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DHAKA FRIDAY JUNE 16, 2006

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ANOTHER MATCH ANOTHER GOAL: Ecuador striker Carlos Tenorio (No. 21) heads home the first goal in his side's 3-0 win against Costa Rica during their World Cup Group A match in Hamburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Ecuador on higher plains

Ecuador 3 Costa Rica 0

AFP, Hamburg

Ecuador beat Costa Rica 3-0 here on Thursday to clinch qualification for the second phase of the World Cup for the first time in their history.

The result means that Ecuador only need to draw with host nation Germany who have also made it to last 16 -- next Tuesday to win Group A by virtue of a superior goal difference, meaning they would avoid England if Sven Goran Eriksson's side win Group B.

The impressive South Americans took the lead when Carlos Tenorio notched his second goal of the tournament, heading in a curling cross from the right by Luis Valencia with just eight minutes gone.

Veteran striker Agustin Delgado smashed in the second from a tight angle early in the second half, after Edison Mendez had nodded the ball into his path.

Substitute Ivan Kaviedes wrapped up the scoring with a powerful shot in stoppage time.

Costa Rican substitute Alvaro Saborio hit the crossbar with a

looping shot five minutes from the end, but his team and Poland will now only be playing for pride when they meet in Hanover on Tuesday.

Ecuador, who beat Poland 2-0 in their first match, dominated the match.

Costa Rican goalkeeper Cristian Mora had to scramble to save on 40 minutes when a deflected cross from Valencia almost caught him out on the goaline.

Delgado, who was a flop with English club Southampton, could have made it 2-0 on the stroke of half-time, but he failed to connect properly just a few feet from the goal.

Costa Rica wasted a golden chance when the unmarked Douglas Sequeira directed his header wide just before half-time.

Ecuador crashed out in the first round in their first ever World Cup appearance four years ago.

Germany beat Poland 1-0 on Wednesday, giving them two victories in two games.

But the Germans only beat Costa Rica 4-2 in their opening match, meaning that their goal difference now in the group is three, while Ecuador's is five.

TEAMS

ECUADOR: Cristian Mora; Ulises De la Cruz, Ivan Hurtado (captain), Geovanny Espinoza (Jorge Guagua

STANDINGS

GROUP A	Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
A	Ecuador	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
	Germany	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
	Poland	2	0	0	2	0	3	0
	Costa Rica	2	0	0	2	2	7	0

69), Neicer Reasco; Luis Valencia (Patricio Urrutia 73), Segundo Castillo, Edwin Tenorio, Edison Mendez; Agustin Delgado, Carlos Tenorio (Ivan Kaviedes 45).

Yellow card: Castillo, De la Cruz, Mora

Costa Rica: Jose Porras; Michael Umana, Douglas Sequeira, Luis Marin (captain); Harold Wallace, Mauricio Solis, Danny Fonseca (Alvaro Saborio 29), Leonardo Gonzalez (Carlos Hernandez 56); Ronald Gomez, Paulo Wanchope, Walter Centeno (Kurt Bernard 84).

Yellow cards: Marin, Solis

Referee: C Codjia (Benin) Attendance: 50,000

LEADING SCORERS

AFP, Berlin

World Cup leading scorers after Thursday's Ecuador-Costa Rica game:

2 - Bravo (Mexico), C Tenorio (Ecuador), Delgado (Ecuador), Klose (Germany), Rosicky (Czech Republic), T Cahill (Australia), Villa (Spain), Wanchope (Costa Rica)

1 - Ahn Jung-hwan (South Korea), Al Jaber (Saudi Arabia), Al Kahtani (Saudi Arabia), Aloisi (Australia), Crespo (Argentina), Drogba (Ivory Coast), Fernando Torres (Spain), Frings (Germany), Golmohammadi (Iran), Iaquinia (Italy), Jaidi (Tunisia), Jaziri (Tunisia), Kaka (Brazil), Kaviedes (Ecuador), Koller (Czech Republic), Lahm (Germany), Lee Chun-soo (South Korea), Mohamed Kader (Togo), Nakamura (Japan), Neuville (Germany), Pauleta (Portugal), Pirlo (Italy), Robben (Netherlands), Saviola (Argentina), Xabi Alonso (Spain), Zinha (Mexico)

THIRD EYE

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM

Luis Argones's much vaunted Spanish inquisition passed off with flying colours as Spain, who have so often flattered to deceive, turned in a performance worthy of champions to dispatch of Ukraine and send warning signs to other competitors. And there was of course an Arab derby which lived up to its billing but ended all square. Finally, a hugely entertaining day of football was topped off by a performance that could only be described as "German."

Sunny Leipzig's Zentralstadion played hosts to a Spanish team that were as red hot as their new jerseys. Spain got off the blocks right from the word go and never looked back as the young guns, in a team devoid of legend Raul, tore right into the heart of the Ukrainian defence.

Xabi Alonso scored from a corner before Villa curled home a deflected freekick. And the Valencia marksman's day got even better as he grabbed a second from a penalty. The Spanish finished off the scoring with panache with

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ARGENTINA V SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

South Americans look to consolidate

AGENCIES, Gelsenkirchen

Two-time World Cup winners Argentina on Friday aim to build on their promising start when they take on a Serbia and Montenegro side weakened by the loss of defensive pillar Nemanja Vidic.

Argentina, who opened their challenge with a 2-1 win over Ivory Coast, were cheered by the return to light training of teenage prodigy Lionel Messi after he had complained of foot pains.

Messi left Thursday's session early with a physiotherapist but told journalists he felt fine.

The creative midfielder, who turns 19 during the tournament, has been in scintillating form for Spanish champions Barcelona and coach Jose Pekerman has come under intense pressure to include

the creative midfielder, who has been hailed as an heir to Diego Maradona, in his starting line-up.

He was not used against Ivory Coast and Pekerman has given no indication when he will be thrown into action.

The Serbs are reeling from the loss of Vidic for the rest of the tournament after the Manchester United defender tore knee ligaments in training.

Star names in the fiery squad have questioned coach Ilija Petkovic's tactics after the 1-0 reverse against the Netherlands in their first game, a result which meant they cannot afford another defeat if they want to qualify from the so-called Group of Death.

"If we begin the match with the same team as that of Sunday, we do not have any chance against

Argentina," midfielder Ognjen Koroman said.

"Argentina are obviously a

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TEAMS

Argentina (4-3-1-2)

1-Roberto Abbondanzieri, 21-Nicolas Burdisso, 2-Roberto Ayala, 6-Gabriel Heinze, 3-Juan Pablo Sorin, 22-Luis Gonzalez, 8-Javier Mascherano, 18-Maxi Rodriguez, 10-Juan Roman Riquelme, 7-Javier Saviola, 9-Hernan Crespo

Serbia & Montenegro (4-4-2)

1-Dragoslav Jevric, 4-Igor Duljaj, 6-Goran Gavranic, 20-Mladen Krstajic, 3-Ivica Dragutinovic, 17-Albert Nadi, 10-Dejan Stankovic, 11-Predrag Djordjevic, 7-Ognjen Koroman, 8-Malejia Kezman, 19-Nikola Zigic

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TEAM	TIME	VENUE
Argentina v Serbia*	6:50 pm	Gelsenkirchen
Netherlands v Ivory Coast	9:50 pm	Stuttgart
Mexico v Angola	12:50am (Saturday)	Hanover

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