

Football rocks: As fans from Russia and England brawl, Austria marked Euros with this

AUSTRIA may have been eliminated from Euro 2016 — but their fans have loved the tournament both in France and elsewhere.

By Bradley Jolly / Published 23rd June 2016



CHEER: Austrian supporters din't have much to celebrate in France

Euro 2016 has been marred by violent fans from Russia, England, Croatia, Germany, Ukraine and other nations brawling in France.

Harrowing photos and clips have captured aggressive supporters fighting in city streets.

But Austrians have not been caught kicking off in ugly brawls.

Their Alpine nation may have been dumped out the tournament on Wednesday after a dramatic last-minute Iceland goal in Saint-Denis, near Paris, but supporters have loved the tournament.



Euro 2016: Violent fans cause chaos

Monday, 11th July 2016

European football's governing body has threatened to disqualify England and Russia if there is any further violence by fans.



DRAMA: Arnor Ingvi Traustason scored late on for Iceland to knock Austria out of the Euros

In fact, in Austria's capital Vienna locals have been wowed by a "vertical wall of rock footballs", erected specially for the competition.

Crazy boffins scoured the globe for the finest natural rocks, polished them into mini footballs and constructed the exhibition of 24 rock footballs — one stone for each country.

Thousands of bonkers Austrians flock to the city to admire the erection.

It is so popular it is the third time the Austrian Geological Survey has created the wall to celebrate the Euros.

And Dr Maria Heinrich, researcher at Austrian Geological Survey, told Daily Star Online: "It is always worth taking a look at the wall.

"The locals love it. People come from miles to enjoy the wall. It is very special here."

"It was not easy to obtain large and solid rocks from all the countries that could be shaped into balls. It was international relations and personal contacts which made it possible.



STUNNING: The colourful rocks are very popular in Austria

She added: "It is great for our country. We have done this three times now because Austrians like it so much.

"There is one rock two billion years old from Russia. Almost as old are the granite from Sweden and Ukraine.

"England has a dolomite from Derbyshire, the same rock used for the Houses of Parliament in London."

And for the first time, Wales make the colourful wall.



NATURE: Dr Maria Heinrich (left) and Professor Alex Maltman (right) are proud of the exhibit

The nation is represented by a striking charcoal-grey sandstone sample, sourced from Cardigan Bay in west Wales, and some 440million years old.

Professor Alex Maltman, lecturer in geography and earth studies at Aberystwyth University, helped source the rock and visited Austria to admire the wall.

He said: "It was all quite amusing in Vienna really.

"I was asked to select a single piece of rock to represent a whole country. I had to chuckle to myself as I sent the heavy package from a little Post Office in Wales all the way to Vienna.

"I have high hopes that I will be seeing the rock up there once again in four years' time."