

DHAKA SATURDAY JUNE 17, 2006



FOLLOW ME: Italian captain Fabio Cannavaro (C) leads his teammates as they warm up during a training session in Duisburg on Wednesday.

Arena expects improvement

Playing mighty Italy after a disappointing World Cup defeat is just the sort of challenge needed for the United States to prove the team's character, US coach Bruce Arena said Thursday.

"This is the moment to shine, to step up and show what you're about," Arena said. "I think they are ready to give a good effort."

Giving no hints of the line-up changes he plans for Saturday's match, Arena said he expects players to answer their wake-up call and play better Saturday than they did in a 3-0 loss Monday to the Czech Republic in a Group E opener.

"All we did is lose a game. The challenge in any sport is how you respond," Arena said. "Naturally there is over-reaction in the short term. If there is any kind of quality in the team, you bounce back."

Arena said he did not over-react in criticizing the team after the loss and declared that differences with

midfielder DaMarcus Beasley have been overblown.

"DaMarcus hasn't been a problem with anything. There are no issues with DaMarcus. There's no problem with DaMarcus," Arena said.

After the loss, Arena said, "We got nothing out of Beasley," who responded that he had no idea what Arena wanted and doubted he would start against Italy if Arena felt that way.

Remarks from DaMarcus and me should probably not have been stated," Arena said. "The final product doesn't look like what it really is."

The reality facing the Americans is harsh. A loss to Italy at Kaiserslautern and a Czech victory Saturday over Ghana would end US hopes of advancing, a disappointing fate for a 2002 quarter-finalist squad.

"Why would there be any reason we should feel we can't get out of the group?" US defender Oguchi Onyewu said.

"We learned a lesson in the first game. Italy is going to be a good team but there's no reason we can't get good results in the next two games."

Fiorentina striker Luca Toni and AC Milan forward Alberto Gilardino are Italy's top threats, supported by some of the best set-up men in the sport.

"The guys we're most concerned about are their two strikers, who are probably among the best tandem of strikers in the World Cup," Arena said.

Both are tremendous finishers. Gilardino is a lethal finisher inside the box and he is in position all the time.

Arena was also impressed with 22-year-old Roma midfielder Daniele De Rossi in Italy's 2-0 opening victory over Ghana.

"I thought De Rossi was very good. He has got a great future," Arena said. "They have an excellent midfield. If they sit back, you need to be patient, pick your chances, not get caught on the break."

"They are going to be selective on how they attack you."

Getting off to a strong start, or at the very least avoiding a major blunder early, will be vital for US chances to win their first European World Cup match against a European side after seven losses.

"When you play against world-class players, they don't make mistakes and punish you for every mistake," US midfielder Bobby Convey said.

"We have to start well. When you don't, it takes away the urgency of the team. When the other team scores it's a shock."

The US team will stay at Ramstein Air Base, the largest US military base outside the United States. No slight was intended to Cup hotels or security measures but safety and comfort will be easier to provide on the base.

"The FIFA hotels were a little out of range and security was a concern," Arena said. "I feel a lot safer with all those bombers there."



WITH IT THE WAIT ENDS: Paraguayan goalkeeper Aldo Bobadilla (L) dives in vain as fellow defender Carlos Gamarra watches Swedish midfielder Freddie Ljungberg's (not on picture) headed goal during their World Cup Group B match at the Berlin Stadium on Thursday.

Totti fit

AFP, Duisburg

Italy striker Francesco Totti will be fit for their second Group E World Cup match against the United States on Saturday, team doctor Enrico Castellacci confirmed Tuesday.

Totti was substituted early in the second half of Monday's 2-0 win over Ghana after taking a knock on the knee, but the Roma captain's injury is minor.

"Totti bruised his left knee, but he's had a scan and there's no problem," Castellacci said.

Totti has only recently returned to action after breaking his left ankle in February.

Castellacci said that Gianluca Zambrotta will also be available to face the Americans after recovering from the left thigh strain which kept him out of the Ghana match.

Tenacious midfielder Gennaro Gattuso, also absent against Ghana, is making good progress after feeling a recurrence of a right leg injury and could also be back for Saturday's match, Castellacci added.

WC BRIEFS

AFP, Berlin

Many German fans, and certainly the media, weren't too sure about taking on the untried Jurgen Klinsmann as coach despite his goal-scoring exploits as a player on the way to glory in 1990.

But with two wins under their belts the "Klinsmann" are showing that Die Mannschaft are coming out of a poor decade stretching back to their Euro-96 win.

For the Berliner Zeitung, Klinsmann has managed to inject a young team with self-confidence -- "mutdoping" in German slang.

"A team which finds solutions, which is able to learn, gets stronger and believes in itself can be rewarded," said the paper noting that at times he has been derided as a "Californian internet coach," because of his habit of returning to his American family home several times a month.

Anja's dream
 Swedish ski world champion Anja Paerson says she is hoping for a final date with Brazil, assuming the Scandinavians can ensure they get out of their group with a result against England.

"My dream final would be Sweden-Brazil," Paerson told the FIFA World Cup website, while admitting that her second-favourite team England were more likely to reach the trophy match.

We're not boxers
 Ilija Petkovic, coach of Serbia and Montenegro, has taken the gloves off after criticism of the team back home which he said was like being on the receiving end of coverage of a boxing match.

"Normal criticism is in order but this I can't accept," said former international star Petkovic, three years in the job.

"We're not at a boxing championship but a football World Cup. This isn't a fight," he was quoted as saying.

Upside down
 On the Berlin "Fan-Mile" behind the Brandenburg Gate thousands of fans from around the world celebrated Germany's win over Poland in deference to their hosts.

A gaggle of Croatian fans were shouting "Deutschland, Deutschland" into the night and were joined by several Irishmen and Mexicans.

Many were draped in German black, red and gold flags but one girl from the Philippines had to be put right as she swathed herself in the German colours.

"No, you've got it upside down. The black is at the top and the gold at the bottom," one picknicky German fan gently pointed out.

German formula
 Germans see a good omen in the dates of their previous titles.

They won in 1954, 1974 and 1990 and if, playing the numbers game, one multiplies 54 by 74 that equals 3996. If you then subtract 1990, that leaves 2006.

German pop group Sportfreunde Stiller is at number 12 in the national charts with their hit "54, 74, 90, 2006" in honour of the formula.

Sweden relieved

AGENCIES, Berlin

Swedish star Freddie Ljungberg doesn't often score with his head -- but Thursday's effort in the dying moments of his country's 1-0 victory over Paraguay in Group B will be worth a place in his scrapbook.

A goalless draw was on the cards, leaving Swedish qualification hopes hanging by a thread after they drew a blank against Trinidad and Tobago when Ljungberg nodded in from close range to send an estimated 45,000 compatriots berserk in the Olympic Stadium.

"I think we played quite well and much better than against Trinidad and Tobago. We created a lot of chances and in the end we scored," Ljungberg said after being named man of the match.

Sweden now have four points and will take their place in the last 16 even if they lose to England in their final group game -- unless Trinidad and Tobago can shock Paraguay, whereupon it would go down to goal difference or even goals scored.

To avoid that scenario a draw will do against an England side coached by compatriot Sven-Goran Eriksson's minimalist 100-percenter.

But a win would give the Swedes the group success and a theoretically weaker rival in the next round, either hosts Germany or Ecuador.

"It's going to be a massive game -- I think both teams want to win

the group," said Ljungberg, who had made the headlines for the wrong reasons earlier this week after a training session bust-up with captain Olof Mellberg -- the second successive World Cup finals it had happened.

"It's going to be difficult."

On his rare header, Arsenal star Ljungberg told Sweden's TV4 television, asked when he last headed a goal: "About a year ago, so it felt good."

"My first goal in the national team was a header but I can't recall any more -- I might be a man with a bad memory!"

On the England match, he added: "It will be an interesting game. We know one point is enough but at the same time you want to win."

"We haven't advanced from the group stage yet," said Lagerback, who said watching from the sidelines had been tough as the clock ticked down.

"It's always frustrating sitting on the bench creating goalscoring chances and you can't put them in the net."

"But (Sweden) not creating goalscoring chances is even

worse."

Swedish coach Lars Lagerback played down the extent of a leg injury to playmaker Zlatan Ibrahimovic, substituted at half time after an ineffectual display by the Juventus star's standards.

"Zlatan had an injury in his leg and we didn't want to risk anything because the medical staff said if he carried on he might not be able to come back during the World Cup so we decided to take him off."

With some 45,000 Swedes cheering the team on at Berlin's Olympia Stadium, Ljungberg said the match was the greatest he had ever experienced. "Absolutely the best. The fans are never this crazy when we play at home. All the Swedes were screaming like mad," he said.

Substitute Marcus Allback praised the sea of yellow and blue-clad fans in the stadium and said he was stunned at the explosive reaction to the goal.

"It was a totally amazing goal. It must be record odds against that likelihood. When I saw it go in and then the whole stadium exploded in cheers, well, I can't find the words to describe it," Allback told TV4.

"All the Swedes were screaming like mad," Ljungberg concurred.

Paraguay's veteran midfielder Roberto Acuna said they needed an injection of younger blood to rejuvenate the team after they lost their opening two matches without scoring and crashed out of the World Cup.

STANDINGS

GROUP B									
Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts		
England	2	2	0	0	3	0	6		
Sweden	2	1	1	0	1	0	4		
T&T	2	0	1	1	0	2	1		
Paraguay	2	0	0	2	0	2	0		

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

The Daily Star
RANGS TOSHIBA
 WORLD CUP QUIZ 2006

Air-Con

2006 Round 4, Draw in Chittagong
 (See June 8 issue of the Star Sport for competition information, prizes and rules)

The Daily Star RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz Round 4, Ends June 29, 2006

Tick (✓) the correct answers

1. Who scored the first goal in the 2006 World Cup?	Klose <input type="checkbox"/>	Lehm <input type="checkbox"/>	Wanhope <input type="checkbox"/>
2. The smallest nation to have played in the World Cup finals is:	Trinidad & Tobago <input type="checkbox"/>	Cameroon <input type="checkbox"/>	Jamaica <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Which Asian player scored in three World Cup finals?	Nakata <input type="checkbox"/>	Sami Al Jaber <input type="checkbox"/>	Ali Daei <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Which World Cup final match ended goalless during the regulation time?	Italia '90 <input type="checkbox"/>	Argentina 78 <input type="checkbox"/>	USA '94 <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Who is this player?	Totti <input type="checkbox"/>	Kaka <input type="checkbox"/>	Messi <input type="checkbox"/>

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms) Age

Father's name Occupation

Address

Telephone (if any) Signature Date

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 4."

READ The Daily Star TO CATCH THE WORLD CUP FEVER

pick & win contest

pick the winner for today's matches and simply send us an SMS. the more correct SMS you send the better your chances of winning!

• SMS before each match and get 15 points for each correct guess
 • SMS during the first 75 minutes of the match and get 10 points
 • to know your accumulated points type 'pc' and send to 2006

how to participate?

- go to message option, type pw<space> 1st 3 letters of country and send to 2006
- in case of a draw:
- go to message option, type pw<space> 1st 3 letters of country<space>draw and send to 2006

today's matches

match1: Portugal (por) vs Iran (ira)
 match2: Czech Republic (cze) vs Ghana (gha)
 match3: Italy (ita) vs USA (usa)

win fabulous prizes every match! every day!

highest point winners throughout the world cup series will win fabulous prizes!

1st: + connection + talktime worth tk. **5 lac***

2nd: talktime worth tk. **3 lac*** + connection

3rd: + connection + talktime worth tk. **2 lac***

handset partner **NOKIA**

standard connection (with ISD)
 free talktime worth tk. 4500

* tk. 1/min from 12am-3am to any operator, for all banglalink subscribers * for banglalink to banglalink calls only - tk. 2/SMS - VAT applicable - conditions apply