

Confederation Cup 2013: Italy in Semi-final "Go Azzurri!!"

Chiara Morucci (June 25, 2013)



Confederation Cup 2013: Italy is in the semi-finals and on Thursday is going to face Spain again. The memories of the sad night of Euro 2012 when Italy lost 4-0 to Spain are still vivid. Italy is a very talented team and we wish it would win this time. As Balotelli tweeted "Go Azzurri!Go Italy!Come on Italy."

The 2013 Confederations Cup has opened its doors the 15th of June and will conclude with the final on June 30th. The nation hosting this renowned international association football tournament in 2013 is Brazil, also the defending champion. This event is a prelude to the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

The teams qualified to participate to the Cup have been, Italy UEFA Euro 2012 runners up because was the second positioned in the European Cup 2012, Brazil hosted country, Spain the 2010 FIFA World Cup winner, Japan 2011 AFC Asian Cup winner, Mexico 2011 CONCACAF Gold Cup winner, Uruguay 2011 Copa America winner, Tahiti 2012 OFC Nations Cup winner, and Nigeria 2013 African Cup of Nations winner.

In the Tournament, the 8 soccer teams had been divided into two groups: Group A and B. The Group A was composed of Italy, Brazil, Mexico and Japan. The Group B included Spain, Uruguay, Nigeria and Tahiti. From each group has come out two semi-finalists. Italy and Brazil were the finalists of Group A and Spain and Uruguay from group B.



[Italy](#) [2] is going to play its semi-final on June 27th at 15.00 (New York Time) against its recurrent "rival" [Spain](#) [3]. The two teams will face again this Thursday just a year after the harsh Italian defeat in the Final of Euro 2012 for 4-0. The semifinal match between Italy and Spain is awaited with excitement by both teams. Italy hopes to win to erase the bad memory of the past tough defeat. On the other hand, Spain is willing to confirm its great talent and hopes to add another international title to its extraordinary soccer history of the last years.

The Azzurri are feared by the Spanish coach [Vicente Del Bosque](#) [4], that in an interview declared "Italy will arrive at the field with revenge in their mind for their earlier defeat at the European Cup, the Azzurri has become a completely new team since the last game a year ago in Ukraine. They will be a very difficult opponents, it is going to be a re-match for them. We want to get to the final though."

The Italian coach [Cesare Prandelli](#) [5], also shares some of his fears and hopes for the semi-final. "Spain is the best team in the world and they have proved it over the last years. They are almost impossible to beat. Spain is in much better condition than us, it is evident in the easy way they qualified for the semi-final" Prandelli stated. "Spain is very good in keeping the ball and attacking, we have to try to make them run as much as possible. I am convinced we can make it difficult. We have great motivations and we will do our best to win." Prandelli added.

Unfortunately, the Azzurri will face Spain without the star [Mario Balotelli](#) [6], who has become in these years the leader of the team. He suffered a very bad injury, a thigh strain, and had to go back to Italy for treatments. Balotelli's talent and his charisma are very missed. Balotelli to feel closer to his teammates wrote few hours ago in twitter to them "Forza Ragazzi! Forza Italia! Dai!!" (Go Azzurri! Go Italy! Come on Italy!)

In Brazil, the Italian team is followed by a very special guest/fan: [Kobe Bryant](#) [7] the star of the NBA the Lakers. Bryant lived in Italy with his family when he was a kid and his love for Italy has made him a fan of the Italian National Soccer team since his childhood.

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[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy_national_football_team

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain_national_football_team

[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicente_del_Bosque

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cesare_Prandelli

[6] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mario_Balotelli

[7] <https://twitter.com/kobebryant>