese really helped our credibility! It also gave us opportunities that other ministries did not have.



Consider things like a "fan tournament" for people to play for their country on a given free day. If done with FIFA approval this can get extra publicity and could be a super chance to share the gospel during a break or at the end of the day before trophies are handed out. Organizations like "Reachout" and "One Goal" can be inroads to FIFA acceptance.

In conclusion, we know that the Word of God does not return void. The opportunity to have the world gather together and then return home with the gospel in hand is wonderful. Eternity alone will give us the true impact – whether great or small. This is not, however, the only impact such a ministry has for the Kingdom of God. The impact within the Christians life, as they see tracts fly out of their hands faster than they can hold on to them, is stimulating. God at work is always a wondrous thing. So, sinners and unbelievers hear the gospel of Jesus Christ in great numbers (we know of over 200,000 tracts that were distributed during this World Cup), AND Christians are given the opportunity to share their faith in Christ while training others to do the same. WOW! It is by God's grace we have such a ministry! Let's do it again if He tarries!

