

WORLD CUP USA '94

WORLD CUP STATS

LOS ANGELES, July 7 (AP): World Cup statistics after the second round:

ATTENDANCES

First Round: Group A: 497,541 (average 82,924); Group B: 472,080 (78,680); Group C: 364,020 (60,670); Group D: 332,230 (55,372); Group E: 392,573 (65,429); Group F: 361,653 (60,276).

Total (after 36 of 52 matches): 2,420,097 (average 67,225).

Total at same stage of 1990 finals in Italy: 1,620,107.

Second Round: 535,012 (average 66,876).

Total (after 44 of 52 matches): 2,955,108 (average 67,162).

World Cup record for whole tournament: 60,772 for the 22 games at the 1950 tournament in Brazil.

Final total in 1990: 2,517,348 (average 48,411).

Highest attendance: 93,869 (Romania v USA, Los Angeles).

Lowest: 44,132 (Bulgaria v Nigeria, Dallas).

Goals

First Round: Group A: 17 (average 2.83); Group B: 22 (3.66); Group C: 16 (2.66); Group D: 18 (3.00); Group E: 8 (1.33); Group F: 12 (2.00). Total 93 (82 in 1990). Average per match: 2.58.

Second Round: 25 (average 3.12).

Total: 118 (average 2.68).

Total goals for entire 1990 tournament was 115 for an average of 2.21.

Biggest win: Russia 6 v Cameroon 1 (Group B)

Top-scoring team: Spain and Sweden 9 goals each.

Best defence: Brazil 1 goal

Leading scorer: Olek Salenko (Russia) 6

Best individual performance: Salenko 5 v Cameroon (World Cup Record) penalties: 13 (all converted).

Red and yellow cards after second round:

Sendings-off: 13; bookings: 202 (16 dismissed and 164 cautioned in 1990 finals).

Europe's best chance?

DALLAS, July 7: Europe should make the most of its dominance of the World Cup because the continent will never again have seven teams in the quarter-finals, according to former soccer great Bobby Charlton, reports Reuter.

Charlton, a member of England's World Cup winning team in 1966, said Africa and Asia has shown they were catching up fast and would pose a serious threat in future tournaments.

He said Europe had profited in USA '94 from South America's failure to adapt to rule changes aimed at curbing defensive play and from the lack of experience of the other continents.

"The rate of improvement in Africa is vast," he said. "Nigeria are the best African team" I've seen at this level they were two minutes away from beating Italy and if they'd done that, they wouldn't have been afraid of anyone.

But there is no substitute for experience. In a situation like that, they didn't know to hold on to a lead, to be professional they're too instinctive.

But they will have learned a lot from this World Cup and so will the rest of Africa.

Charlton said Asian countries were investing heavily in soccer and could soon make a major breakthrough as well.

"I don't think we'll ever see this situation repeated where Europe get seven teams in the quarter-finals," he added.

"FIFA's rule changes giving three points for a win, banning back passes and the tackle from behind had helped European teams who are more open to attacking soccer and hindered the South Americans," he said.

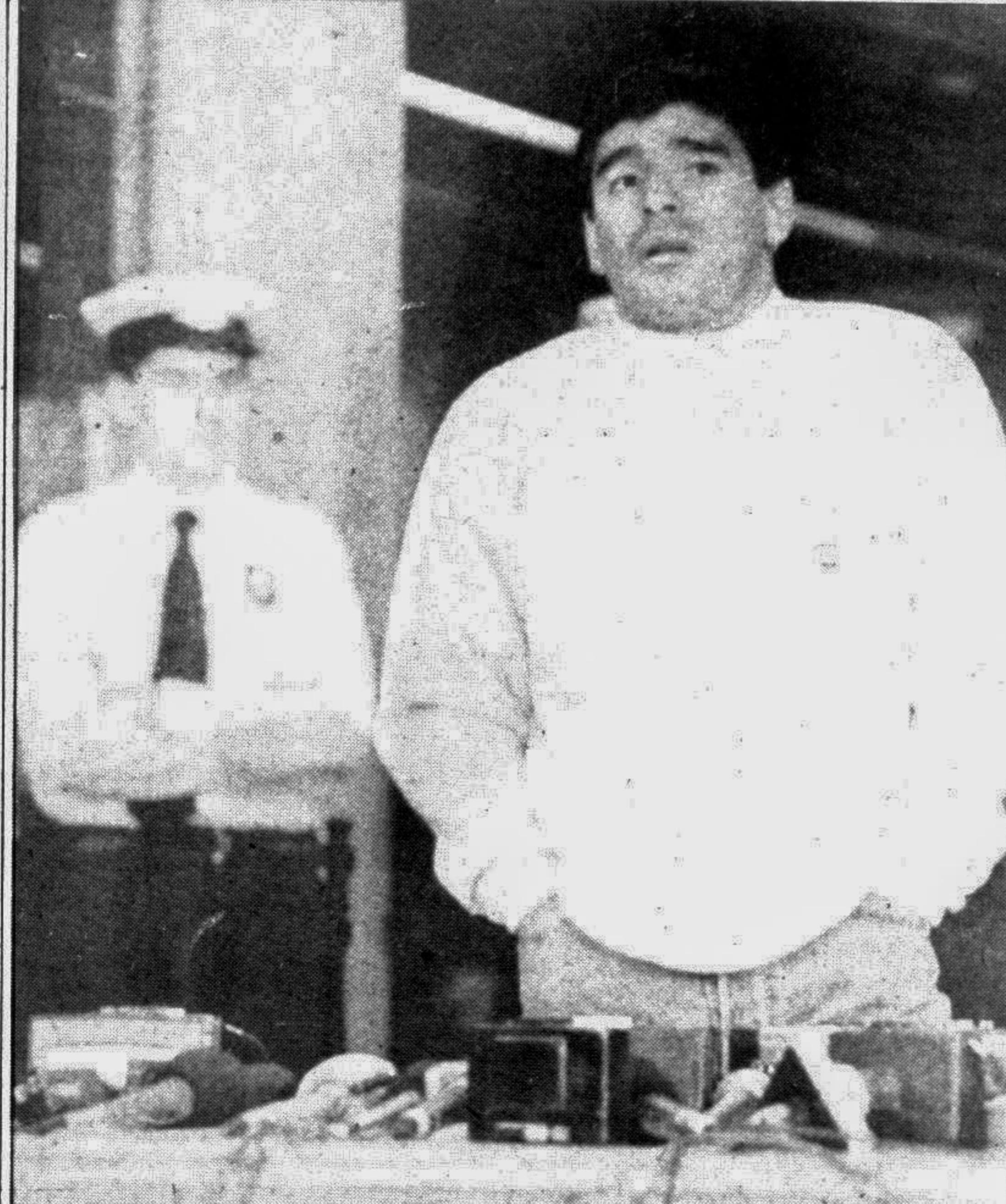
The South Americans are more defensive oriented, they are often guilty of time wasting and arguing with referees, with the new directives they find it more difficult to get to grips with the situation," he said.

The exception was Brazil, he added, because they had never favoured defensive football and always looked to attack.

"But the Brazilians must be a bit worried now that they have seven European teams against them, he said they always think of the Europeans as being physical and strong."

Charlton said he thought Brazil had not played as well as they could, especially towards Romario and Bebeto, but he felt they were the best team at the finals and could take the title.

The former Manchester United forward said he favoured Germany to meet them in the final but thought the competition was still open with the Netherlands, Italy and Spain also capable of winning the World Cup.



Disgraced Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona speaks to the press after arriving in Buenos Aires from the USA on July 6. Maradona said he was the only one responsible for being banned from the 1994 World Cup finals.

— AFP photo

Maradona carries the can

BUENOS AIRES, July 7: Argentina's fallen soccer idol, Diego Maradona, arrived home Wednesday telling his fans that he is the only one to blame for his scandal-tainted dismissal from the World Cup, reports Reuter.

FIFA banned the Argentine captain from the sport last week because he failed a doping test for taking a drug containing the banned alkaloid ephedrine.

Argentina, who were in the hunt for their third world title, crashed out of the tournament Sunday with a 3-2 second round loss to Romania.

"I'm the only one responsible, you can say that much," a sad-looking Maradona told a news conference at Buenos Aires International Airport.

"It's useless to look for a scapegoat," said the stocky 33-year-old midfielder, who added that he had hoped to end his career with a World Cup triumph.

Asked if he felt like a retired player, Maradona said that FIFA had practically ruled him out of the sport for good.

FIFA, the sport's international governing body, is due to consider Maradona's case and decide a definitive punishment when the finals are over.

Maradona, a former street urchin, was one of the world's best players in the 1980s. He led his country's team to victory in the 1986 finals and to a second place in 1990.

His brilliant international career began to crumble in 1991 when soccer authorities banned him for 15 months after he tested positive for cocaine following an Italian lea-

gu's attack.

Maradona, who has seen little serious soccer since and ran into more trouble by getting arrested for cocaine possession, still managed to come back for this World Cup.

After shedding excess weight, he led Argentina to victory in its first two-matches against Greece and Nigeria.

Just as he was becoming the toast of the tournament, Maradona was drummed out of the World Cup for failing a doping test.

His blunder shocked both the nation that idolised him and his team, which lost its next two matches and had to pack its bags earlier than it expected.

"I wanted to say I am very sorry about everything that happened. There was nothing we could do," Maradona said.

Brazil, last of the Latins

NEW YORK, July 7: It's down to Brazil to defend the honour. Having won every World Cup played in the Western Hemisphere,

team eliminated.

Still, according to Hernan Lopez of the Colombian Football Federation, Colombia are different from Argentina or Mexico.

"It's about behaviour," said Lopez, in charge of the federation's referees. "(The Colombian players) were convinced they would be champions, but when they confronted reality, they had a problem."

Unlike Argentina, who lack young talent, Lopez said, Colombia are lush with developing players.

The Bogota newspaper *El Tiempo* sees the difference between Europe and South America more attitudinal.

"We've seen that South American football depends too much on one or two players, while in Europe they play offensively one day and defensively the next with the same punch," it said.

Mexico, led by new-age goalkeeper Jorge Campos, went further than Colombia, winning the "Group of Death" on goals scored over three-time champions Italy, Ireland and defence-minded Norway.

It was eliminated in the quarterfinals on penalties by Bulgaria.

Bolivia upset Brazil in qualifying — albeit in the thin air of La Paz. Their best scorer, Marco Etcheverry, came to the World Cup injured and was ejected from the first game after he came on as a substitute.

Bolivia never recovered.

Argentina, the 1978 and '86 winners, certainly didn't expect aging star Diego Maradona to get suspended for taking a cocktail of five banned stimulants.

Argentina did show a promising striker in Gabriel Batistuta, but needed far more to overcome the loss of their leader, who was playing well and inspiring his teammates.

Latin Americans are used to success. Seven of the 14 World Cups went to South American teams — Uruguay, in 1930 and

1950; Argentina in 1978 and '86 and Brazil in 1958, '62 and '70.

"The European invasion" read a headline in Bogota's *El Espectador* mourning the elimination of all the Latin American teams except Brazil.

Greeks feel it's outrageous

ATHENS, July 7: Legal proceedings have been opened in Greece into allegations that 13.6 million dollars were wasted on promoting the country's disastrous debut in the World Cup finals, reports AFP.

The proceedings were ordered by an Athens examining magistrate in the wake of newspaper reports claiming there had been excessive expenditure on receptions and cultural events.

CARLOS BILARDO

Latin America has seen Europe and the rest of the world go by, and may have to adjust to being second best, reports AP.

Of the eight quarterfinalists, all but Brazil are from Europe.

What happened, Latin America?

Carlos Bilardo, the former Argentine coach who also coached Sevilla in the Spanish First Division, said teams across Europe are using a style of play the Latin teams never had to catch up to.

"We are, and I mean all South Americans, we are falling way behind in the world of soccer," he told Barcelona's La Vanguardia newspaper Wednesday. "In tactics, we're 10 years behind. I said it long ago and nobody wants to recognise it."

Heading into the month-long tournament all the talk was about dark-horse Colombia. They had a 22-18-5 record since the 1990 World Cup and Pele called Colombia the best team coming into the championship.

But Colombia lost to Romania and then the United States to become the first

Argentine soccer coach Alfonso Basile, whose side were unexpectedly knocked out of the World Cup in the second round, offered on Thursday to resign, reports Reuter.

Our hopes were set on bringing the title home. I live here and know that in Argentina it's no good being second best," Basile told reporters on arrival from the United States. "So the management team is to step down."

Argentine Football Association president Julio Grondona said Basile would be asked to honour his contract until the end of the year. Local commentators have tipped River Plate coach and 1978 World Cup winning skipper Daniel Passarella as Basile's most likely successor.

"I think his problems have been caused off the pitch."

Rai, who was ranked 10th in FIFA's 1993 footballer of the year poll, was sold to Paris St Germain in July 1993 for 3.1 million dollars.

He arrived in France with

reputation as a consistently

creative Medio who led Sao Paulo to the 1992 International Cup.

In Sao Paulo, Rai was the uncontested leader," Santanna said. He had a great influence on the rest of his colleagues.

He was a real leader. On the pitch he was the one who organised the action."

RAI

thing is not going well," Santanna said. He does not want to give all he can give, and it's the same problem with Brazil."

Santanna said Rai's problem was not unprecedented.

"We have seen people like him who have a lot of promise, and even play at a high level, and then suddenly, it does not work any more," he said.

Bulgarians in search for more

NEW YORK, July 7: Bulgaria believe they can add another remarkable chapter to their incident-packed World Cup story when they meet Germany in the quarter-finals on Sunday, reports Reuter.

A team who two weeks ago had never won a match in the World Cup finals in 17 attempts suddenly find themselves on the brink of fame and fortune after a string of adventures that culminated in a penalty shoot-out win over Mexico.

The final twist on Tuesday ended a game that featured 10 yellow cards, two sending-off penalty saves from both goalkeepers and six-minute delay to repair a broken net.

For Bulgaria, whose celebrations went on long into the night, it was practically par for the course. There may be better footballing sides among the seven European teams in the quarter-finals but none with a

Havelange did it for Maradona's good!

MADRID, July 7: The president of FIFA, Joao Havelange, said he made personally sure that Argentine star Diego Maradona was suspended from the World Cup last week in order to avoid taking more extreme measures, reports Reuter.

In an interview with Spanish sports paper as published on Thursday, Havelange also said he would ensure that "Maradona will not be punished too heavily, in such a way that at his age it would force him to retire."

The 33-year-old former Argentine captain, who tested positive for the banned drug ephedrine following a first round match, has said soccer career is over.

Havelange said he was in Washington when news emerged that Maradona had tested positive. He flew immediately to Dallas where he arrived in the early hours of June 30.

Once anti-doping committee chairman Dr Michel D'Hooge had explained how serious this was I asked Julio Grondona (President of the Argentine Football Association) to pull him out of the World Cup to avoid taking a drastic decision," Havelange said in the interview.

"We had to suspend the player from the competition because there was no other way, and in any case all the federations know the doping rules," he said.

Havelange did not specify what more extreme steps might have been taken if Maradona had not been suspended, but there has been speculation that the whole Argentine team might have been punished.

Havelange said FIFA was not on a witch hunt against Maradona and had supported him in his efforts to return to football two years ago after a 15-month ban for taking cocaine.

The world governing body for soccer is due to consider Maradona's case and decide a definitive punishment for him when the finals are over.

Havelange said doctors with the Argentine team should have exercised more control over what the player was taking.

Havelange told us he was generally delighted with the World Cup this year, describing the organisation as having been a big success.

And he added that when France held the competition in four years time, it would not last any longer despite involving 32 teams instead of 24.

He said the finalists would not have to play more than seven matches.

Basile offers to quit

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