



A poster depicting the 1974 World Cup silver medallists (from the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance)

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1974 World Cup

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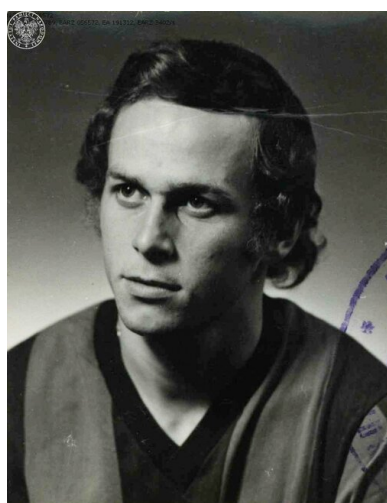
A silver medal for the Polish national team, the Golden Boot for Grzegorz Lato and the Fair Play Award for Polish players: the 1974 World Cup was one of the most successful in the history of Polish football.

On July 6, 1974, Poland became the third best team on the planet during the 10th World Cup in West Germany.

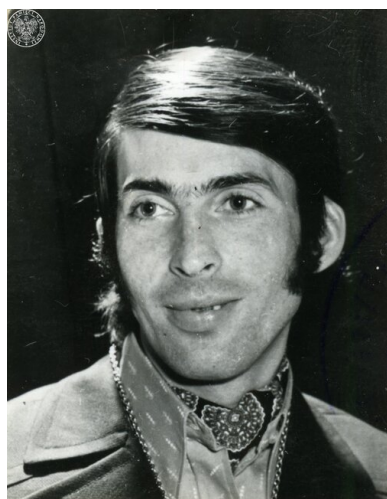
A winning streak

No one expected the upcoming success. Poland ended up in a tough group with Argentina, Italy (runners-up of the previous WC at the time) and Haiti. In the second round, it had to go through West Germany, Sweden and Yugoslavia. During the entire tournament, Poles lost only a single match: the legendary “Water Battle” against the hosts.

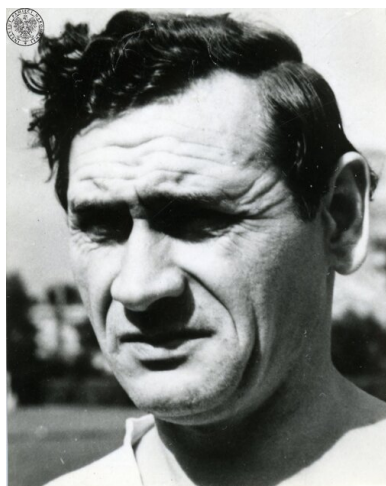
On July 6, 1974, the team led by Kazimierz Górski defeated Brazil (WC champions at the time) 1:0. Poles handled the 30-degree heat better than the Latin American players. Grzegorz Lato sealed the result in the 76th minute.



**Grzegorz Lato, top scorer at the
1974 World Cup (photo from the
Archives of the Institute of
National Remembrance)**



**Kazimierz Deyna, Polish national
team captain (photo from the
Archives of the Institute of
National Remembrance)**



**Kazimierz Górski, Polish national
team coach (photo from the
Archives of the Institute of
National Remembrance)**



**Kazimierz Górski signing a World
Cup ball at the Presidential
Palace shortly after being
awarded the Commander's Cross
of the Order of Polonia Restituta
by the President of the Republic
of Poland, on March 3, 2006**

(photo from the Polish
President's Chancellery)

Victorious second place

In the end, Lato took the title of the best scorer with seven goals. Andrzej Szarmach, *ex aequo* with Dutch Johan Neeskens, came second with five goals. Kazimierz Deyna ended up in the top 11, and Robert Gadocha took the title of the best left winger of the tournament.

Poland also received the Fair Play Award as the team playing the cleanest football.

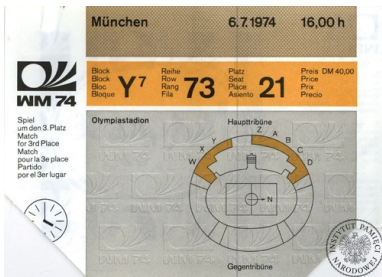
The silver medalists of the World Cup (back then first place received golden medals, second place silver with golden finishes, third silver and fourth bronze) were greeted by crowds of fans and representatives of the communist authorities at the airport in Warsaw.



A poster from the 1974 FIFA
World Cup held in West Germany,
featuring a reproduction of a
photograph of Grzegorz Lato
scoring Poland's seventh goal in
their winning group match
against Haiti (photo from the
Archives of the Institute of
National Remembrance)



A poster depicting the 1974 World Cup silver medallists (from the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance)



An original ticket for the third-place play-off between Poland and Brazil (from the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance)

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The Polish national team then achieved similar success at the 1982 World Cup in Spain. Today, we are waiting for more...

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