

History of Futsal

About US Futsal

The origin of Futsal (Five-a-Side Soccer) can be traced back to Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1930 when Juan Carlos Ceriani devised a five-a-side version of soccer for youth competition in YMCAs. The game is played on basketball-sized courts, both indoors and out without the use of sidewalls.

The term FUTSAL is the international term used for the game. It is derived from the Spanish or Portuguese word for "soccer"-- **FUT**bol or **FUT**ebol, and the French or Spanish word for "indoor" -- **SAL**on or **SAL**a. The term was adopted by U.S. Futsal since it includes the initials "**fUtSAI**" (**USA**). The term was trademarked in the United States after U.S. Futsal changed its corporate name within the state of California.

The game is frequently referred to as Five-A-Side or Mini-soccer. Once Ceriani got the ball rolling, Futsal gained rapid popularity throughout South America, particularly in Brazil. The skill developed in this game is visible in the world-famous style the Brazilians display outdoors on the full-sized field. Pele, Zico, Socrates, Bebeto and other Brazilian superstars developed their skill playing Futsal. While Brazil continues to be the Futsal hub of the world, the game is now played, under the auspices of FIFA, all over the world, from Europe to North and Central America and the Caribbean, South America, Africa, and Asia and Oceania.

The first international competition took place in 1965, when Paraguay won the first South American Cup. Six more South American Cups were held through 1979, with Brazil winning all of them. Brazil continued its dominance with a victory in the first Pan American Cup in 1980 and won it again the next time it was played in 1984. A U.S. team took part in the 1984 cup, but finished out of the running.

U.S. Futsal was founded in 1981 and incorporated in January, 1983. Osvaldo Garcia was its first president. The game is referred to as Minisoccer, five-a-side soccer, Futbol Sala or Futebol de Salao, but it is also widely refereed by its trademark name, Futsal. The current U.S. Futsal president is Alex J.C. Para.

The first Futsal World Championship conducted under the auspices of FIFUSA (before its members integrated into FIFA in 1989) was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1982, with Brazil finishing in first place. The Brazilians repeated as champions at the second World Championship in 1985 in Spain, but lost in the third World Championship in 1988 in Australia to Paraguay. FIFA took over direct sponsorship of the event in 1989 in Holland and 1992 in Hong Kong. Brazil won both times. The U.S. Futsal (Indoor Team), finished third in 1989 and second in 1992 at the FIFA Five-a-Side World Championship. The highest showing by any team from the United States in a FIFA tournament until the U.S. Womens team won the gold medal in China for outdoor soccer. The Third FIFA World Championship was held November 24 through December 11, 1996, in Spain and for the first time

FIFA names it the FIFA Futsal World Championship. The Fourth FIFA Futsal World Championship was held in Guatemala between November 18 to December 4th, 2000. The fifth Futsal World Championship was held in Taipei in December 2004.

The first international Futsal match played by the U.S. Futsal National Team was in May 1984 in Nanaimo, Canada, and the United States won 6-5. The first international Futsal match in the United States was held in December, 1985, at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, California. The U.S. select team, defeated Australia, 9-5.

U.S. Futsal has conducted a National Championship each year since 1985. Futsal is establishing itself at the youth level in the U.S. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America took a strong interest after the Columbia Park Club in San Francisco asked U.S. Futsal to give a demonstration. The national organization adopted the sport, and it is now played at about 1,100 Boys and Girls Clubs throughout the U.S. The American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) also plays the sport in a close working relationship with U.S. Futsal since 1988.

The U.S. Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) and U.S. Futsal signed an agreement in August of 1995 and in 1999, to promote futsal in all their National State Association as their game of choice for indoor soccer under the auspices of U.S. Futsal.