



## After the draw it is clear: Germany will face Cyprus in the first match

When Alex Schlüter announced the official group draw on Wednesday evening at 19:00 CET, the excitement was high, not only among the organisers of the SOCCA World Cup. A large audience followed the draw of the preliminary round groups via livestream. In 44 countries, people held their breath in the hope of avoiding a "group of death" and getting supposedly "feasible" group opponents from the pot. However: Alea iacta est - the die is cast.

Germany will face Chile, Oman and Cyprus in Group A, which was drawn by Head of Local Organizing Committee (LOC), Julia Colter. An interesting constellation that is difficult to assess, but at least on paper, apart from the hosts, contains no tournament favourites. Group D, on the other hand, is different, with reigning world champions Brazil. The Tournament Director of the International Socca Federation (ISF), Tom Nash, has assigned the South Americans Hungary from pot 2 - a team known to be strong and ambitious in small-sided football. Further drama in this group is provided by Turkey, who are difficult to assess from a sporting point of view but can count on a large fan support in the heart of the Ruhr area. The same goes for the Moroccans, who also have a large Essen community and will face Scotland, Georgia and India in Group K.

Christoph Köchy, President of Deutscher Kleinfeld-Fußball-Verband and responsible for pot 3, has not only drawn Turkey into Group D, but also Oman into Group A, whom Germany already met at the last World Cup. There, the team of national coach Malte Froehlich clearly prevailed. The strongest team from pot 3 was Italy, who knocked France out of the group last year and could also cause a surprise in this tournament. In any case, the match between Italy and Greece (Group G) promises to be very exciting.

The draw was completed by Thanos Papadopoulos, CEO of the ISF. He completed the groups with many newcomers like Bahrain or Saudi Arabia, but also with some exciting South American teams like Colombia and Peru. Or Uruguay, who will face one of the favourites in Group I, Poland.

At the end of the draw, Schlüter asked Marc Müller, Head of Sport & Marketing of the LOC, to come on stage to give a final assessment. "A dangerous group, but we have to get out of it," was his conclusion on Germany's starting position. Difficult groups were above all the constellations in D and I, but England against USA was also a game "you can only look forward to".

At the moment, the match schedule is being drawn up behind the scenes. But one thing is already certain: Germany will open the tournament on 2 June against Cyprus.

For further enquiries please contact us under:

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