

Die Mannschaft

The 90 minute film is crafted as a behind-the-scenes documentary. With award winning co-producer Sönke Wortmann the public expected an exciting sequel to Wortmann's first soccer documentary *Das Sommermärchen* about the 2006 World Cup in Germany. From the training camp in the South Tyrol Alps to images from Camp Bahia in the North-East region of Brazil on the Atlantic coast, scenes from the team's daily activities are interspersed with footage from the actual games, as well as some pre-game locker room speeches and interviews of the players and coaches.

Whether this documentary lives up to the 2006 movie or the expectations following this historic win is questionable. You see the players at Camp Bahia hanging out, practicing, relaxing, playing soccer with local school kids and dancing with Pataxo Indians, being busy with their phones, stretching, working out, etc. Yet what seems lacking are enough moments where the inside world of the players and coaches is being explored. What was the reaction of the team after the difficult match against Algeria which Germany won 1-0 but played rather poorly in? Mertesacker gives his famous icy interview after the match but was this the moment that stoked the fire for the rest of the team and the remainder of the tournament? Being cooped up for seven weeks can readily induce cabin fever. It has been said that Germans thrive under conditions like this and get better as the tournament progresses. But there must have been some moments where decisions were made that changed the course of the tournament for the team, analogous to what happened after the famous loss to East-Germany in 1974. Was the injury to Mustafi in the Algeria match and the subsequent move to put captain Lahm back on defense such a tournament changer? The movie seems to fall short of providing enough insights into these crucial moments and capturing the emotional aspects of such a historic quest. Yet, to anyone who loves this game and follows the history of the cup, there are plenty of interesting images from behind the scenes that merely watching the games on TV cannot provide.

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Friday Film Fest Series



Die Mannschaft

By Martin Christ, Jens Gronheid, and Ulrich Voight

May 20th, 2016

• 6:30 PM •

Film, Food & Discussion

Non-Members \$15, Members \$12

The German Society of PA

611 Spring Garden St.

215-627-2332

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Die Mannschaft (2014)

Directors: Martin Christ, Jens Gronheid, and Ulrich Voight

Producers: Tom Speiss, Sönke Wortmann

“Brasilien hat Neymar.

Argentinien hat Messi.

Portugal hat Ronaldo.

Deutschland hat eine Mannschaft.”

Steven Gerrard (England)

Commentary: Karl Moehlmann

Vier Sterne

1. Der erste Stern – 1954 “Das Wunder von Bern” ★

On July 4th, 1954, the German national team defeated the highly favored Hungarian team 3-2 in the final of the World Cup in Bern, Switzerland. The players and their coach **Sepp Herberger** became national heroes. The names of captain **Fritz Walter** and of **Helmut Rahn** (who scored the winning goal) are forever etched in Germany’s soccer history. More than just an athletic triumph, the stunning victory engendered for the first time in post war Germany “a kind of collective happiness and a counter-image to the Nazi-era” (Sönke Wortmann). The victory cry *Wir sind wieder wer* epitomized the boost which the championship gave to the battered psyche of the nation.

2. Der zweite Stern – 1974 – Kapitän Beckenbauer ★ ★

After West-Germany had won the European Championship in 1972 in Belgium with **Captain Franz Beckenbauer**, the charismatic **Günter Netzer** in midfield and the bomber **Gerd Müller**, West-Germany was considered the clear favorite to win the next World Cup in 1974 on home turf. So it came as a great shock when East-Germany beat West-Germany in the first group stage 1-0 in the Hamburg Volksparkstadion with a goal by **Jürgen Sparwasser** in the 77th minute. But the team around captain Beck-



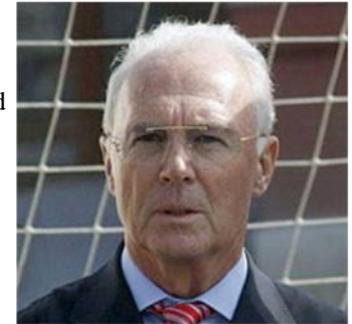
enbauer regrouped and advanced to the final against the Netherlands which was lead by the dynamic **Johann Cruyff** and their modern form of *Total Football*. The Dutch took the lead from a penalty. However, West Germany tied the match on a penalty by **Paul Breitner**, and won it with **Gerd Müller's** fine finish soon after



3. Der dritte Stern – 1990 – Coach Beckenbauer ★ ★ ★

The 1990 World Cup took place in Italy. The team was lead by **captain Lothar Matthäus** and coached by the *Kaiser* Franz Beckenbauer. When they played against Argentina in the final in Rome, it was the unprecedented third consecutive final appearance by the *Mannschaft*. In the rematch of the 1986 final, West Germany won 1-0 with the only goal being a penalty scored in the 85th minute by **Andreas Brehme**.

Beckenbauer, who won the World Cup as the national team's captain in 1974, thus became the first person to win the World Cup as both captain and coach



4. Der vierte Stern – 2014 – Brasilien ★ ★ ★ ★

In the 84 year history of the world cup (1930 – 2014) no European Team has ever won a championship on South American soil. And before 2002, when the World Cup was played in South-Korea and Japan for the first time, the tournaments used to alternate between Europe and the Americas. So when Germany beat Brazil 7-1 in the Semi-Final and then Argentina 1-0 in the Final, it was an historic victory. In particular, the 7-1 thrashing of proud host and record Cup winner Brazil (5 World Cups) was a result that no one believed possible. Yes, Brazilian superstar Neymar was hurt and their best defender Thiago Silva was suspended for this game, but Brazil had many more renowned stars and the home field advantage of this soccer crazy nation. Five goals in the first half, seven goals in total for the worst defeat in Brazil’s history. Even the loud German tabloid *Die Bildzeitung* couldn’t find words.

