



**JAPAN**



**WORLD  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
2006**

# FIBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

**MEDIA CENTER – DRAW REACTIONS**



**FIBA**

We Are Basketball

## SUMMARY

<b>1</b>	<b>Reactions from Coaches and Players after the Draw .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Claude Bergeaud, Head Coach France: .....	4
1.2	Jean Jacques Conceicao, former player Angola: .....	4
1.3	Aluisio Ferreira, Head Coach Brazil: .....	4
1.4	Sergio Hernandez, Head Coach Argentina: .....	4
1.5	Jonas Kazlauskas, Head Coach China: .....	4
1.6	Mike Krzyzewski, Head Coach USA: .....	4
1.7	Zeljko Pavlicevic, Head Coach Japan: .....	4
1.8	Bogdan Tanjevic, Head Coach Turkey: .....	4
1.9	Julio Toro, Head Coach Puerto Rico: .....	5
1.10	Tunji Awojobi, player Nigeria: .....	5
1.11	Pau Gasol, player Spain: .....	5
1.12	Phil Jones, player New Zealand: .....	5
1.13	Erazem Lorbek, player Slovenia: .....	5
1.14	Makhtar N'Diaye, player Senegal: .....	5
1.15	Dirk Nowitzki, player Germany: .....	5
1.16	Nikos Zisis, player Greece: .....	5
1.17	Mindaugas Zukauskas, player Lithuania .....	6



## 1 REACTIONS FROM COACHES AND PLAYERS AFTER THE DRAW

On 15th January 2006, the draw for the FIBA World Championship took place in Tokyo, Japan. The whole basketball world was eagerly waiting for this moment including the protagonists of the game. On the following pages you will find what they said after the draw:

Group A Sendai	Group B Hiroshima	Group C Hamamatsu	Group D Sapporo
Argentina France Lebanon Nigeria Serbia & Montenegro Venezuela	Angola Spain Germany Japan New Zealand Panama	Australia Brazil Greece Lithuania Qatar Turkey	P.R. of China Italy Puerto Rico Senegal Slovenia USA

### COMPETITION FORMAT

#### Preliminary Round

The top 4 teams of each group advance to the 1/8 Finals round in Saitama

GROUP A Sendai	GROUP B Hiroshima	GROUP C Hamamatsu	GROUP D Sapporo
ARG	ANG	AUS	CHN
FRA	ESP	BRA	ITA
LIB	GER	GRE	PUR
NIG	JPN	LTU	SEN
SCG	NZL	OAT	SLO
VEN	PAN	TUR	USA

#### 1/8 Finals

A1 vs B4	C2 vs D3	B1 vs A4	D2 vs C3	C1 vs D4	A2 vs B3	D1 vs C4	B2 vs A3
----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

#### 1/4 Finals

? vs ?	? vs ?	? vs ?	? vs ?
--------	--------	--------	--------

#### 1/2 Finals

? vs ?	? vs ?
--------	--------

#### FINALS

? vs ?
--------



### **1.1 CLAUDE BERGEAUD, HEAD COACH FRANCE:**

"Our group and Group B are a little bit less difficult than the others but of course everything is relative. Both Argentina and Serbia & Montenegro have won prestigious titles in the past few years but we are not unhappy with the draw. What we want is to remain in the top teams of world basketball."

### **1.2 JEAN JACQUES CONCEICAO, FORMER PLAYER ANGOLA:**

"I think my team has a chance. Making the quarter-finals or beyond would mean Angola would be more of a basketball country and the excitement would spread to more and more countries. It would be much better for the continent of Africa."

### **1.3 ALUISIO FERREIRA, HEAD COACH BRAZIL:**

"Greece is in a good period, as they were the European champions, and Lithuania have unbelievable power. Turkey is growing up year-by-year, while Australia and Qatar are teams with less tradition than the Europeans in basketball."

### **1.4 SERGIO HERNANDEZ, HEAD COACH ARGENTINA:**

"France have excellent players but are inconsistent as a team. They could be frightening or vulnerable - at the same time. I like to make our debut against France and finish the group against Serbia & Montenegro, because it means we cannot lose concentration."

### **1.5 JONAS KAZLAUSKAS, HEAD COACH CHINA:**

"Slovenia and Italy are all nice European teams. Italy is also strong, although they don't have any NBA players. Puerto Rico has both NBA players and European-based players but I know nothing about Senegal. We have to beat Senegal and win one or two more games."

### **1.6 MIKE KRZYZEWSKI, HEAD COACH USA:**

"With FIBA expanding the World Championship from 16 teams to 24 teams for 2006, this will be the most competitive and exciting World Championship ever. The format makes every game critical. Our preliminary group appears to be very balanced and I'm sure each game will be competitive."

### **1.7 ZELJKO PAVLICEVIC, HEAD COACH JAPAN:**

"We need to be smart. We should concentrate on Angola, which will be our second game. We have a chance. I've been a player and coach and I know how many times bigger teams have problems against smaller teams. We're not a great team, we're not the United States, we're not even Germany. But maybe one day, people will appreciate Japan playing in such a big tournament."

### **1.8 BOGDAN TANJEVIC, HEAD COACH TURKEY:**

"We have to play much better than we played in the European Championship. At the beginning of the tournament, we have to be in perfect condition and play effectively both on offence and defence in the tournament. Turkey expects a good finish at the 2006 World Championship and we know it."



### **1.9 JULIO TORO, HEAD COACH PUERTO RICO:**

"We must have faith and the desire to play a good World Championship, and not only focus on the fact that the group could be difficult. Improving on the seventh place we achieved in Indianapolis would be a good achievement."

### **1.10 TUNJI AWOJOBI, PLAYER NIGERIA:**

"If the fourth team goes through, I think we'll be fourth. We will go through, but it will be tough. We have the athletes and the team work. I think we're going to surprise the world. They're not going to be counting on us."

### **1.11 PAU GASOL, PLAYER SPAIN:**

"Our aim is to finish as first of the group. Without a doubt, our most difficult rival is Germany guided by Dirk Nowitzki and I'm looking forward to playing against them. I am certain we will play a great World Championship. I have full confidence in the team that our new coach Pepu Hernandez will put together."

### **1.12 PHIL JONES, PLAYER NEW ZEALAND:**

"We face tough teams like Spain and Germany but we also face weaker sides like Japan and Panama, who are unknown, I think we have a good chance of qualifying for the next round. Just like in 2002, we have to take each game as it comes. If we finish in the top two of our group then we have better chances of going far."

### **1.13 ERAZEM LORBEK, PLAYER SLOVENIA:**

"Just because we will make our debut in the competition doesn't mean that we are going to Japan just looking to gain experience. Our aim is to go through to the next round and we know that we have a great opportunity on our hands to get a good result and show to the rest of the world that a small country like Slovenia plays good basketball."

### **1.14 MAKHTAR N'DIAYE, PLAYER SENEGAL:**

"We're past asking people for their shoes. We know them guys in the NBA. We have guys in the NBA, too. Everybody wants to play against the US so it will be a great experience, especially for our young players. It will be good for Senegal basketball. The game will be shown all over the rest of the world."

### **1.15 DIRK NOWITZKI, PLAYER GERMANY**

"As everyone knows, one of my biggest goals is to win the Olympics. I would love to win the World Championship but there are so many great teams, so I can't make any predictions that Germany will win. It should be a great tournament for the fans, as there will be some wonderful players on show, such as Kobe Bryant and LeBron James."

### **1.16 NIKOS ZISIS, PLAYER GREECE:**

"Considering that we are European champions, everyone will be watching us. Our rivals will be more motivated and eager to beat us and that is why we must remain together as a team. We have the toughest group. It is the biggest basketball competition and just to be a part of it will be great."



**FIBA**

We Are Basketball

### 1.17 MINDAUGAS ZUKAUSKAS, PLAYER LITHUANIA

"It seems like a tough group, with European champions Greece, then there's Turkey who are not an easy team, while Brazil and Australia are established. I don't know much about Qatar, but we will have to wait and see. It's good to meet Team USA in the group stages as you are guaranteed that you will not cross them until the semi-finals."