

DOWN THE WORLD CUP LANE

Mexico 1986: The Hand of God

AGENCIES, undated

At first glance, it looked as if FIFA weren't entirely to blame for revisiting Mexico's heat and altitude (Colombia, the original choice, and Brazil both pulled out) — but the truth was murkier than that. Canada and the USA were both allowed to present their case, but there was strong evidence that the decision had already been taken: one of FIFA's vice-presidents, Guillermo Canedo, was a leading executive with the private Mexican television company Televisa. Asked about the prohibitively high ticket prices, Canedo replied that 'people always have TV.' FIFA president Joao Havelange said his conscience was clear and 'other people may write or say what they like.' What many wrote and said (even those from Thatcher's Britain) was how shocked they were by the ongoing gulf between Mexico's rich and poor. Havelange had no convincing answers when asked why FIFA simply didn't fill the empty seats with needy children or ban Camel cigarettes as a major sponsor.

As for the altitude, teams were fitter by now and appeared to suffer less distress—but most of the fancied teams had other problems. The holders Italy came with the same coach and several of the same players but had a patchy recent record. France had won all twelve of their matches in 1984, including the European Championship in which Platini scored nine goals in five games. But that was at home, that team had begun to creak a little in the two years since, and there was still no reliable striker.

Maradona was at his peak for Argentina but seemed to lack a quality supporting cast. West Germany had Beckenbauer as manager but no midfield general (the brilliant Schuster was now refusing to play for the national team). Brazil were strong at the back and had Careca up front but were still relying on their 1982 creative players, who were all over 30: Zico, Socrates, Falcao, Junior. Mexico, who'd been doing well under their Yugoslav coach, seemed to have been strengthened by the inclusion of Hugo Sanchez, now with Real Madrid — but had lost 3-0 to England a month earlier and would again have to lean heavily on home support.

England had qualified far more comfortably this time, without losing a match. The messianic Bryan Robson had a troublesome shoulder but there was a quick new striker

2nd casualty for USA

AFP, Chicago

Defender Cory Gibbs will miss the World Cup with a right knee injury and will be replaced by Gregg Berhalter, US Soccer announced on Thursday.

The move marked the second time US manager Bruce Arena had to adjust his defensive corps since he announced his roster for the World Cup finals in Germany next month.

On May 3 — one day after Arena announced his 23-man squad — Chris Albright was tapped to replace the injured Frankie Hejduk.

Gibbs, 26, suffered the injury in Team USA's 1-0 loss to Morocco on Tuesday in Nashville, Tennessee.

He is considered one of the squad's most athletic defenders.

"Naturally, we are very sorry for Cory," Arena said in a statement as his side prepared to play Venezuela in a World Cup tune-up in Cleveland, Ohio, on Friday.

"We know he was looking forward to playing in his first World Cup. I believe strongly in him as a player. We are going to miss him."

"In Gregg, we are fortunate to have a player of his experience ready to step in to his second World Cup. I'm confident that Gregg will be able to contribute immediately to our team."

Berhalter, 32, played on the 2002 World Cup squad that reached the quarterfinals. In the Americans' 1-0 loss to Germany in the round of eight, he had a shot that went off the hand of German defender Torsten Frings on the goal line, but no penalty kick was awarded.

in Gary Lineker, the First Division's leading scorer. High hopes but fingers crossed. Northern Ireland came through from the same group after holding out for a goalless draw at Wembley and showing their usual grit by winning 1-0 in Romania.

Scotland were there yet again, after a long haul tinged with tragedy. Jock Stein, still their manager, had died of a heart attack while watching the 1-1 draw in Cardiff, which sent them through to a play-off with Australia. The 0-0 draw in

Melbourne owed much to Jim Leighton's form in goal.

Yet again the Scots were unfortunate with the draw for the finals, finding themselves in the 'Group of Death' with West Germany, the exciting Danes (in the finals for the first time) and Uruguay, many people's favourites with their array of world-class defenders and Francescoli in midfield.

FIFA had carried out their threat to increase the number of qualifiers to 24, partly to uphold Havelange's old election promises to Africa and Asia, who provided his power base. The second stage mini-leagues were scrapped in favour of a knockout format, a return to the 1970 system but with an extra match. To fit 24 into the 16 needed for the second round, the four third-placed teams with the best records would join the top two in each of six groups. The phrase 'keep it simple' only applied on the pitch.

Not everything had changed from the last time the tournament came to Mexico: more than ever, the organisers were kowtowing to the wishes of TV companies. Not only were some kick-offs scheduled for the hottest part of the day, but matches were to end on the dot of full time, to fit in with broadcasting deadlines. Very snug. As in someone's pocket.

Diego Maradona's brilliance left its mark on this edition of the World Cup as he almost single-handedly carried Argentina to their second world title and in the process endeared himself to the people of the world.

Used to that heat Morocco made the second round after draws with Poland and England and a 3-1 win over Portugal.

Three of the quarter-finals went to penalty shootouts. Germany, who beat Morocco 1-0, needed a shoot out to edge Mexico, Spain

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PHOTO: AFP FILE

Argentina captain Diego Maradona kisses the World Cup after defeating West Germany 3-2 in the final on 29 June 1986 at the Azteca Stadium in Mexico City, watched by the West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (top R).

BITS AND BOBS

Japan off to Germany

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan's World Cup team left for Germany on Friday amid flashing cameras and seen off by around 300 fans at Narita airport.

The Asian champions are scheduled to arrive at their World Cup base in the former West German capital Bonn on Friday evening local time.

They play warm-up games against tournament hosts Germany and Malta before their Group F opener against Australia on June 12. Japan's group also includes Croatia and holders Brazil.

All dressed in matching light grey suits, Japan's 23-man squad were greeted by screaming fans and jostling camera crews as they arrived for their flight to Frankfurt.

Japan coach Zico, looking relaxed and posing for snap shots, was presented with a bouquet of flowers by airline staff wearing Japan replica shirts before board-

ing. Eleven members of the Japan squad played at the 2002 World Cup which the country co-hosted with South Korea. Japan reached the last 16 under Frenchman Philippe Troussier four years ago.

They will be making their third World Cup finals appearance after also qualifying in 1998.

Beethoven's home town Bonn has already been decked out in Japanese blue banners to welcome the Japan squad and their army of fans.

The Japanese squad and officials have taken over a 252-room Hilton hotel on the banks of the Rhine.

Brazil don't scare us: Srna
 REUTERS, Zagreb

Croatia are not afraid of World Cup favourites Brazil, winger Darijo Srna says.

"Brazil are favourites, not only to

win the group but the whole World Cup. But we are not afraid of the Brazilians.

"We respect them highly but we shall not start that match in fear," he told Croatian daily Vecernji List on Friday.

The world champions are Croatia's first opponents in a Group F match in Berlin on June 13. Japan and Australia are their other group rivals. "We are aiming to get that second place (in the group), but we have to win it by fighting on the pitch," said the Shakhtar Donetsk winger. "I can hardly wait to get past the friendlies and start the World Cup," added Srna, who scored five goals in Croatia's qualifying campaign and is the driving force in the team.

Croatia play warm-up matches against Iran at home on May 28, Poland in Wolfsburg, Germany, on June 3, and Spain in Geneva on June 7.

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Vonlanthen keeps fingers crossed

AFP, Geneva

Young Swiss striker Johan Vonlanthen looks almost certain to miss the World Cup finals in Germany after suffering a torn thigh muscle earlier this week.

His likely replacement in Switzerland's squad, midfielder Hakan Yakin, arrived at the team's training camp in the northeastern village of Feusisberg Thursday.

Yakin, 29, will be on the team sheet for Switzerland's warm-up match against Ivory Coast on Saturday, coach Jakob Kuhn said. "We have until June 12, the day before the match against France, to notify FIFA of a change in the list of 23," Kuhn explained. "We will almost certainly have to make the change."

However, Vonlanthen was adamant that he had not buried his hopes of taking part, despite warnings that it would take at least a month to shrug off the injury suffered during fitness tests.

"I still believe in it and am working hard to make it," the 20-year-old Breda striker said. "If I am fit again in four weeks, that's alright for the second match in the group."

Vonlanthen was the favourite pairing with top goalscorer Alexander Frei during Switzerland's qualifiers last year.

Yakin would be the second highest goalscorer for the national team if he joins the current squad. The creative playmaker was instrumental in helping Basel through European competition in recent years.

But he fell out of favour for Switzerland after a troubled recent career and only made a comeback from injury for his current club, Young Boys, in recent months. Yakin had been left out of the squad of 23 but was included in a shortlist of stand-by players.

"I'm happy when I have an additional player who can decide a match," Kuhn commented.

'Scandal won't bother us'

REUTERS, Florence

Italy striker Filippo Inzaghi says Marcello Lippi's World Cup squad are trying to keep a soccer scandal out of their minds and insists morale is high.

A far-reaching investigation into match-fixing allegations has overshadowed the Azzurri's build-up to the World Cup finals which start in Germany on June 9.

"It is very sad and we don't pretend that nothing has happened and think that it is right that whoever has made mistakes be punished," Inzaghi told reporters on Friday. "But at the World Cup we want to give some satisfaction for the fans and from today we just want to talk about football."

Inzaghi said relationships between players from different teams had not been soured by allegations that some clubs had tried to influence the appointment of referees to Serie A games.

"There is one atmosphere in the team and a desire to give our all to obtain the results we want," said

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Del Horno's fate in the balance

REUTERS, Madrid

Spain defender Asier del Horno's chances of playing in the World Cup finals hung in the balance on Thursday after he picked up an ankle injury.

"He injured himself in the game yesterday and he was still suffering this morning so we did a scan," national team doctor Genaro Borrás told reporters.

"He has damaged the area around the Achilles tendon in his left ankle. It is a small injury but by way of a precaution he will do nothing until Monday when we will see how it has healed."

"We will do further tests on Tuesday. We have to be realistic. I hope it heals but I have my doubts. It could put his participation in the finals in doubt."

Spain play their first game in the World Cup finals in Germany against Ukraine on June 14.

However, Borrás had good news over the injury to Real Madrid defender Michel Salgado.

"He hasn't torn the muscle in his leg and has only suffered a strain which was less serious than we had originally thought," said Borrás.

"He will be able to return to action on Tuesday and we'll see how the injury has healed over the following four to six days."

Both players will miss the warm-up game against Russia in Albacete on Saturday.

End it like Beckham: A possible swansong

AP, London

David Beckham is no longer England's main man.

The 31-year-old midfielder — known as much for his glamorous lifestyle, fashion sense and tattoos as for his bending free kicks — has been eclipsed as his country's key player.

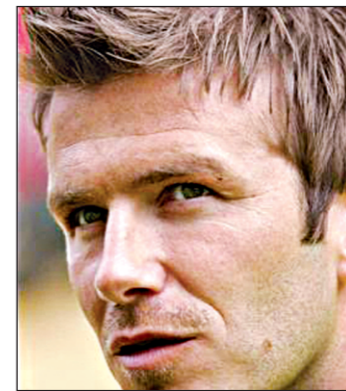
Wayne Rooney, recovering from a broken foot, is the player England's opponents fear most. Midfielders Steven Gerrard and Frank Lampard are considered more influential than Beckham.

Beckham's future at Real Madrid is uncertain, and his England captaincy is being questioned.

He has a lot riding on the World Cup in Germany, which could be his last chance to make his mark at a major championship. For the first time since 2000, he's injury-free heading into a big tournament.

"Physically I'm going into this competition — touch wood — without any broken bones or anything like that," Beckham said. "So personally I feel great. Physically, mentally, it's perfect."

Beckham has just finished his



DAVID BECKHAM

third season at Real Madrid, which coincides with the Spanish club's worst trophy drought since the early 1950s.

"Even though I haven't won anything, I've played well this season," Beckham said. "It's a feeling that I've never really felt before, but it also gives you that push to want to go on and win something."

Beckham thinks England has a great chance to do that at the World Cup, even though Rooney is in doubt with a broken foot.

"Because of where it is this time as well, because it's in Europe," he said. "I think it's better physically for the team. We have got the belief this time."

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2006 Round 2, Draw in Khulna
 Competition Information, Prizes and Rules

Information

- The *Daily Star* Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2006 is a series of competitions on World Cup Soccer being held in Germany from June 9 to July 9.
- There will be FIVE rounds of competition.
- Each round will have a separate draw with attractive prizes from the house of RANGS TOSHIBA as per announcement.
- Participants of all the FIVE rounds will automatically qualify for the Bumper Draw, which will have even bigger prizes.
- For each round, a set of questions including a photographic quiz will be published in *The Daily Star*.
- Names and addresses of all prize winners will be published in *The Daily Star*.
- Winners will have to collect their prizes from the *Daily Star* office after satisfactory authentication of their identity.
- Any taxes or levies, as per law, for all the above prizes will have to be borne by the prize winners.

Rules

- Residents of Bangladesh are eligible to participate in **Rangs Toshiba** World Cup Quiz 2006. Employees of and **Rangs Toshiba** and their immediate family members shall not be eligible to participate.
- All entries must be submitted in the original form printed in *The Daily Star*. Photocopies or reproductions in any form will not be accepted.
- Forms will have to be cut along the dotted lines.
- Participants are to put a tick () mark in the box alongside their answer to each question.
- A person may send numerous entries for each round.
- Entry forms should be completed with a ballpoint pen.
- Name, address, father's name and particulars of participants must be clearly written. Each entry form must also bear the signature of the participant and date.
- Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- Entries must reach the office of *The Daily Star* on or before the closing date marked on the entry form. Late entries will not be accepted.
- Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 2".
- Entries may be hand delivered or posted to *The Daily Star*, 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215.
- Entries will be placed in a sealed box for the draw to be held on a notified date in public in presence of invited guests and Quiz participants, if any.
- Winners will be decided on the basis of correct entries drawn out from the box.
- Entering this Quiz competition shall be construed as the respective agreement by each participant to abide by all rules, instructions and guidelines as may be issued by *The Daily Star*.
- Any decision of *The Daily Star* in the conduct of the Quiz competition/including the answers selected as correct shall be deemed final and binding on all participants and shall not be called in question and/or challenged in any manner whatsoever.
- The Daily Star* management, in their absolute discretion, reserves the right to amend, modify or substitute any of the above rules and/or change or reschedule any and all dates of the Quiz competitions under any circumstances.

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS


Prize	Item	Model	Winner
1st	One 21" Toshiba Bomba Flat TV	21CZ8DE	YOU
2nd	One Toshiba Refrigerator	GRM-19BPT	YOU
3rd	One Toshiba Washing Machine	VH-7200	YOU
4th	Ten Canon Cameras	BF-800	YOU
5th	Twenty Toshi Irons		and YOU

QUIZ SCHEDULE

Round & Draw	Starts	Answers must reach by 8pm	Lucky Draw for prizes
1 Rangpur	May 05	May 18	May 23
2 Khulna	May 19	June 01	June 02
3 Sylhet	June 2	June 15	June 16
4 Chittagong	June 16	June 29	June 30
5 Dhaka (Bumper)	June 30	July 09	TBA

The Daily Star RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 2 Ends June 01, 2006

Tick () the correct answers

- The only player to have appeared in three World Cup final matches is: Matthaus Maradona Cafu
 Munich Frankfurt Berlin
- The 2006 World Cup final will be held in: 5 3 0
- How many goals did France score in the 2002 World Cup? South Korea Saudi Arabia
- Which Asian nation made highest number of appearances in World Cup finals? Iran Ronaldinho Drogba Ronaldo
- Who is this player? 

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms).....Age.....
 Father's nameOccupation
 Address
 Telephone (if any)SignatureDate.....

Write with a ballpoint pen in clear BLOCK letters.
 Cut along the dotted lines and mail to OR drop in the Quiz Box at The Daily Star
 You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 2."

READ The Daily Star CATCH THE WORLD CUP FEVER



PHOTO: AFP

A Japanese department store employee displays a 20-million yen pure gold soccer ball, which is the same size of an official football, on Friday.