

FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011 sets new TV viewing records

BERLIN, GERMANY: The FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011 has smashed several TV audience records along the way. This was particularly notable in the host nation Germany, the defending champions twice over, as well as in the countries of the two finalists, the USA and Japan.



(Getty Images)

The four games featuring the German team all gained average audiences of more than 14 million, with their final three matches attracting averages of over 16 million viewers nationwide - by far the highest audiences on record for FIFA Women's World Cup matches in Germany. An average audience of over 17 million people watched Germany bow out to Japan, representing nearly a quarter of the German population.

To put these figures into context, an average German audience of 15.5 million watched the recent Klitschko v. Haye World Championship boxing match in Hamburg, Germany, and an average of 14.8 million watched Germany v. Serbia at the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa. The German audiences for the FIFA Women's World Cup are also the highest audiences for any sporting programme in the market since the final in 2010.

Solid figures

"These are solid figures on their own, but when you put them into context with other major sports events they emphatically underline that the FIFA Women's World Cup was an exceptionally popular spectacle for TV viewers," said FIFA TV director Niclas Ericson.

In the USA, an average audience of over 14.1 million watched the final between the USA and Japan. ESPN delivered the large majority of the audience, reporting an average of close to 13.5 million and a peak audience during the penalty shoot-out of over 21.1 million. This is ESPN's highest-ever audience for a football match and ranks as the second-highest audience for a daytime telecast in US cable history (behind the 2011 Rose Bowl). These audiences were also over three times higher than the US average audience for the final round of golf's Open Championship on Sunday, as well as nearly 10% higher than the audience for baseball's All Star Game last week.



(Getty Images)

Breaking records

Newly crowned world champions Japan also achieved record audiences at home for the final despite the match airing in the early hours of Monday morning. An average audience of 10.4 million watched Japan beat the USA, while a peak audience of over 15 million witnessed the penalty shoot-out. This audience is more than three times higher than the previous record for a women's football match in Japan set by the semi-final last week, and it is more than 50% higher than the audience in Japan for the final of the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa. This also compares favourably to Japanese audiences for other major sporting events, including The Masters golf tournament.

In France, a record audience was set for the France v. USA match, with an average audience of over 2.3 million tuning in. This is more than double the previous record for a women's football match in the market, which had been set for the France v. England quarter-final earlier in the tournament. The audience in France peaked at nearly 3.3 million towards the end of the France v. USA match.

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