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Ireland to go flat out

ORLANDO, July 3: Ireland manager Jack Charlton said on Saturday his team would chase victory from the word go against the Netherlands in the second round of the World Cup next Monday, reports Reuter.

"I don't know what to expect. When you get to the knockout situation you know you need a result on the day," he told reporters, adding that one approach could be to defend, give nothing away and pin everything on a penalty shoot-out.

"We'll be very positive," he said. "We'll go and try and win the game from the start even though we are very good at penalty kicks."

Midfielder Andy Townsend, the Ireland captain, suffered a hamstring injury in Tuesday's goalless draw with Norway but trained with the rest of the squad in the Citrus Bowl Stadium on Saturday.

"Everybody trained this morning, no problem," Charlton said.

He refused to say who would be in the line-up against the Dutch but Kelly could keep his place at right back after replacing suspended Denis Irwin against Norway.

Gary Kelly is probably one of the quickest full-backs in the world. He's very much an important part in our business as is Terry Phelan, who is also a very good boy," Charlton said. Left back Phelan, like Irwin, missed the Norway game following two bookings in the first two first-round matches.

Ireland trained for an hour in the stadium in the midday sun after the Dutch had finished their one-hour practice.

Dutch coach Dick Advocaat looks likely to bolster his defence and midfield, leaving his winger won the bench, and deeply a 4-4-2 formation.

Danny Blind, who did not get a game in the first round, played at right back in what appeared the probable first team line-up in a practice game in which the reserves came out 2-0 winners.

Frank Rijkaard came into midfield in place of Jan Wouters, who is suspended after two bookings, leaving just two up front — Dennis Bergkamp and Peter van Vossen.

A bad day for men in black

LOS ANGELES, California, July 3: FIFA's part-time referees came under fire on Saturday for two controversial decisions which played a decisive part in Belgium and Switzerland going out of the World Cup, reports AP.

Kurt Rothlisberger, from neutral Switzerland, and Mario van der Ende of Holland both earn their living as teachers and the Belgian and Swiss coaches felt they would be better employed staying in their classrooms.

Defending champions Germany, inspired by two goals from 34-year-old Rudi Voeller, beat Belgium 3-2 and now play Mexico or Bulgaria while Spain finished eventual 3-0 winners over Switzerland. They tackle Nigeria or Italy in the quarter-finals.

A disputed 15th minute goal by Fernando Hierro meant the Swiss were always in danger of a counter-attack as they pushed forward in search of an equaliser. And they duly conceded two other goals in the last 20 minutes.

Rothlisberger waved play on in Germany's challenge from behind.

It was just the sort of offence FIFA had insisted would be outlawed in this World Cup and a penalty could have put Belgium only a goal in arrears.

"It was a scandal," said Belgium coach Paul Van Himst. "He shouldn't referee another international match. I'll be interested to see what FIFA does."

Spain's crucial first goal came immediately after Van der Ende allowed Miguel Nadal to hack down Stephane Chapuisat as he bore down on goal.

Nadal was sent off by Danish referee Peter Nikkelsen, another teacher, for a similar incident in Spain's opening match against South Korea.

Hierro broke away and scored at the other end with Sergi running back into an outside position.

"To make matters worse it was an offside goal," said Switzerland's English coach Roy Hodgson.

Spain's third goal came from a penalty awarded when Ferrer was fouled. However, if Van der Ende had been consistent Ferrer would have not been on the pitch.

The Dutch referee booked Switzerland's Marc Hottinger for kicking the ball away but 10 minutes later allowed Ferrer to do the very same thing. The right back had already been booked for a foul and another yellow card would have led to his dismissal.



German defender Martin Wagner (L) kicks the ball away from Belgian captain Georges Grun during first half action in their World Cup second round match at Chicago's Soldier Field Stadium on Saturday. Germany edged Belgium 3-2. — AFP photo

Americans, be careful in Mexico City

WASHINGTON, July 3: The State Department called on US government employees and dependents Saturday to exercise "extreme caution" while traveling in Mexico City due to World Cup-related demonstrations there, reports AFP.

In a statement Saturday, the State Department said demonstration by groups celebrating Mexico's success in the World Cup finals have led to violence.

As a result, the US embassy in Mexico City has advised all US government employees and dependents to exercise extreme caution while traveling in Mexico City on the days that Mexico play.

Three people were killed and 189 injured in clashes Tuesday after an estimated 30,000 people poured into Mexico City streets at the end of the match between Mexico and Italy.



Veteran striker Rudi Voeller fires the ball past Belgian goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme for Germany's opening goal in their World Cup second round match at Chicago's Soldier Field Stadium on Saturday. Germany won 3-2. — AFP photo

Holland plan to tighten up

ORLANDO, July 3: The Netherlands, renowned for their exhilarating attacking traditions, plan to tighten up and take on Ireland at their own uncompromising game for a place in the World Cup quarter-finals on Monday, reports Reuter.

The Dutch played two of their three first-round matches in the searing heat and strength-sapping humidity of the Citrus Bowl, the stadium in which Ireland suffered their one defeat in a 2-1 beating by Mexico.

Coach Dick Advocaat says the extreme conditions makes it impossible for the Dutch to play the way they would like and he is set to bolster his defence and midfield to make his team less vulnerable.

"We always like to play nice attractive football but the result is most important," he said.

The Dutch, who stumbled at

the second round hurdle against eventual champions West Germany in 1990, topped their groups this time but made anxious work of it with narrow 2-1 wins over Saudi Arabia and Morocco and a 1-0 loss to Belgium.

Now Advocaat appears ready



DICK ADVOCAAT

to omit his clever wingers and tighten up at the back with a 4-4-2 formation.

"Ireland have a very tough team and play a very aggressive game, he said. We'll play similarly to how they play, moving people behind the ball and looking for the counter-attack."

Frank Rijkaard, dropped against the speedy Moroccans, is expected to return in place of Jan Wouters, who is suspended after two bookings.

Danny Blind should have his first game of the tournament at right-back, with right-winger Marc Overmars standing down. The Dutch wingers, however, have proved a potent threat as substitutes, with Gaston Taument and Bryan Roy coming on to grab the respective winners against Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

Ireland manager Jack Charlton hopes for a better day at the Citrus Bowl than last time when he was fined 20,000 Swiss Francs (14,900 dollars) and banned from the touchline for one match for abusing match officials during the loss to Mexico.

He may well retain Gary Kelly, who deputised at right-back for suspended Denis Irwin in last Tuesday's goalless draw against Norway.

Left-back Terry Phelan, banned against Norway like Irwin for his second booking, is expected to return, with Steve Staunton moving up to midfield and Jason McAteer stepping down.

"Our acclimatisation is okay now but that's not quite the same as playing in the matches when it is 120 degrees (Fahrenheit) — 49 Celsius — in the Citrus Bowl," Charlton said.

"Our game has always been about chasing and closing people down but we can't do that here. So we're letting the players play as individuals and telling them to have a go at people the way they see it."

Ireland, who went further than the Dutch and reached the 1990 World Cup quarter-finals, came agonisingly close to ousting the Dutch — the eventual champions — at the 1988 European Championship and beat them 1-0 in a friendly only last April.

But that will all be history when they meet on American Independence Day, just before the US take on title favourites Brazil.

Charlton, casting the Dutch as favourites in their private duel, is looking for a double upset. "The Americans have done very well. Maybe it will be them facing US in Dallas in the quarter-finals," he said.

Advocaat who refuses to look beyond Monday's match, disagrees: "We're playing at home so I think it will be 1-0", he said.

PROBABLE TEAMS NETHERLANDS: 1-Ed de Goey, 15-Danny Blind, 4-Ronald Koeman, 18-Stan Valckx, 2-Frank De Boer, 20-Aron Winter, 8-Wim Jonk, 5-Rob Witschge, 3-Frank Rijkaard, 10-Dennis Bergkamp, 19-Peter van Vossen.

IRELAND: 1-Pat Bonner, 12-Gary Kelly, 5-Paul McGrath, 14-Phil Babb, 3-Terry Phelan, 8-Ray Houghton, 6-Roy Keane, 7-Andy Townsend, 10-John Sheridan, 11-Steve Staunton, 9-John Aldridge.

Referee: Peter Mikkelsen (Denmark). Kick-off 1600 GMT

Charlton predicts European triumph

ORLANDO, Florida, July 3: Jack Charlton, who has been a fierce critic of the furnace-like conditions World Cup teams have had to endure, now believes a European side is quite capable of winning the tournament, reports AFP.

Maldini in Baresi's role

MARTINSVILLE, New Jersey, July 3: Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi hinted on Saturday that he will move Paolo Maldini to central defence and pick attacker Daniele Massaro to stop what he called Nigeria's "supermen" in the World Cup, reports Reuter.

Maldini, captain in the absence of the injured Franco Baresi, was switched from left back to the heart of defence during a training match while Massaro was given the nod over Pierluigi Casiraghi up front.

Midfielder Dino Baggio is struggling with a thigh strain and his place for the practice game was taken by the experienced Roberto Donadoni.

Coach Sacchi said either Donadoni or the hard-running Antonio Conte would fill the vacancy should Dino Baggio not recover in time for Tuesday's second round game against Nigeria in Boston.

Sacchi continued to sing the praises of the African champions. "We are going to play against supermen," Sacchi said of their power and speed.

"Most of them have played in European leagues and pricked up useful experience," he added. "They are superior to a lot of teams who have bigger reputations."

The coach has admitted he is on a hiding to nothing in the last 16 match as Italians expect their team, world champions three times, to win.

But Italy have not played well in this tournament and Sacchi seems to feel fresh changes are required.

Maldini gave a towering display in central defence as his club AC Milan thrashed Barcelona 4-0 in May to win the European Cup. Baresi and central defensive partner Alessandro Costacurta missed the final through suspension.

Sacchi paired Maldini and Costacurta on Saturday with Antonio Benarrivo and Roberto Mussi, who has won only two caps, filling the full-back slots.

Massaro, was another Milan hero in the European Cup final, netting twice. He scored his first international goal in last Tuesday's 1-1 draw with Mexico shortly after coming on a substitute for Casiraghi.

Sacchi had no qualms about stressing the quality of the opposition, something he has done throughout the World Cup.

"One Milan player told me that before they played Barcelona they were terrified of what the Spaniards could do," he said.

The Italian coach was up early on Saturday studying a video of Nigeria's 2-1 defeat by Argentina in the opening round.

"I think we are better than them and I think I know how to beat them," he said. "But I'd rather not say how."

Voeller fresh, fantastic

CHICAGO, July 3: Rudi Voeller, 34, who had retired from German soccer fans echoed through the day that one of their biggest favourites was playing again, reports AP.

Forward Rudi Voeller, age 34 and coaxed out of retirement just before the World Cup began, was back in the starting lineup and his presence was an important one Saturday in a 3-2 victory over Belgium for the defending champions.

Thanks to Voeller, Germany are in the quarterfinal.

Playing in his 89th international match, Voeller scored two goals, assisted on another and inadvertently helped Belgium get one of their scores during an eventful and fast-paced second-round match.

"Voeller had a lot of time to rest. It was his first game and he was explosive," said Belgium goalie Michel Preud'homme.

"After the first round, we thought we should have an other line and it worked out pretty well. I'd like to thank Rudi Voeller," said German coach Berti Vogts, who told the striker several days ago he would make his first start.

Voeller is well liked by his teammates and sometimes the centre of their ribbing. After he was teased when his frizzy hair began to gray, he simply dyed it.

But Saturday he didn't look old one bit. It was his teamwork and passing with star Juergen Klinsmann that helped the Germans constantly manoeuvre the ball into scoring position on a wet and cool day.

"It's no secret that Juergen and I have known each other a long time, played a lot of games together and we know how the other is moving," said Voeller.

"I'm a little tired as all the players are. It's my first game of over 90 minutes. But I'm happy," he said. "When you score a goal, it gives an old guy like myself time to play the game more relaxed."

Voeller relaxed early, taking a pass behind the defence from Lothar Matthaus, heading a one-bounce pass to himself and then ramming the ball past Preud'homme for a 1-0 lead in the sixth minute.

But two minutes later, he

misheaded a ball in front of his own goal while trying to clear and it gave Belgium's Georges Grun an easy path to the net and he scored to tie the match.

Three minutes passed and Klinsmann scored with Voeller getting an assist pass. In the 40th minute, Veller headed in a goal after a corner kick by Thomas Haessler to make it 3-1. The goal turned out to be the winner after Belgium scored late in the second half.

"I knew I would not be able to make all seven games of the Cup, but I was ready to help my teammates," said Voeller.

Voeller, bothered by a series of injuries, had retired from international play in 1992 but had continued playing club soccer in France. Vogts was not satisfied with the attacking capabilities of the national team, so he asked Voeller to come back.

"After 10 years I thought my time had come to retire. Shortly before the World Cup, Berti Vogts came to me and asked me to play again. I'm very happy," said Veller.

Voeller's two goals were his 46th and 47th in international play, second best on Germany's all-time list behind Gerd Mueller, who had 68 in 62 games.

WORLD CUP NOTEBOOK

UNDATED (AP): After 100,000 people filed past his coffin, soccer star Andres Escobar was buried Sunday amid calls for Colombians to rid themselves of violence.

Escobar, 27, died in a parking lot 10 days after he inadvertently scored the first goal for the United States in the game, which the Americans won 2-1.

Colombia had been favourites to win the championship, but instead were eliminated in the first round, partly due to the upset.

Police said Escobar was shot 12 times in a Saturday morning confrontation with three men and a woman, who surrounded him after he left a bar in Medellin, Colombia's third-largest city.

The national police reported the arrest of two suspects Saturday afternoon and said two others were being sought. Medellin Mayor Luis Alfredo Ramos said other Colombian World Cup players living in Medellin would be given bodyguards. A reward for the assassins' capture was set at \$62,500.

FIFA, the international governing body for soccer, said in a statement from Dallas that it was "profoundly horrified and dismayed" by the slaying.

Hundreds of Diego Maradona fans marched Sunday through the streets of Bangladesh's capital, Dhaka, demanding the return of the Argentine soccer star to the World Cup.

"Dhaka will burn if Maradona is not allowed to play," chanted more than 600 placard-waving supporters of the soccer star in front of the National Press Club.

Sunday's demonstration was the third in Bangladesh since Maradona's expulsion on drug abuse charges on Thursday. Soccer is the most popular sport in the country, even though it has never made it to the World Cup.

Carrying national flags of Argentina and Bangladesh, the protesters demanded immediate lifting of the ban on Maradona imposed by FIFA.

With Diego Maradona banned from the World Cup, Argentina need a new hero. Claudio Caniggia could be the man.

Caniggia, 27, the dazzling forward who led the Argentines in scoring in the last World Cup and has notched two goals in the United States, drew the highest praise from Maradona before the latter player was sent home for using five banned types of the drug ephedrine.

"He is a genius," Maradona said. "Thanks anyway," Switzerland, Le Matin newspaper said Sunday. "The American dream has ended," it grieved, a day after the Swiss squad's 3-0 loss to Spain.

Sadness was tinged with pride that English trainer Roy Hodgson's team had made it to the second round in their first World Cup appearance in 28 years.

"Hold your head up Roy. Hold your head up Boys," said the German-language tabloid Sonntagsblick in Geneva. "No one should be ashamed of our performance."

The newspaper Sonntags Zeitung described the young national squad — centered around a clutch of young talent who play for German league teams — as the best in decades.

"We played four matches (in two weeks) and it wasn't always easy to mobilize the energy," said 34-year-old sweeper Alain Geiger.

In the first-round games, the Swiss tied 1-1 against the United States, trounced eventual Group A winners Romania 4-1, and lost 2-0 against Colombia.

President Clinton telephoned members of the United States soccer team during dinner Saturday night, wishing them well against Brazil on Monday and inviting them to the White House.

Clinton, calling from Camp David, said he would be watching the game — the first second-round appearance for the United States in the World Cup since 1930 — with his wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea.

"We're sitting here on pins and needles and pulling for you," Clinton said.

"My family has watched all the games together and my daughter is a big soccer fan, so she is making sure I understand what I see," the President added.

Clinton talked on a speaker phone to the entire team, and then chatted separately with coach Bora Milutinovic and team captain Tony Meola.

"My English is so bad but my team plays very well," Milutinovic said.

It's crunch time for Baggio

MARTINSVILLE, New Jersey, July 3: Tuesday's second round clash with Nigeria is not just crunch time for Italy. For Roberto Baggio too, everything is on the line, reports AFP.

The Juventus forward, voted world and European player-of-1993, came into USA '94, universally acclaimed as the outstanding player of his generation.

At 26, Baggio was felt to be close to his peak, ready to take the United States by storm. "When I think of the World Cup in America I think of one name — Baggio," said Franz Beckenbauer last December.

But after displays against Ireland and Mexico that were among the least inspired he has ever produced in the blue shirt of his country, that kind of extravagant praise has become a rapidly fading memory.

A 20-minute cameo against Norway gave a taste of the feast Baggio might yet serve up, but it was not enough to stem the calls for his head.

Italian coach Arrigo Sacchi continues to insist it is only a matter of time before Baggio clicks into the kind of brilliance he displayed in Italy's crucial qualifying matches.

But there are signs that his faith is being pushed close to breaking point. "It does not only apply to



ROBERTO BAGGIO

Baggio but if a player is not in top form he will not play," said Sacchi in his most explicit hint yet that he was prepared to do the unthinkable.

The Italian coach, who has Parma's Gianfranco Zola waiting in the wings, has already shown he is not overawed by Baggio's superstar status by sensationally pulling him off against Norway when goal-

keeper Gianluca Pagliuca was sent off.

Baggio pointing at his own chest with a disbelieving who, me? expression in reaction to his number going up was one of the strongest images of the first round.

The shake of the head that followed was an action that must have been matched repeatedly by bemused Italians from Milan to Messina as they sought to understand why their hero had failed to deliver the goods.

Even the player's mother says she does not recognise him. Giovanni Agnelli, the Fiat magnate who owns Juventus, said he looked like a "wet rabbit" against Mexico.

A nationwide debate has raged about whether Baggio a reclusive, shy individual and a practising Buddhist, has the personality of a winner while Sacchi has had to face a torrent of criticism that his tactics are responsible for his failure to produce performances worthy of his undoubted ability.

The player himself while refraining from a direct criticism of Sacchi's philosophy, which demands that every player does his share of the donkey work of pressurising opponents, has helped to fuel those attacks.

"I know I have looked bad on the field," said Baggio, whose cause has not been helped by an inflamed Achilles tendon. "The way we have played so far means I nearly always have my back to goal which makes it so much more difficult to score. In those kind of situations I cannot perform miracles."

His disappointing displays mirror the way Gianluca Vialli failed to live up to expectations in the 1990 World Cup and Baggio sees a clear parallel.

"In 1990, Vialli sacrificed himself for the team with his running off the ball. His work allowed Toto Schillaci and me to come in with our speed and skill and make things happen."

"To an extent I've done the same thing here but as a team we have not taken advantage of that."

Sacchi, however, rejects the idea that it is his formation, in which Baggio is played as one of two central strikers, that is at fault.

Roberto has played in Italy teams with the same style and in the same conditions for the last three years and it has not stopped him playing some of his greatest matches."



A MINUTE'S SILENCE — (from left) German Juergen Klinsmann, Thomas Helmer, Matthias Sammer, Guido Buchwald and Thomas Haessler observe a minute's silence to pay tribute to the slain Colombian defender Andres Escobar, who was shot dead by unidentified gunmen on July 2, just before the start of their second round match against Belgium at the Soldier's Field Stadium in Chicago on Saturday. — AFP photo