

RoboCup99 is a sports film about one particular human utopia: the man-made autonomous machine a Frankensteinian creature intended to be more perfect than humans themselves.

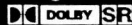
Each year, the RoboCup event, which was initiated by Japanese scientists in 1997, brings together the worlds leading devisers of artificial intelligence applications. They have jointly come to the conclusion that the game of soccer provides the optimal testing ground for establishing the limits of the capabilities of an autonomous machine (i.e. a robot).

The film shows the various stages of the third successive tournament, held at Stockholm City Conference Centre in 1999. It culminates in the middle sized robots final game between Sharif CE Teheran (Iran) and the Azzurra Robot Team (Italy).

A pivotal features of all the series is that the robots are started up at the beginning of the match and they then play independently and creatively without human intervention. This is thus not a computer-game-like human-versus-human situation, but a supernatural, larger-than-life battle between the minds of truly independent machines.

The long-term goal of the scientific community is not exactly modest:

"We proposed that the ultimate goal of the RoboCup Initiative to be stated as follows: By mid-21st century, a team of fully autonomous humanoid robot soccer players shall win the soccer game, comply with the official rule of the FIFA, against the winner of the most recent World Cup. We propose that this goal to be the one of the grand challenges shared by robotics and artificial intelligence community for next 50 years."

duration: 25 minutes
super 16mm/super 8mm/DV/Digital Betacam
colour, English dialogue 

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RoboCup99

Mika Taanila's

RoboCup99

"By year 2050, a team of fully autonomous robot soccer players shall win the human World Cup Champion team."

Hiroaki Kitano, the President of the Robocup Federation

director & editor & research.....	Mika Taanila	music.....	Shizuo, Christoph De Babalon, Rehberg / Bauer
director of photography.....	Jussi Eerola	graphic design.....	Timo Mänttari
sound designer & sound recordist.....	Olli Huhtanen	production manager.....	Ulla Simonen
camera assistant.....	Ville Väinänen	producer.....	Lasse Saarinen

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What is RoboCup

The Robot World Cup Initiative (RoboCup) is an international research and education initiative. It is an attempt to foster AI and intelligent robotics research by providing a standard problem where wide range of technologies can be integrated and examined, as well as being used for intergrated project-oriented education.

For this purpose, RoboCup chose to use soccer game as a primary domain, and organizes **RoboCup: The Robot World Cup Soccer Games and Conferences**. In order for a robot team to actually perform a soccer game, various technologies must be incorporated including: design principles of autonomous agents, multi-agent collaboration, strategy acquisition, real-time reasoning, robotics, and sensor-fusion. RoboCup is a task for a team of multiple fast-moving robots under a dynamic environment. RoboCup also offers a software platform for research on the software aspects of RoboCup.

While soccer game is used as a standard problem where broad-range of efforts will be concentrated and intergrated, competition is only a part of RoboCup activity.

Current activities of the RoboCup Initiative consists of:

- Technical Conferences
- Robot World Cup
- RoboCup Challenge Programs
- Education Programs
- Infrastructure Development

Nevertheless, Robot World Cup competition is the central pillar of our activity, where researchers can get together and evaluate research progress.

Currently, RoboCup has:

- Simulator League
- Small Robot League
- Full Set Small Robot League, which is 11 robots per team
- Middle Size Robot League
- Sony Legged Robot League (Sponsored by Sony)
- Humanoid League (From 2002, demonstration may take place before 2002)
- TeleOperation Track (to be announced)
- RoboCup Commentator Exhibition

The overall description of RoboCup is available from a series of papers, including:

- RoboCup in *Proc. of IJCAI-95 Workshop on Entertainment and AI/Alife*, Montreal, 1995.
- RoboCup: The Robot World Cup Initiative in *Proc. of The First International Conference on Autonomous Agent (Agents-97)*, Marina del Ray, The ACM Press, 1997.

- RoboCup: A Challenge AI Problem, *AI Magazine*, Spring, 1997.
- The RoboCup Synthetic Agent Challenge 97, *Proc. of IJCAI-97*, 1997.
- The RoboCup Physical Agent Challenge Phase-I *RoboCup-97*, Springer-Verlag, 1998
- RoboCup as a Research Program *IROS-97*, Grenoble, 1997.

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