



WORLD CUP USA '94



Today's World Cup Fixtures

Group D
Argentina vs Greece
Group A
Germany vs Spain
Group D
Nigeria vs Bulgaria

Fatal fiesta

BRUSSELS, June 20: A Moroccan youth was shot and wounded on Sunday in the southern Belgian town of Verviers when celebrations of Belgium's 1-0 World Cup win over Morocco turned violent, police said, reports Reuter.

Police said fighting broke out between several hundred Moroccans and Belgians in the centre of Verviers following the shooting.

Belgian television said police arrested members of a right-wing extremist party accused by local Moroccan residents of being responsible for the shooting.

A police spokesman said the youth was not in a serious condition and the police had the situation under control.

In Brussels, where hundreds of soccer fans celebrated Belgium's victory, police said fighting also broke out between rival supporters on the city's historic Grand Place.

They said some cars were damaged and some shop windows smashed in central Brussels. There was no news of any arrests.

Belgian radio quoted Brussels mayor Freddy Thielemans as saying the incidents had been caused by a few trouble-makers.

Some 500 policemen were called up to monitor the World Cup festivities in Brussels.

Police said there were other minor incidents involving soccer fans in a few northern towns, including Antwerp, Belgium's second biggest city.

There are 200,000 Moroccans living in Belgium, 10 percent of whom live in Brussels.

Extreme-right wing parties made substantial gains in Belgium in the European elections a week ago, but racist incidents have been rare.

Baggio will have to soldier on

NEW YORK, June 20: Roberto Baggio, who is struggling with an inflamed Achilles tendon, has been told he will have to soldier on through the World Cup, reports AP.

The European footballer-of-the-year was forced to miss training on Sunday, 24 hours after Italy's opening defeat by Ireland in Group E increased the pressure on their attempt to qualify for the second round.

Italian officials said the injury would not put Baggio out of the finals but the team doctor, Andrea Ferretti, added: "It's a problem which cannot be solved with a few days' rest. He will have to live with it. He will train on Monday and can play the next game on Thursday."

Ferretti said the hard pitch at Giants Stadium had added to Baggio's discomfort against Ireland.

Norwegian PM, switched on

OSLO, June 20: Norway's woman Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, showed television viewers on Sunday her knowledge of the country's World Cup soccer team, reports Reuter.

"He's got nice blond curls, that Flo," she said of key attacker Jostein Flo.

Brundtland appeared on a television panel commenting on Norway's 1-0 win against Mexico in a World Cup Group E clash at the RFK Memorial Stadium in Washington.

Apart from remarking on Flo's hair, Brundtland displayed a wide knowledge of the Norwegian team and said she found the game very exciting.

Other panelists were Norwegian ski jumper Espen Bredesen, a gold medal winner at the Lillehammer Winter Olympics, and Arne Eggels, manager of Norwegian soccer club Rosenborg.



Mexico's flamboyant custodian Jorge Campos (sporting number 1 jersey) has a busy moment during his side's Group E opener against Norway at the RFK Memorial Stadium on Sunday. Norway recorded their first ever World Cup win, 1-0. — AFP photo

Norway's maiden victory



WASHINGTON, June 20: Norway beat the sweltering conditions and their tough Mexican opposition with an 85th minute goal from substitute Kjetil Rekdal in Sunday's World Cup Group E clash at the RFK Memorial Stadium, reports Reuter.

Rekdal struck when striker Jan Aage Fjortoft burst between two defenders as Norway raised their challenge late in the game and the ball ran free.

He collected the ball and fired in from 10 metres to secure a 1-0 win a Norway then survived a scramble in the final minute when Mexico's Luis Alves 'Zague' headed the ball against a post and the rebound was scrambled off the line.

Norway dominated much of the game, but finally owed their survival to goalkeeper Erik Thorstvedt who made two fine saves late in the second half after his opposite number Jorge Campos had earlier kept Mexico alive.

The two contrasting goalkeepers, one tall and fair, the other dark and kitted out in a garish fluorescent yellow, were the dominating players in a festive atmosphere reminiscent of the 1986 Mexico finals.

Most of the crowd, in green shirts, showed their obvious support for the Latin American team and celebrated their side's attacking play with the 'hola' or Mexican wave, but in the neither team had anything tangible to enjoy.

Norway had the best chances for most of the game, but their best efforts ended with one 'goal' being disallowed when Jan Aage Fjortoft bundled the ball in but was ruled to have fouled the goalkeeper.

Mexico, playing with a

rhythmic short-passing mid-field game which contrasted with the Norwegians' more direct approach, also had one player cautioned against Norway's two in a game littered with stoppages.

Thorstvedt's save from the busy and skilful Mexican midfielder Luis Garcia was critical, particularly as when they broke away again, Norway swept into the lead.

The final flurry of action from Mexico hinted at what they might have achieved earlier with more commitment to attack as they joined Italy at the bottom of the "Group of Death" after their opening games.

It was Norway's first victory in the World Cup finals and came 56 years after their last match in the finals in 1938 when they were beaten by Italy, who they now meet in East Rutherford on Thursday.

For Norway, it was a memorable victory against a nation making its 10th appearance in the finals. The players, showing their appreciation for the pockets of Norwegian support in the stadium, returned to the pitch after the game to wave to their celebrating fans.

Although Rekdal was the goalscorer, goalkeeper Thorstvedt was their real hero with his diving save from Garcia, when the Mexican midfielder played a fluent one-two with Sanchez and fired in a powerful 20-metre drive 15 minutes from time.

Alongside his captain Rune Bratseth, Thorstvedt showed why they are recognised as two of the best players in their positions in the tournament as the Norway defence held firm against Mexico's late burst.

Rekdal said: "I feel very proud to be part of this team on this day as it is Norway's first win in the World Cup finals. It is the best moment of

my career.

"We took a while to settle at the start of the game, but we got better and for me to score was perfect as I was not in the starting team. The heat made it difficult to play, but it was not too serious a problem.

"We now feel confident we can make it to the second round."

TEAMS

NORWAY: 1-Erik Thorstvedt, 20-Henning Berg, 4-Rune Bratseth, 5-Stig Inge Bjoernebye, 18-Alf Inge Haaland, 22-Lars Bohinen, 7-Erik Mykland (10-Kjetil Rekdal 79), 8-Oeyvind Leonhardsen, 11-Jahn Ivan Jakobsen (2-Gunnar Halle 46), 6-Jostein Flo, 9-Jan Aage Fjortoft.

MEXICO: 1-Jorge Campos, 2-Claudio Suarez, 3-Juan Ramirez Peralas, 21-Raul Gutierrez (6-Marcelino Bernal 71), 5-Jesus Ramon Ramirez, 16-Luis Valdes (17-Benjamin Galindo 46), 4-Ignacio Ambriz, 14-Joaquin Del Olmo, 10-Luis Garcia, 9-Hugo Sanchez, 11-Luis Alves Zague.

Referee: Sandor Ruhl (Hungary)

MATCH-STAT

Match statistics for Sunday's Norway v Mexico World Cup, Group E game:

| | Norway | Mexico |
|---------------|--------|--------|
| Goals | 1 | 0 |
| Shots on goal | 10 | 14 |
| Fouls | 16 | 11 |
| Corners | 11 | 6 |
| Offsides | 3 | 6 |
| Yellow Card | 2 | 1 |
| Red Cards | 0 | 0 |

STANDINGS

World Cup, Group E Standings after Sunday's Norway v Mexico match (tabulate under played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ireland | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Norway | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Italy | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Mexico | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

FIFA dispels confusion



DALLAS, June 20: FIFA on Sunday clarified confusion over which tackles from behind warranted a red card at the World Cup, reports Reuter.

Sepp Blatter, general secretary of the world soccer body, dismissed any suggestions that referees were not following their instructions to send off players who committed violent tackles from behind.

There have been a number of incidents in matches so far in which players have tackled from behind but have not been punished, prompting some confusion.

"So far, from the reports we have received from the referees' inspectors and the commission, we are satisfied with

the way the referees apply our instructions, and also the linesmen," Blatter told reporter.

He clarified pre-tournament explanations of the type of tackle from behind that would lead to instant dismissal, saying a red card would only be issued if the tackling players had no realistic chance of winning the ball.

Originally FIFA said any tackle from behind that was considered violent would lead to a dismissal.

FIFA president Joao Havelange said four days before the finals began that any referee who did not show a red card for a tackle from behind would be on the first plane home.

Blatter also said before the soccer began that a tackle from behind would mean an

automatic sending off.

But on Sunday he said: "What he wants to avoid is these no-chance situations of the attacker going away and the defender attempting not to take the ball, but to stop the player from behind. This is what we want to take out of the game."

"If the tackling player does not touch the ball, then he should be sent off. If he takes the ball away then obviously he has played the ball."

"We have shown the referees a lot of examples of what we mean, where there was not a chance for the player to win the ball, especially with sliding tackles at the man with the ball."

Blatter said FIFA was pleased with the standard of refereeing.

Pele's fear

WASHINGTON, June 20: Pele said on Sunday he feared for Latin American soccer after Mexico became the continent's third team to lose their opening World Cup match to a European side, reports Reuter.

"I am a little worried about the Latin team — we started with the defeat of Bolivia and then came Colombia and Mexico," the great Brazilian said after the Mexicans lost 1-0 to Norway in Washington.

"It only remains for Brazil to play," he said, apparently forgetting Argentina who play Greece on Tuesday.

Brazil met Russia in San Francisco on Monday.

Pele said Mexico had played too defensively. "They started far too slowly and allowed Norway to move about... they did not attack nearly enough."

"I always said Norway could make life difficult for Mexico. They are a very well prepared team. They have a lot of heart and are very dangerous on the counter-attack."

But Pele said a defeat in the first round was no disaster and Colombia, a team he rated as the best in South America, were still on course to reach the second round. They lost 3-1 to Romania on Saturday.

"Often it's best to start with a defeat because then things can be ironed out before it's too late. Two teams at least will qualify from the first round."

Santos in to replace Gomes

SAN FRANCISCO, June 20: Coach Carlos Alberto Parreira selected central defender Marcio Santos on Sunday to replace the injured Ricardo Gomes in Brazil's opening World Cup match against Russia, reports Reuter.

Santos, who plays for French league side Bordeaux, won his place in Monday's Group B match in San Francisco ahead of as Roma's Aldair and is expected to play in the centre of the defence alongside Ricardo Rocha.

Gomes, the captain and first-choice central defender, was ruled out of the finals last week after injuring a leg muscle during a warm-up match.

Leonardo, as expected, was named left back because Branco is still recovering from a back injury. Striker Romario has recovered from a leg muscle injury and will line up alongside Bebeto in attack.

Sun the villain

PASADENA, Calif., June 20: The Southern California sun proved to be more of a menace than soccer hooligans at the first World Cup game at the Rose Bowl, reports AP.

Police say 55 people were treated for heat exhaustion during Saturday's game when 92,000 fans crammed into the stadium to watch Romania upset Colombia 3-1.

The temperature soared to 31 degrees Celsius (88 Fahrenheit) in the city 15 kilometres (10 miles) north of downtown Los Angeles, according to the National Weather Service.

On Sunday, fans flocked to the Rose Bowl for another game pitting Sweden against Cameroon.

The first game went smoothly except for 38 arrests for ticket scalping, said police who confiscated 220 tickets and an undetermined amount of cash.

Some shoving and pushing occurred outside the stadium as hundreds of people waited, some impatiently, for up to 1 1/2 hours for shuttle buses to take them to far-flung parking areas, said police Cmdr Mary Schander.

The bus arrangements were made by the World Cup. Schander said Although an ample number of buses were available, pedestrian traffic impeded buses arriving for pickups, and the planners had expected that volunteers could handle loading of the buses after the game.

Schander said there was no violence of note at any post-game celebrations and wake although revelers packed the bars and restaurants in the trendy Old Pasadena district.

Can Maradona do it again?



FOXBORO, Massachusetts, June 20: Diego Maradona confounds his many critics by leading Argentina in his fourth World Cup, opening against debutants Greece in a Group D game at Foxboro Stadium on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

The stocky star of Argentina's 1986 triumph, so often written off since defeat in the 1990 finals as he indulged in drugs, failed to keep fit and fought with his clubs and — once with an air gun — the media, can set a record for World Cup appearance if he plays in all three first-round matches.

Argentina will be looking to capitalise on the still considerable ball skills of Maradona to feed the dangerous strike pairing of 1990 veteran Caniggia and Gabriel Batistuta.

He's still the best player in the world. We'll be waiting for the balls from Diego's magic left foot to score," said Caniggia, also back from a drugs ban and set to play despite a bruised toe in his left foot, with a painkiller if necessary.

Coach Alfio Basile, heavily criticised backhome for defensive tactics that almost cost Argentina a passage to the US finals, is betting firmly on attack knowing a victory in the opening game against the group's weakest side is crucial.

His opposite number Alkatas Panagoulas said Argentina had much better players than Greece, but that they would feel the pressure of their country's expectations.

"If they don't score in the first 20 minutes, we will gain confidence and it will become more difficult for Argentina to win," said Panagoulas, taking

heat from some astonishing upsets in the first few days of the tournament.

Veteran defensive midfielder Panayotis Tsalouhides is expected to have the task of picking up Maradona in the last quarter of the field. Stopper Yannis Kalitziakis and Thanasis Kollitsidakis will take Caniggia and Batistuta.

Diego Maradona is expected to pack his defence and midfield and leave it to lone striker Nikos Machlas, 21 last Thursday, to try to eke out a chance or two and make the most of them.

Basile may have plenty of individual talent in his squad, but he has to hope they gel after fitful recent performances.

The South American champions go into the match with a record of 23 wins and 17 draws in 44 matches under Basile since the 1990 World Cup final. They never met Greece.

They will play with a clas-

sic back four, in which Oscar Ruggeri wins an Argentine record 95th cap, and a ball-winning and playmaking pair of Real Madrid's new signing Fernando Redondo and Diego Simeone of Sevilla.

Luis Islas of Independiente looks set to take over in goal from 1990 penalty shootout hero Sergio Goycochea. But Basile said he would not name his team until midway today.

In an also European-based attacking quartet — apart from the clubless Maradona — Caniggia's Roma teammate Abel Balbo, normally a striker, will play a more withdrawn role helping his captain.

Basile's squad have worked hard on their fitness in the last two weeks. Maradona and Balbo are expected to get back and help Redondo and Simeone to regain possession when opponents take the ball.

They will need to pace themselves in the intense heat. The match kicks off at 12.35 pm local time, when temperatures in recent days have been well above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (30 Celsius) in the Boston area.

PROBABLE TEAMS

ARGENTINA: 12-Luis Islas, 4-Roberto Sensi, 13-Fernando Caceres, 6-Oscar Ruggeri, 3-Jose Chamot, 14-Diego Simeone, 5-Fernando Redondo, 10-Diego Maradona, 19-Abel Balbo, 7-Claudio Caniggia, 9-Gabriel Batistuta.

GREECE: 1-Antonis Minou, 4-Stelios Manolas, 2-Stratos Apostolakis, 5-Yannis Kalitziakis, 3-Thanasis Kollitsidakis, 17-Minas Hatzidis, 6-Panayotis Tsalouhides, 8-Nikos Nioplis, 19-Savvas Koffides, 11-Nikos Tziantakis, 9-Nikos Machlas.

Referee: Arturo Angeles (United States).
Kickoff: 1635 GMT.

Rothenberg relishes revelations



WASHINGTON, June 20: Violence at the opening World Cup matches was virtually non-existent and far less than usually associated with games involving the four major US sports, USA 94 chairman Alan Rothenberg said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

He also reported that television viewing figures for the US team's 1-1 draw with Switzerland on Saturday were the highest for any soccer match in the United States except for the 1982 World Cup final in Madrid.

"The crowds have been fun-loving, celebrating groups of fans and at the first five games, we have had no trouble at all," he told a news conference before Norway played Mexico in the first game at Washington's RFK Memorial Stadium.

He said there had not been a single arrest at Dallas, adding this was "previously unheard of compared with incidents following National Football League games."

Chicago police said 14 people were arrested for unruly behaviour at the World Cup's opening game between Germany and Bolivia at Soldier Field Stadium on Friday.

Violence related to fanatical fans, lumped together as hooligans and primarily from England, Germany and the Netherlands, has marred major soccer matches in Europe.

Rothenberg said that early figures supplied by the ABC network showed the game had an overnight viewer rating of 5.8 meaning that about 5.8 per cent of US households with televisions had their sets tuned to the game.

Rothenberg described ABC officials as ecstatic.

"It is the highest rating for a soccer match ever in the United States except for the 1982 final," he said, referring to the match in Madrid when Italy beat West Germany to win the Cup for the third time.

"The third round of the United States Open Golf had only a rating of 5.2 and we are delighted with the response."

He denied suggestions from a Venezuelan journalist that he was painting an unduly rosy picture of the tournament, after only five matches on the opening two days.

"I am just telling it the way I see it," he said.

Amazing!

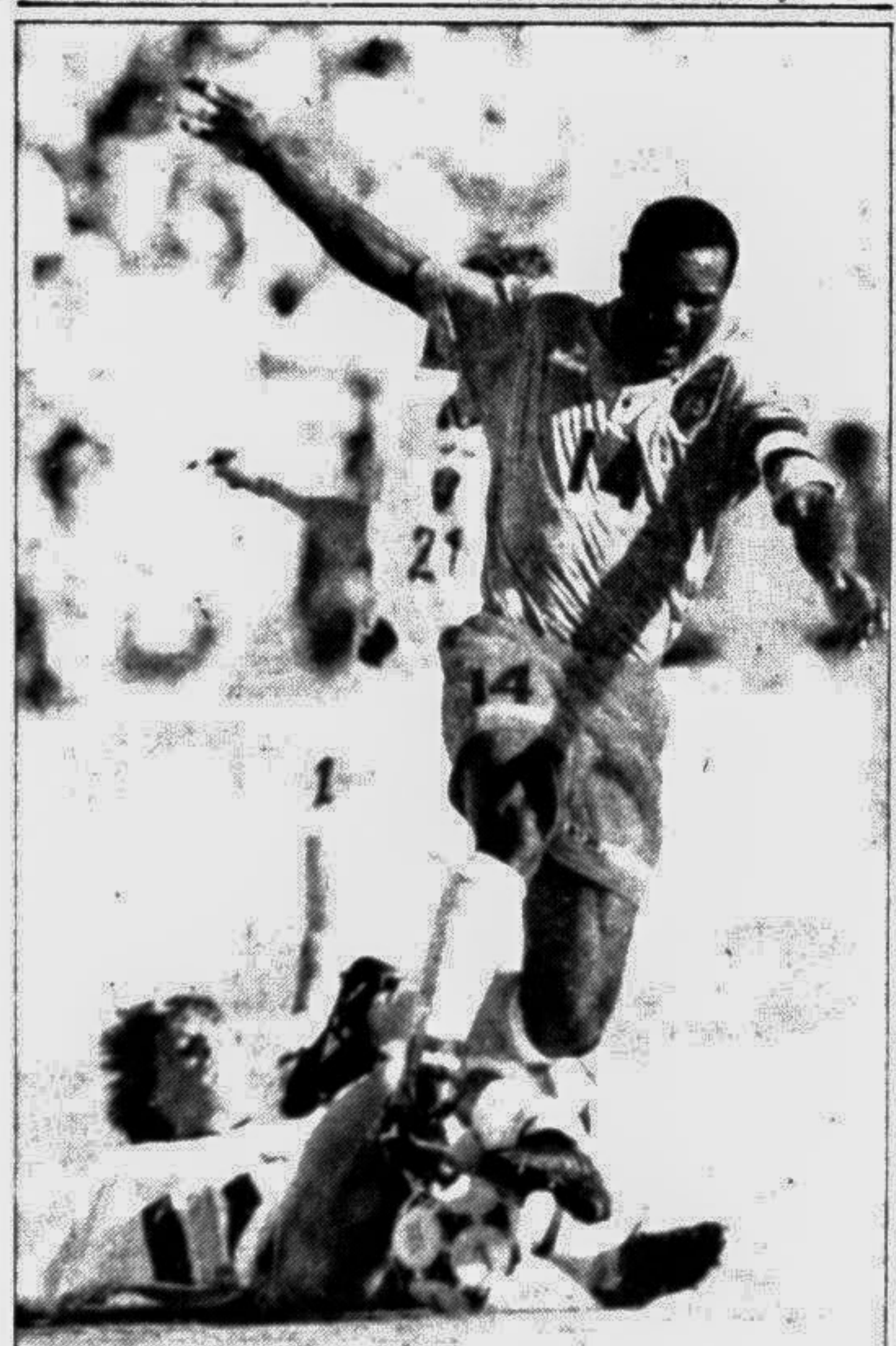
PASADENA, June 20: Cameroon's France-born coach Henri Michel said in Sunday his team's preparations for the World Cup finals had been a nightmare — with rows still raging in the squad hours before the 2-2 draw with Sweden, reports Reuter.

"Even two or three hours before this match I was talking to my players about matters other than football," he said.

Michel and veteran goalkeeper Joseph-Antoine Bell said the team had held discussions with officials over "matters other than football" just before their opening Group B game.

Cameroon, who had their main stadium closed by FIFA for safety reasons this year, have had to overcome administrative squabbling, controversy over the marketing of the team and shortage of money in their build-up to the tournament.

The Cameroon government intervened to settle the dispute.



Cameroon captain Stephen Tatawa bulldozes his way through the Swedish defence during the African Lions World Cup opener at the Rose Bowl Stadium on Sunday. — AFP photo

IN GROUP B, WEST GERMANY STEP UP A GEAR TO DEFEAT YUGOSLAVIA. THE UNSTOPPABLE GERD MULLER SLIDES IN THE SECOND GOAL.



BUT, IN THE ARCHETYPAL GAME OF TWO HALVES, THE HOSTS POWER PLAY TAKES THEM THROUGH IN THE END.



A CRACKING MATCH THEN FOLLOWS IN RAIN-DRENCHED DUISBURG. GERMANY ARE ROCKED BY ESTADION'S SUPERB STRIKE FOR SWEDEN.



ONLY POLAND STAND IN THE GERMANS WAY NOW. ON A QUAGMIRE PITCH, ONE EXPLOSIVE PIECE OF FINISHING FROM DER BOMBER MULLER DECIDES THE OUTCOME.



THE FINAL SHOWDOWN IS IN MUNICH'S FUTURISTIC OLYMPIC STADIUM. A RECORD 1,000 MILLION TV VIEWERS TUNE IN EXPECTANTLY.



HOLLAND BEGIN BY CONFIDENTLY KNOCKING THE BALL AROUND. THEN CRUYSR PICKS IT UP AND BURSTS SUDDENLY TOWARDS GOAL. HOENESS PANICS AND LUNGES RECKLESSLY.



THE EXCITEMENT HAS OBVIOUSLY AFFECTED THE GROUNDSTAFF. THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN TO PUT THE CORNER-FLAGS IN PLACE.



REFEREE TAYLOR BOLDLY POINTS TO THE SPOT. IT'S THE FIRST EVER PENALTY AWARD IN A WORLD CUP FINAL. LESS THAN A MINUTE HAS BEEN PLAYED.

