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banglalink picture of the day



GERMANY MOVE FORWARD: German players rush towards goalkeeper Jens Lehmann (not in picture) to celebrate their victory in the World Cup quarterfinal against Argentina after the keeper made the second save in penalties at Berlin's Olympiastadion on Friday.

Germany shoot Argentina out

Germany 1 (4) Argentina 1 (2)

AFF, Berlin

Goalkeeper Jens Lehmann was the toast of Germany as the hosts progressed into the semifinals of the World Cup with a sensational 4-2 penalty shootout win over Argentina here on Friday.

With the game unsettled at 1-1 after extra-time Arsenal goalkeeper Lehmann stepped up to save spotkicks from Roberto Ayala and Esteban Cambiasso to ensure celebration parties across Germany.

A rare goal from 33-year-old defender Ayala four minutes after the interval put Argentina ahead and they held the lead until the 80th minute.

But with the majority of the 72,000 fans driving them on Germany equalised with Miroslav Klose heading in his fifth goal of the finals.

Extra-time failed to separate the teams and penalties were needed to decide the tie.

Germany had won all three of their previous World Cup shootouts and converted all of their four penalties to march into the last four.

Germany will now face the winner of the Italy v Ukraine quarterfinal being played in Hamburg in the semifinal in Dortmund on Tuesday.

"It was very exciting for us on the bench, it was like a Hitchcock movie," Klinsmann told reporters. "We always believed that we'd come back (from a goal down in normal time).

"Penalties are always the toughest way to go out but we are very proud of this team. Five of them could still play for the under-21s and they're backed by fantastic older players."

Paying tribute to Lehmann, he added: "We have a very strong belief in Jens Lehmann when it comes to penalties -- he proved he had the sense of where the ball will go."

The keeper said: "To win the quarter-final is fantastic for us. We had super shots (in the penalty shootout). And it's just expected that a German goalkeeper makes the saves."

For two-time winners Argentina it was heartbreak and their emotions boiled over after the final whistle with several players involved in scuffles as tempers frayed.

Argentina coach Jose Pekerman made three changes to the team that beat Mexico in extra-time with the biggest surprise seeing Javier Saviola dropped to the substitutes bench for Carlos Tevez.

Germany manager Jurgen Klinsmann, part of the West Germany side that beat Argentina 1-0 in the 1990 World Cup final, stuck by the same team that beat Sweden in the second round.

The hosts had scored after four minutes in each of their last two matches -- although they did not manage an early breakthrough this time -- and started off at a frantic pace to unsettle the Argentines.

Argentina playmaker Riquelme created the first real danger in the game with his inswinging corner forcing a clearance at the near post.

In the 16th minute Germany had their first opening with Ballack latching onto a cross but he could only divert his header wide.

With the game scoreless at half-time both managers had their players fired up for the second half and Argentina had Juan Sorin booked meaning he would have missed the semifinal.

But Argentina stomached that blow and four minutes after the interval they took the lead through

an unlikely source.

Riquelme curled in a corner from the right and veteran Ayala, winning his 105th cap, powered in a header.

It was the first time Germany, who had kept three consecutive clean sheets, had gone behind in the tournament and they responded by piling forward.

Ballack had a chance to equalise on the hour mark but Ayala was on hand to block the Germany captain's shot.

Maxi Rodriguez had a chance to wrap up the game on 66 minutes for Argentina but shot into the sideneeting.

It was a costly mistake as Germany levelled in the 80th minute with substitute Tim Borowski flicking on a cross and Klose heading in.

Extra-time was needed and Fabricio Coloccini hit the crossbar with what looked like a misdirected cross.

Germany's nerve held out once again as the Mannschaft kept up their incredible spotkick record.

Just beforehand, the England soccer anthem 'Football's Coming Home', blared out over the public address system -- almost as a reminder, intentional or otherwise,

to both sides that they had both knocked England out in their last penalty test -- Argentina in the 1998 quarters and Germany in the 1990 semis.

Lehmann lay on the ground to contemplate the possibility of being cast as hero -- or villain -- before rival and 2002 first choice German keeper Oliver Kahn came over to wish him luck.

It seemed to do the trick for Lehmann, whereas the unfortunate Leonardo Franco, a 28-year-old from Atletico Madrid who had to seize his chance in the limelight after replacing the injured Roberto

Abbondanzieri 20 minutes from the end of normal time, was unable to stop any German strikes.

Oliver Neuville smashed the Germans ahead but Julio Cruz levelled. Skipper Michael Ballack then sent Franco the wrong way and then Lehmann guessed right, going to his left to smother a poor Ayala kick whereas Lukas Podolski showed nerves of steel to make it 3-1 for the hosts.

Maxi Rodriguez saw his shot squeeze low past Lehmann for 3-2 but Tim Borowski took Die Mannschaft to the brink with

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FIFA WORLD CUP GERMANY 2006

TODAY'S MATCHES
 ALL MATCHES LIVE ON ESPN.
 *ALSO LIVE ON BTV.

TEAM	TIME	VENUE
England v Portugal*	8:30 pm	Geisenkirchen
Brazil v France	12:50 am (Sunday)	Frankfurt

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FIFA World Cup 2006 Quiz

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 Event 2

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Md. Nur-E-Alam, Rajshahi	Sheikh Fariduddin, Dhaka
Nazrul Islam, Dhaka	Shah Ferdous Chowdhury, Sylhet
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