

Japan offers global 3-D telecasts in 2022 WC bid

May 23 2010



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High-tech Japan has promised to treat football fans worldwide to ultra-realistic live 3-D telecasts of World Cup matches should it win the right to host the 2022 edition.

The 550 billion yen (six billion dollar) "Universal Fan Fest" project is part of Japan's bid submitted to football's world governing body FIFA on Friday, the Japan Football Association said Monday.

The matches would be viewed by some 360 million people at nearly 400 select stadiums in FIFA's 208 member countries, said JFA general secretary Kohzo Tashima, chief executive officer of the bid committee.

The images would be captured from 360 degrees by 200 high-definition

cameras during each match, to be transmitted as three-dimensional images, a technology that has been driven in large part by Japan's electronics giants.

The matches would be shown on giant screens or, if technological advances in coming years allow, projected like a real match onto the pitch itself, giving viewers the illusion of watching the real thing.

Microphones installed below the pitch where the actual game is taking place would record all sounds, including the ball being kicked and the referee's whistle, to create an ultra-realistic digital version.

The futuristic communications system would be powered in part from electricity generated by spectators cheering and stamping their feet, as well as from solar panels on the roof of the stadium.

"You may say the required technology is like a dream and smacks of a sci-fi movie," said Keio University professor Jun Murai, who serves as director of technology at the committee.

"But it is important to see how technology will evolve within 12 years. I think it will be realised or become usable by around 2016," he told a Tokyo press conference.

At Germany 2006, about 18 million people were estimated to have attended public viewing events, mostly free-of-charge events in parks, said Makato Maruyama, director of operations at the Japan bid committee.

"We envisage public viewing at stadiums, increasing the attendance by tens of times," he said.

FIFA's 24 executives will choose the hosts of the 2018 and 2022 World

Cups on December 2.

Australia, Britain, Russia and the United States are bidding for both 2018 and 2022 competing against co-hosting campaigns by Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as Spain and Portugal.

Japan has recently dropped its plan to bid for the 2018 Cup to focus on hosting the 2022 event. South Korea, which co-hosted the 2002 edition with Japan, are also bidding to stage the 2022 World Cup, as is Arab state Qatar.

All the bidding nations presented their World Cup concepts and plans to FIFA on Friday and will set up exhibition booths near where FIFA holds a general assembly in Johannesburg during next month's World Cup in South Africa.

Then a FIFA inspection team will visit the bidding countries over two months starting with Japan July 19-22.

Japan's 2002 bid also features an unprecedented plan to invite 6,000 children from the 208 countries to watch [World Cup](#) matches, participate in football clinics, and learn about environmental issues and world peace with trips to the atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"FIFA at its working level has rated Japan's proposals as outstanding and unique," said Japan Football Association president Motoaki Inukai, who heads the bid committee.

"But it's a different story how the voting FIFA executives are viewing our proposals," he said. "We have just made a start by submitting the bid book."

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Citation: Japan offers global 3-D telecasts in 2022 WC bid (2010, May 23) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-05-japan-global-d-telecasts-wc.html>

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