

DHAKA SUNDAY JULY 2, 2006



Argentines lament bad luck

Fans want Pekerman to stay

AFP, Berlin

Argentina lamented their poor luck on Friday after losing their World Cup quarterfinal to Germany on penalties, a loss which saw coach Jose Pekerman resign amid mutual ill-feeling which boiled over at the end.

"It is over, the chapter is closed," said Pekerman, who opted to leave out of the squad several experienced campaigners such as Inter Milan's Javier Zanetti.

"The players have always done what was necessary to attain their objective, to the last penalty," the 56-year-old added.

"It's a defeat which hurts badly," said veteran striker Hernan Crespo.

"At no time were Germany better than us -- and that makes it harder to take. We don't deserve to be going home so early."

Skipper Juan Pablo Sorin said: "I think the Germans got lucky with it going to penalties, which is a lottery. It was very frustrating as we gave it all we had. We matched Germany, in Germany, for 120 minutes and you can't ask for much more than that."

For scorer Roberto Ayala, whose 49th-minute header looked to have secured a win until ten minutes from

the end when Miroslav Klose levelled, "it was a black day for Argentina."

Ayala was desolate after German keeper Jens Lehmann saved his spotkick.

"It will take a lot of time for the hurt to go," the 33-year-old Valencia star told reporters after he failed to book a semi-final date which would have taken him level with Diego Simeone's record 106 caps for Argentina.

Midfielder Esteban Cambiasso was in tears after his spot kick was saved by Lehmann.

"How can it end like this? It's a terrible way to go out," stammered the Inter Milan star, who has had a terrible past few months struggling with a personal problem.

Striker Carlos Tevez concurred.

"It's a defeat which really hurts badly, especially as we gave all we could out there. But that's football, especially when it comes down to spotkicks," said the Corinthians attacker.

The players were circumspect on the fisticuffs at the end which saw German team manager Oliver Bierhoff charge that German defender Per Mertesacker was kicked after the shootout, appar-

ently by Argentinian defender Leandro Cufré before another Argentinian defender Gabriel Heinze joined the fray.

Crespo was the most forthcoming, while remaining diplomatic.

"We basically didn't appreciate the way they (the Germans) were jumping up and down during the penalties. I don't want to make too much of it but there was a lot of tension," said the Chelsea forward, whose future clubmate Michael Ballack insisted that he had not seen what had provoked the storm.

Cambiasso and Maxi Rodriguez also played down the incident, which FIFA is investigating.

"It's logical there was some frustration which spilled over at the end, but I'm not here to say who was at fault," said Cambiasso, while Rodriguez insisted: "It was nothing really -- it's not worth saying much about it."

Pekerman also played down the scenes.

"I think it was a spontaneous situation arising from a very emotional moment," he explained.

Argentine football fans swallowed their disappointment at their World Cup exit on penalties

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DOWN AND OUT: Argentine footballers look stunned after their loss to Germany in penalty shootout in the World Cup quarterfinal at the Olimpiastadion in Berlin on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

Friend indeed

REUTERS, Berlin

Diego Maradona was not in Berlin's Olimpiastadion to see Argentina's World Cup quarterfinal defeat to Germany because a member of his entourage was not allowed in, FIFA said on Saturday.

World soccer's governing body said the iconic former captain had been given four VIP tickets for the match, which Argentina lost on penalties, but wanted to bring in a fifth person whom FIFA had already declared was not welcome.

"It has been reported that Diego Maradona arrived at the stadium and then left again because not all of his entourage was allowed in," FIFA spokesman Markus Sieglar said.

"This was the decision of Diego Maradona alone," Sieglar said at FIFA's daily World Cup news briefing.

Sieglar said FIFA had been tough with Maradona and the Spanish television station he is working for before the game.

"Maradona's delegation was told in advance that one particular person would not get a ticket because this person has been rude repeatedly during the World Cup and even became almost physically aggressive," he said.

"We're sorry if Diego Maradona didn't want to accept that. He and a certain number of companions are welcome at any time," he added.

Sieglar refused to say if the person who was barred from the matches was the bodyguard.

One of the game's greatest ever players, the 1986 World Cup winner has been an enthusiastic and high-profile supporter of the Argentine team in Germany.

"We've always had tickets for Diego Maradona, even if it was difficult sometimes because he just turned up. We always found a solution for him," Sieglar said.

"The problem yesterday was that one person was not on the list of names but wanted to come in."

Science fiction!

AFP, Hamburg

Ukraine coach Oleg Blokhin said one of the most interesting things about his country's run to the World Cup quarterfinals on their debut was what people were saying about him and his team.

"I'd like to thank the journalists for their copious articles about the Ukrainian team. Reading all that was for me like reading science fiction literature," he said with just a touch of irony.

Bierhoff shrugs off Italy

AFP, Berlin

Germany's Euro 96 hero Oliver Bierhoff, now team manager, says Italy will be afraid of the hosts heading into Tuesday's World Cup semi-final in Dortmund.

Germany eliminated Argentina 4-2 on penalties on Friday -- after the match finished 1-1 after extra-time -- and Bierhoff believes their next opponents will be gripped by fear.

"To win five games in a row is fantastic but winning the title is the main thing," Bierhoff said at Saturday's press conference.

"Germany fans and those around the world have seen that Germany are up there with the best."

"Italy are a tough opponent but they will be afraid of Germany."

Italy crushed Germany 4-1 in Florence the last time the two teams met in March for a friendly and there were even calls for manager Jurgen Klinsmann's head.

Bierhoff, scorer of the first ever golden goal in Germany's Euro 96 final win, remembers that game well.

"Everyone wanted to send Jurgen Klinsmann home after that defeat," Bierhoff admitted.

"We remember the 4-1 and we need to be very concentrated for sure. We were surprised in the first minutes of the game."

"Perhaps this was a good development for the team. But it is forgot-

ten now."

Italy scored twice in the first seven minutes as Germany's defence fell apart and the match was labelled 'the Florence fiasco'.

But this time Germany have home advantage and Bierhoff revealed he and Klinsmann would use their Italy experiences for the game.

Bierhoff played for Udinese and AC Milan during his career while Klinsmann played for city rivals Inter Milan.

Klinsmann also enjoyed his finest hour on Italian soil lifting the 1990 World Cup with West Germany in Rome.

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WC BRIEFS

AFP, Berlin

Former foreign minister Joschka Fischer says the "wonderful" World Cup has changed Germany to the extent that his countryfolk could now almost pass for being from the Mediterranean.

"It's almost like a mid-summer night's dream, with a bit of Woodstock thrown in," the Green politician told the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper.

Furthermore, "the weather is Mediterranean and the people suddenly are too," he swooned. Even Chancellor Angela Merkel fell into the arms of organiser and German legend Franz Beckenbauer after the win over Argentina.

Bad for business

The World Cup "feelgood factor" is a myth and there is no link between how well England do in the tournament and the performance of the British economy, research by the Halifax building society says.

According to a study, the economy tends to do better in years when England have been eliminated at the quarterfinals stage, but performance has been relatively weak when the team has progressed beyond the last eight. It added that World Cup years also tended to be poor ones for the stock market. The study says growth in consumer spending also fails to receive a boost from the event, rising by an average of 2.7% in World Cup years, in line with the long-term average.

Handbagging

Former British leader Margaret Thatcher put her deadly handbag away 16 years ago but they're doing a roaring trade in the trendiest versions where England's spend-thrift wives and girlfriends have been based in normally laid back Baden-Baden. Since the England squad arrived in the spa town on the edge of the Black Forest four weeks ago Baden Baden has not really lived up to its guidebook tag of "ageing and elegant."

The manageress of Hermes in Sophienstrasse has seen handbags at 2,000 euros (2,500 dollars) a piece flying off the shelves.

"They are very pretty girls and they like to shop," the Times quoted the manageress as saying of the England entourage.

"Many English journalists come here, too, but they only take pictures and ask questions," she added, clearly inquisitive of the slight gap in spending power.



ENGLAND ALLOVER: Two England fans, with their bodies painted in their country's colours, wait for the World Cup quarterfinal against Portugal to begin at Gelsenkirchen on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP



2006 Round 5 (Bumper), Draw in Dha

(See June 8 issue of the Star Sport for competition information, prizes and rules)

The Daily Star RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz Round 5 (Bumper) Ends July 09, 2006

Tick () the correct answers

1. Whom did Ronaldo overtake as the leading scorer in the World Cup?	Muller <input type="checkbox"/>	Pele <input type="checkbox"/>	Fontaine <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Which player was shown three yellow cards in a World Cup match?	Simunic <input type="checkbox"/>	Deco <input type="checkbox"/>	De Rossi <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Who scored the 2000th World Cup goal?	Ze Roberto <input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Cole <input type="checkbox"/>	Allback <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Which World Cup champions failed to win it at home?	Italy <input type="checkbox"/>	Uruguay <input type="checkbox"/>	Brazil <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Who is this player?	Essien <input type="checkbox"/>	Drogba <input type="checkbox"/>	Saha <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 5."

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