

WORLD CUP USA '94



GOAL NUMBER FIVE: Russia's Oleg Salenko beats the despairing Cameroon goalie with a well executed volley to create a World Cup record with five goals beating Frenchman Just Fontaine's four in the 1958 edition during their final group match at the Stanford Stadium on Tuesday. Russia crushed Cameroon 6-1.

Today's World Cup Fixtures

Group D
Greece vs Nigeria
Argentina vs Bulgaria

Asian snooker matches begin today

Sports Reporter
With the country convulsing in the grip of World Cup fever, with the nation busy making guesses about the future world champions, the opening ceremony of the 11th Asian snooker championship was supposed to be a quiet affair. But it was not.

Hosting the meet for the first time, the Bangladesh Billiards and Snooker Federation (BBSF), burdened with the enormous task of organising an international meet involving a game which is perhaps a wee bit more than a total stranger, has more than enough reasons to be reasonably elated for polishing off a handsome ceremonial.

Minister for Industries A M Zahiruddin Khan formally inaugurated the nine-day meet with Sindhu Pulsirivong, president of the Asian Billiards and Snooker Federation present as a special guest. Azimuddin Ahmed, the BBSF president and chairman of the tournament organising committee, also spoke on the occasion. The ceremonial was marked by the formal introduction of the participants.

The participating teams are: Brunei, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and hosts Bangladesh.

Split into four groups, 25 players representing 12 countries, including three from the host nation, will fight it out for top honours in four three-hour sessions everyday running through to July 6. Although the opening ceremony was held yesterday, the tournament proper starts at 10 this morning. The matches will be decided in best-of-seven frames.

Dahlin changes his mind

BONN, June 29: Swedish international striker Martin Dahlin made a dramatic U-turn on Tuesday when it was announced he would remain with Borussia Moenchengladbach next season, reports AFP.

Russia thrive in goal feast

PALO ALTO, June 29: Oleg Salenko scored a record five goals as Russia crushed Cameroon 6-1 in World Cup Group B on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Salenko struck in the 16th, 41st, 45th, 73rd and 75th minutes, making him the first player ever to score five goals in one match at the World Cup finals. Dmitry Radchenko added the sixth in the 82nd minute.

Even a goal by 42-year-old Roger Milla with his first touch as a second-half substitute was not enough to inspire Cameroon's 'Indomitable Lion' and keep them in the tournament.

Russia have three points and could qualify as one of the four third-placed teams if results go their way in the final matches in Groups D and F. Cameroon, with only one point after a draw against Sweden and a defeat by Brazil, were eliminated.

Salenko, who plays for Spanish club Logrones, is now the top scorer at USA '94 with six goals following the penalty he scored in the 3-1 defeat by Sweden last Friday.

"I cannot call myself a superman," Salenko said through an interpreter. "In order to be a superman we have to win the World Cup."

Cameroon began the match seeking a victory that could have won them a second-round berth after a 2-2 draw against Sweden and a 3-0 defeat by Brazil.

But the Africans could not repeat their success in reaching the quarter-finals in Italy in 1990 and fell apart.

Salenko coolly drove the ball under Cameroon goalkeeper Jacques Song'o to open the scoring after the ball ran free to him when Igor Korneyev was tackled by two defenders in the penalty box.

He was left completely clear to score the second, walking the ball into the net while the Cameroon players were still protesting a free-kick decision which went against them.

He scored the third from a penalty a minute before half-time and the fourth and fifth were right-foot shots from inside the penalty area.

It was a dramatic turnaround for the 24-year-old striker who was not in the starting line-up for Russia's opening match of the finals — a 2-0 defeat by Brazil.

Milla's goal was a fine effort in the 47th minute. He held off a defender and turned to slide the ball into the far corner of the net from close range.

As promised, he followed his success with a hip-wiggle at the corner flag — his trademark when he scored four goals in the final in Italy four years ago.

Cameroon had several chances in the first half and after Milla scored, Francois Omam-Biyick hit the crossbar in the first half and Thomas Libih struck the post early in the second half, but luck deserted the Africans.

Their exit followed a host of off-field problems, including a row over unpaid match bonuses and the decision by first-choice goalkeeper Joseph-Arfoine Bell to quit the team after the match against Brazil because of a dispute with officials.

Salenko, who was whisked off by officials for a doping test after the match, said he was delighted to score five goals but that it was a result of great teamwork.

"It was a team achievement. We played very well today even if we have only a slight chance of qualifying for the next round," he said.

He said he had not known about the record until it was announced in the stadium after he scored his fifth goal.

"I did not know what the record was or think about the possibility of beating it today. I only realised I had broken the record when I heard it announced," he said.

He put the turnaround in the Russians' fortunes down to Sadyrin's decision to include seven players from the top Russian team Spartak Moscow.

"We understand each other without speaking," Onopko said.

Referee: Jamal Al-Sharif (Syria)

Yellow Cards:
Russia — Valery Karpiya (57), Dmitry Khlestov (88), Yuri Nikiforov (90)
Cameroon — Andre Kana-Biyick (13), Jacques Song'o (45)

Koreans do Asia proud: Blatter

DALLAS, June 29: South Korea's World Cup performance has given Asian football a major boost, said FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter here on Wednesday, reports AFP.

Their match against Spain and their performance against Germany drew international attention to the good football Asian teams can play," said Blatter. "Their performance will help the whole of Asia."

South Korea and Japan are battling to host the 2002 World Cup but Blatter refused to be drawn on whether Korea's appearance at the finals here will help their cause.

South Korea tied their opening match against Spain 2-2, then drew 0-0 with Bolivia before going down 3-2 to Germany in a match they almost won.

"They should have beaten Bolivia," said Blatter. "It would have assured them of a second round place."

A cooking pot for Michel?

YAOUNDE, June 29: Cameroon was a humiliated and bitter country on Wednesday after its soccer team's 6-1 thrashing by Russia led to their exit from the World Cup, reports Reuter.

Market women in the capital Yaounde were about the only cheerful people, jokingly telling reporters they had a cooking pot ready for Henri Michel, the team's French coach.

"We advise him to go straight home to France," one laughing woman at the Mokolo Market said.

The "Indomitable Lions," Africa's pride in the 1990 World Cup in Italy when they reached the quarter-finals, crashed out in the first round in the US, conceding 11 goals in three matches.

"What upsets me most was the score we were beaten by last night. What will the world say about Cameroon? Six-one, that is denigration," said shopkeeper Blancard Tchatchoua.

"It was predictable that we lost. You can't win if you don't train, but the scoreline... I am ashamed, ashamed for my country," said Tchatchoua.

Reacting to their defeat, Cameroon's players and coach blamed their atrocious preparations.

Government ministers interfered in team selection, officials and businessmen scrapped for a slice of the sponsorship cake which finally eluded all of them and the national soccer federation was split between two rival factions.

"I think you have to blame the whole set-up of Cameroonian football," Michel said in Palo Alto.

Sports commentators in many African countries said Cameroon's performance was a disgrace and feared it could weaken Africa's case for four or five representatives in the 1998 finals instead of the current three.

Morocco were also eliminated in the first round, leaving Nigeria as Africa's last standard bearer.

"Last night it was the whole of African football, some would say Africa itself, which was humiliated," wrote the Sports Editor of Ivory Coast's Fraternite-Matin.

Michel said he was uncertain of his future. Most Cameroonians would be amazed if he is not sacked, blaming him as a principal cause of the debacle.

Cameroon's state media also rounded on Michel.

"It is not the players' fault or the lack of funds, it is the fault of a single man, Henri Michel," said television commentator Jean-Lambert Nang during the Russia match.

Norway curse their luck

EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ, June 29: Triumphs at their Olympics, in international diplomacy and during their first World Cup appearance in 56 years had some Norwegians suspecting that a higher power was on their side, reports AP.

"God is Norwegian," said one Norwegian T-shirt after the successes.

But when Norway were knocked out of the World Cup by the smallest possible margin Tuesday, that God must seem the cruelest in Valhalla, the ancient Viking heaven.

Norway did what they set out to do: Get four points that they presumed was needed to advance from the first round. However, Norway have the misfortune to end up in Group E, the toughest in the Cup, against Mexico, Italy and Ireland. In the so-called "Group of Death," four points was not enough.

A few months earlier, Norwegians learned that a small team of their countrymen had secretly brokered talks between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The effort was hailed by much of the world as a triumph for Middle East peace.

No more Fontaine, it's Salenko

LOS ANGELES, June 29: Oleg Salenko's World Cup record five goals against Cameroon on Tuesday also made the Russian the highest scorer since Poland's Grzegorz Lato in 1974, reports AFP.

The 24-year-old Salenko became the first player to score at least four goals in a match since Emilio Butragueno in Spain's 5-1 defeat of Denmark in the 1986 finals.

Eight other players had scored four goals in one match. Salenko, who scored from the penalty spot in a 3-1 defeat to Sweden three days ago, has now scored six goals. That equals the leading tournament tally since Lato in 1974.

No one has scored more, than six goals in any of the four previous tournaments.

Italy's Toto Schillaci (1990), England's Gary Lineker (1986), Italy's Paolo Rossi (1982) and Argentina's Mario Kempes (1978) finished as leading scorers with six goals each.

Salenko scored 16 goals for his Spanish club Logrones last season.

Russia, who still have a chance to qualify for the second round, scored the highest win since the Soviet Union thrashed Hungary 6-0 in 1986.

Roger Milla also set a record when he came on in the second half to score for Cameroon.

The 42-year-old had already become the oldest player in the World Cup finals when he was a substitute against Brazil. He became the oldest player to score in a World Cup finals match in Italy four years ago but on Tuesday he also became the oldest player to score in any international match.

Salenko had not scored in four internationals before coming here but Russian captain Viktor Onopko denied he only made the team as a replacement for the rebels who had refused to play under coach Pavel Sadyrin.

"He definitely was in the squad," Onopko said.

Salenko said he did not know about the record.

"I did not know what the old record was and only realised it when the announcement was made," he said.

"I prefer to call it an achievement of the team," he added.

"The team played extremely well today even though we still only have a slight chance to qualify."

"Most of all we wanted to show Russian spectators at home exactly what we are capable of."

Sadyrin was asked if Russia would have performed better with the likes of Igor Shalimov and Andrei Kanchelskis who had refused to play under him.

"That's not a serious question," he said.

"I think the team today was just as strong as the team would have been if they had been here."

AP adds: "I would exchange all my goals for Russia's second-round berth," Salenko said.

He played in Russia's final World Cup qualifier against Greece and was expected to back up striker Sergei Yuran during the World Cup. With Yuran out of the team because of poor form and a clash with coach Pavel Sadyrin, Salenko became a starter.

"Record, what record?" asked Salenko when leaving the pitch. "Now that I found out, it feels great to joint the legends."

Entering the World Cup, Salenko had not scored in international play. His best previous record was when he netted three goals for Dynamo Kiev against Dynamo Moscow in the 1990 Russian Cup final.

Salenko had also scored in Russia's second World Cup, a 3-1 loss to Sweden. His six goals make him the leading scorer in the tournament.

Players to score four goals in a World Cup game: Emilio Butragueno, Spain, 1986; Eusebio, Portugal, 1966; Just Fontaine, France, 1958; Sandor Kocsis, Hungary, 1954; Juan Schiaffino, Uruguay, 1950; Ademir, Brazil, 1950; Ernest Willimowski, Poland, 1938; Leonidas, Brazil, 1938; and Gustav Wetterstrom, Sweden, 1938.



RECORDS IN CONTRAST: Oleg Salenko of Russia (R) and Roger Milla (L) of Cameroon, the representatives of two generations pose after the last Group B encounter of the two teams at Stanford Stadium. Salenko scored five of Russia's six goals to erase Fontaine's record while Milla at 42 became the oldest player to score in the international circuit when he pulled one back in Cameroon's unsavoury farewell.

For Milla life begins at 42

SAN FRANCISCO, June 29: Cameroon's colourful striker Roger Milla already knows what is on the agenda after the World Cup — helping children in his native country, reports AFP.

The oldest player to compete in the World Cup finals at 42 tentatively set up a foundation four months ago for youngsters in need.

"Though he has yet to decide in what way it will bring aid, financial and moral support will probably be the two main benefits."

"Helping children is very important to me. I hope the foundation I set up will be of great help to a lot of children," he said.

He intends to compete in a tournament in Africa following the World Cup and is considering working for FIFA in a position representing Africa.

And on hopes for African nations in future World Cups.

It will continue to be important that we progress. In past, African teams did not have a good showing when they played in the World Cup. Now at least we are here and we are strong.

His wiggling hips made him a superstar at the Italian World Cup four years ago in an otherwise mediocre tournament.

However, it was not all such plain sailing in USA '94. He admitted he had come on at a terrible time against Brazil in Group B.

Milla entered the match less than two minutes before Marcio Santos made it 2-0 for Brazil, and a minute after Rigober Song was sent off.

"It was an awful time to come on, but that's the way it is," he said.

Milla said he had tried to make sure football and not money was on the agenda in the USA but after two matches goalkeeper Joseph-Antoine Bell pulled out because of pressure from Cameroon politicians.

Bell was the ringleader for calling a strike in protest at money owed to players by the federation.

Milla said: "They were at the World Cup to play matches and the Bell affair was not a sporting question, it was quite another matter."

At the 1990 World Cup in Italy, Milla came on as a sub to score against both Romania and Colombia.

Yet far from feeling the pressure that he and Cameroon should score this time, he said it was out of his hands.

"If it's God's will, we will have 10 goals. But if it's God's will we will have zero, we will have zero," he said.

In Italy, Milla also became the oldest player ever to score at a World Cup, being one year older than Sweden's Gunnar Gren who was 37 when he scored against West Germany in the 1958 semifinals.

His two late goals against Romania, his outfoxing of eccentric Colombian keeper Rene Higuita before scoring, and a superb performance against England in Naples elevated him to hero status.

England's Stanley Matthews is the oldest international. He was two months older than the 42-year-old Milla will be when he played Denmark in 1957.

But Milla beat Dino Zoff's World Cup record. The goalkeeper was 40 when he captained Italy to the 1982 World Cup.

But to Milla, being the oldest player was of no importance.

"It means nothing. I was the oldest outfield player at the 1990 World Cup. So what? All that matters is how good I am as a footballer not my age."

It's a heavy-duty semi-final line-up

MARADONA, A HERO AT HIS ITALIAN CLUB NAPOLI, CONTROVERSIALLY APPEALS TO THE FANS THERE TO BACK ARGENTINA AGAINST THEIR OWN COUNTRY



Inclusively though the Azurri sit back tentatively in 68 minutes. This costs them dear when blond bombshell Caniggia flicks home an equaliser



Neither side can muster another goal and the match is decided by the now all-too-prevalent penalty shoot-out. Tension gets the better of Italy's Donadoni and Serena



Govococha, originally a second-choice goalkeeper, is Argentina's hero. 50 million Italian hearts are broken



But ten minutes from time, the English deservingly draw level. Linaker clinically punishes confusion in the German defence



The ensuing extra-time produces a poignant moment. Young England star Paul Gascoigne bursts into tears when a yellow card means he'll miss the next match

