

## Bats in the belfry?

SOFIA, July 11: Bulgarians flooded the streets on Sunday in a nationwide outburst of joy at their 2-1 World Cup quarter-final, victory over champions Germany, reports Reuters.

In Sofia, old people lent over their balconies, smiling and clapping as youngsters ran below shouting, waving flags and spraying each other with champagne and beer.

Hundreds of thousands of fans jammed the streets, heading in cars, buses, trucks and on foot for the centre of town, where crowds filled the square in front of the national palace of culture.

President said they had never seen so many flags in the streets, or such noisy celebrations, even during the overthrow of communism four years ago.

Armed police, out in force to control the crowds, joined in the celebrations, driving around with sirens blaring, some hugged overjoyed fans.

"Hristo Stoichkov for president" sang the crowd, exulting in the first goal which levelled the score after Germany had taken the lead.

The scenes were repeated in towns all over the country. Cars screeched around the packed streets while fireworks and guns punctuated the evening sky.

In a live speech on Bulgarian television, President Zhelev congratulated the nation on the unprecedented victory, saying it had been made possible by the end of the communist regime.

"Democracy had to come in order to allow our footballers to play in the most prominent European and world teams and really show their talent," said Zhelev, a former dissident, in a reference to the many foreign-based players in the national squad.

## GOAL SCORERS

UNDATED (Reuters): Following are the World Cup '94 goal scorers after quarterfinal matches played on Sunday:

6-goals Oleg Salenko (Russia)

5-goals Juergen Klinsmann (Germany), Hristo Stoichkov (Bulgaria)

4-goals Martin Dahlin (Sweden), Gabriel Batistuta (Argentina), Romario (Brazil), Florin Raducioiu (Romania), Kennet Andersson (Sweden), 3-goals Bebeto (Brazil), Gheorghe Hagi (Romania), Roberto Baggio (Italy), Jose Caminero (Spain), Dennis Bergkamp (Netherlands), 2-goals Tomas Brodin (Sweden), Juan Golkoetxea (Spain), Ilie Dumitrescu (Romania), Georges Bregy (Switzerland), Adolfo Valencia (Colombia), Luis Garcia (Mexico), Fuad Anwar Amin (Saudi Arabia), Claudio Caniggia (Argentina), Hong Myong-Bo (South Korea), Daniel Amokachi (Nigeria), Rudi Voeller (Germany), Wim Jonk (Netherlands), Dino Baggio (Italy), Emmanuel Amunike (Nigeria), Yordan Lechkov (Bulgaria), 1-goal Bulio Salinas (Spain), Hwang Sun-Hong (South Korea), Soe Jung-Won (South Korea), Eric Wynalda (United States), Ray Houghton (Ireland), Marc Degryse (Belgium), Kjetil Rekdal (Norway), Roger Ljung (Sweden), David Embe (Cameroon), Francois Omambiyik (Cameroon), Ral (Brazil), Gaston Taument (Netherlands), Diego Maradona (Argentina), Bryan Roy (Netherlands), Rashidi Yekini (Nigeria), Finidi George (Nigeria), Alberto Garcia (Mexico), Alain Sutter (Switzerland), Stephane Chapuisat (Switzerland), Adrian Knap (Switzerland), Ernie Stewart (United States), John Aldridge (Ireland), Marcio Santos (Brazil), Dmitry Radchenko (Russia), Sami Al-Jaber (Saudi Arabia), Georges Grun (Belgium), Mohamed Chaouch (Morocco), Samson Siasia (Nigeria), Daniel Borimirov (Bulgaria), Harold Lozano (Colombia), Herman Gaviria (Colombia), Karlheinz Riedle (Germany), Erwin Sanchez (Bolivia), Josep Guardiola (Spain), Daniele Massaro (Italy), Marcelino Bernal (Mexico), Fahd Al-Ghshayan (Saudi Arabia), Roger Milla (Cameroon), Saeed Owairan (Saudi Arabia), Hassan Nader (Morocco), Nasko Sirakov (Bulgaria), Fernando Hierro (Spain), Luis Enrique (Spain), Aitor Beguiristain (Spain), Abel Balbo (Argentina), Branco (Brazil), Aron Winter (Netherlands), Lothar Matthaeus (Germany), Dan Petrescu (Romania).

Own goal — Andres Escobar, Colombia (vs. United States)

## Daring escape

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany, July 11: Two Albanians escaped from jail while their warders watched the World Cup on television, it was revealed today, reports AFP.

The two used part of a bed frame to dig a hole through their cell wall and climbed over a three-metre wall using bed sheets.



An ecstatic Bulgarian midfielder Jordan Lechkov raises his hands in joy after heading home the match winner against favourites Germany during their quarter-final match at the Giants Stadium on July 10. Bulgaria won the match 2-1. — AFP photo

## Bulgarians not yet blase



EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey, July 11: Bulgaria's players, ecstatic over their remarkable 2-1 quarter-final win against Germany on Sunday, insisted they would vanquish yet another World Cup champion on their way to the USA '94 final, reports Reuters.

"I think we have a great chance of beating Italy ... they're not as good a team as Germany," said captain and goalkeeper Borislav Mihailov after his side had scored twice in three minutes late in the game to shock the defending champions.

Hristo Stoichkov, whose goal direct from a free-kick in the 76th minute hauled his side back into the match, was equally confident.

"We have nothing to lose. I think we'll have as big a success against Italy in the semi-final," said the Barcelona striker, who has now scored five goals in the tournament.

Substitute Ivaylo Yordanov, brought on late by coach Dimitar Penev to ensure that Stoichkov would not receive a

second yellow card and miss Wednesday's semifinal at Giants Stadium, claimed the Germans had misjudged their opponents.

"Germany were scared of us ... there was no doubt we were the better team. Now we've beaten two World Cup winners and we're waiting for a third."

Since their opening game, when a 3-0 loss to Nigeria extended their sequence without a win at World Cup finals to 17, Bulgaria have beaten Greece, Argentina, Mexico and Germany in succession, scoring nine goals and conceding two.

Apart from Stoichkov and Emil Kostadinov up front, Yordan Lechkov and Krasimir Balakov have emerged as top-class players in a team that continues to shrug off persistent rumours of internal disagreements.

Coach Penev said Lechkov's knowledge of the German players gained from playing for Hamburg in the Bundesliga had been one of the reasons behind Bulgaria's triumph.

"Even since the World Cup qualifying matches started, we have tried to build the side

around those players who have been playing for foreign clubs," said Penev, a former national captain who won 90 caps as a defender.

"Now that we've reached the semifinals everyone will look at us in a different way. We've played well in all our games, but because this took us to the semifinals it has the greatest value."

The President of Bulgaria, as he did after the successful penalty shoot-out against Mexico, telephoned the team dressing-room to congratulate the players who were busy planning yet another party.

They did not train for almost two days following the celebrations that greeted the Mexico result and coach Penev's birthday on Tuesday will be the third such excuse to raise a glass the squad has had in the space of five days.

The Bulgarians have been among the most relaxed sides in the finals and even tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade officials to move them from their isolated base to a hotel closer to the bright lights of Manhattan.

## Tell-tale of transformation



DALLAS, July 11: Striker Hristo Stoichkov has dramatically transformed Bulgaria from a group of dispirited and nervous no-hopers into a cohesive team capable of winning the World Cup, reports Reuters.

The Bulgarian side which bravely fought back from a goal down to dump defending champions Germany out of the tournament on Sunday bore no resemblance to the one drained of almost any hint of self-belief by their 3-0 defeat to Nigeria in the first round.

Having now beaten both of the 1990 World Cup finalists, Germany and Argentina, Bulgaria clearly believe they can become the first Eastern European side to win the trophy.

Such a feat would be outstanding not least because of their abysmal World Cup history, but because they were only seconds from not even qualifying for the tournament.

Emil Kostadinov earned them a sensational 2-1 victory over France in Paris with a goal from virtually the last kick of their last qualifying match to send them to the United States instead of the French.

But they looked miserably out of their depth when they opened their World Cup campaign against debutants Nigeria.

Following the painful loss to the African champions that marked Bulgaria's 17th game

without a win in six World Cup finals, several players drowned their sorrows in the bars of Dallas into the early hours of the following morning.

On the day of their show-



HRISTO STOICHKOV

down with Greece in a match that proved the turning point, the players were intensely nervous at their team hotel.

Neither was their tension eased by reports in the Soviet press that hundreds of Bulgarian skinheads were threatening a violent homecoming for the players at the airport if they lost to Greece.

But two penalties from Barcelona star Stoichkov relaxed the nerves and spurred Bulgaria to an historic 4-0 victory which lifted the pressure that had inhibited their play.

Having finally cast off their World Cup jinx, the team

played with much more verve against Argentina — after spending the last minutes before the game singing folk songs in the dressing room.

With the pressure off and the South Americans reeling from the suspension that morning of Diego Maradona, Bulgaria blew away the 1990 final stand registered a shock win that was to transform their self-belief completely.

Again it was Stoichkov who turned the tide with a 61st minute goal, but more tellingly the midfield lambasted by coach Dimitar Penev for its initial lack of effort and mobility was running with the vigour of teenagers.

Hamburg's Yordan Lechkov, scorer of the winning goal against Germany, and Sporting Lisbon's Krasimir Balakov, started to drive the side forward.

And at last Stoichkov and Porto winger Emil Kostadinov, who were also singled out by Penev for their reluctance to contribute enough, were showing why they are footballing millionaires.

The Bulgarians survived the knife-edged drama of a drawn second-round match against Mexico that went into extra time and the only penalty shoot-out of the finals, to emerge with a belief that now luck was also taking their side.

They now head for the uncharted territory of the semifinals and a meeting with Italy, wondering whether their revived form, and lady luck, will stay with them.

## Records in contrast

LOS ANGELES, July 11: Nowhere is Bulgaria's glitzy, glitzy feat of ending Germany's World Cup campaign on Sunday more pronounced than in their starkly contrasting mundial records, reports Reuters.

The Bulgarians, with no World Cup wins before coming to the United States, were stacked up against the tournament's aristocrats.

Germany, triple champions and three-time runners-up, were playing in their 73rd match, the most ever spanning over 13 World Cups, and trailed only Brazil in the number of victories, 48-43.

Bulgaria's four victories at USA '94 broke a depressing run of 16 matches over five finals appearances without victory. Bulgaria's 4-0 group win over Greece last month was their first World Cup win and now their record stands at 21 games, 4 wins, six draws, 11 losses.

Including Sunday's goals, Bulgaria have scored 20 times overall, but have conceded twice as many, 40.

In contrast, Germany, who have appeared in five of the last seven finals, have accumulated 155 goals with 96 against.

## Illgner quits national team

NEW YORK, July 11: German goalkeeper Bodo Illgner quit the national team here Sunday after the World Cup holders lost 2-1 to Bulgaria in the quarter-finals, reports AFP.

"I told the coach in the changing rooms that I will not play for the national team anymore," the 27-year-old Cologne keeper said. "I had made the decision to quit already before, but I wanted to leave with another World Cup title."

"It didn't work out, I am standing by my decision."



BODO ILLGNER

Coach Berti Vogts said he felt let down by Illgner's decision.

"It shows some weakness of character," he said.

But Vogts disparaged Illgner's efforts on Hristo Stoichkov's free-kick that levelled the match.

Based on that effort, Vogts said: "It's good that he's quitting."

Illgner, who failed to react as the ball raced over the wall and into his net, was unapologetic.

"I don't think that it's all my fault," he said, adding that the ball was hit so fast he did not see it until it was in the back of the net.

Illgner earned his 54th cap against Bulgaria. He made his international debut in a 1-0 victory over Denmark in September, 1987. He was part of the team that won Germany's third World Cup in Italy in 1990.

It was that experience that prompted Vogts to choose him over 32-year-old Andreas Kopke, who had briefly claimed the position when Germany lost to Denmark in the European Championship final.

## Call for Vogts' head

BONN, July 11: Germany's biggest selling daily newspaper Das Bild lead the calls for manager Berti Vogts' head here on Monday after the country's World Cup exit, reports AFP.

Out it's over, Berti. Three minutes blew it all," ran the tabloid's headline after the 2-1 defeat to Bulgaria in the quarter-finals.

The newspaper argued: "It was enough to make you cry that the world champions would lose to a Bulgarian side who 'preferred the swimming pool to training, who stuffed chips and spent their time tanning their stomachs.'"

It also questioned Germany's tactics, asking why Andreas Moeller was not substituted and an attacker brought on when the team fell behind.

The Cologne Express copy, under the headline "End of a dream," also blamed Moeller and Vogts, saying it was the first time Germany had not got to the semifinals since 1978 — when Vogts was the national skipper.



German midfielder Thomas Haessler (R) and Bulgaria's Nasko Sirakov are locked in a tussle to win the ball during their World Cup quarter-final at the Giants Stadium on July 10. Bulgaria shocked the three-times champions with 2-1 win to set up a semifinal match against Italy on July 13. — AFP photo

## Germany's fall: A postmortem



EAST RUTHERFORD, July 11: The heroes of 1990 succumbed to unsung Bulgaria on Sunday, shattering German dreams of winning the World Cup a record fourth time, reports Reuters.

While Brazil and Italy remain in the running for an unprecedented fourth triumph, the Germans return home with calls for resignation and charge inevitable in a land where soccer expectations could not be higher.

For the first time since 1978, when defending champions West Germany fell in the second round, Germany will not be contesting the World Cup final.

Winners in 1954, 1974 and 1990, the Germans were also runners-up in 1966, 1982 and 1986 and semifinalists a further three times, so this quarter-final elimination rates as a big disappointment.

Trapped by an insatiable demand for success, Berti Vogts has failed to deliver the big prizes since taking over from Franz Beckenbauer after the 1990 World Cup victory.

Kaiser Franz, captain in 1974 when Vogts was a terrier-like defender, said in jocular vein after piloting West

Germany to triumph in Rome four years ago that newly united Germany would be invincible.

But Vogts, unlike the majestically imperturbable Beckenbauer, has found success more elusive. Against all the odds, Denmark, beat them in the 1992 European Championship final in Sweden and now Bulgaria have ended the 1994 World Cup dream.

The squad was packed with experience, with captain Lothar Matthaeus extending his record to 117 caps and 10 other members of the 22 having more than 50 international appearances to their credit. Nine of the starting line-up against Bulgaria were in the 1990 World Cup squad.

But, with their leading lights in their late 20s or early 30s, they were not the dominating force of old, while Vogts drew criticism as well as applause for his decision to send home midfielder Stefan Effenberg for rudely gesturing to fans in the first-round game against South Korea.

South Korea, three goals down, pulled back to 3-2 and showed the Germans were vulnerable. Belgium, denied a flagrant penalty, also finished the stronger in a 3-2 defeat in the second round and then Bulgaria turned a 1-0 deficit

into a 2-1 victory.

Asked if he would now resign, Vogts said he was not surprised by the question because there had been plenty of speculation. He said he would consider his future calmly but had always felt he would go on as long as he enjoyed working with the players.

Several of the side may now decide the time has come to call it a day, though goalkeeper Bodo Illgner and striker Rudi Voller, who was persuaded to make an international comeback for the World Cup, were the only players to say straight away they would definitely quit the national side.

Ironically, only two of the starting line-up on Sunday were younger than 27-year-old Illgner, while Voller is 34 and Matthaeus, Guido Buchwald and substitute Andreas Brehme — scorer of the penalty which won the 1990 final against Argentina — 33.

Matthaeus, who had just equalled the record of fellow German Uwe Seeler, Poland's Wladyslaw Zmuda and Diego Maradona of 21 games in World Cup finals said instant announcements of international retirement raised questions about preparation.

He said there were aspects of the campaign which had not suited him and he would discuss the future with the German Football Federation after some holiday.

Defender Juergen Kohler, who rightly felt he had done a good marking job on Bulgarian dangerman Hristo Stoichkov, pledged to continue to the 1996 European Championship in England, leaving the disappointment of this World Cup behind.

"You can't be satisfied but that's football. You win together and you lose together. It's a difficult moment for our players but we must look forward," he said.

Vogts, too, was already looking ahead to 1996 with any rebuilding the team might need.

Illgner, though leaving the scene himself, puts his faith in German resilience. "It is not the end of the German era," he said.

## Wheaton wears Woodbridge down

NEWPORT, Rhode Island, July 11: David Wheaton, showing the form that made him a 1991 Wimbledon semifinalist, outlasted Australia's Todd Woodbridge here Sunday in a third-set tiebreaker to win the ATP hall of fame classic, reports AFP.

Wheaton won 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5) to take the \$1,000-dollar top prize at the 240,000 dollar event. He was most pleased about returning to form.

"To me, more important than winning was the way I fought here," Wheaton said. "I would have been disappointed if I had lost, but I shouldn't have been. I fought as hard as I could. It was more important than any result."

"I'm very disappointed because I have won so many doubles finals, but never a singles final on the main tour," Woodbridge said. "The thing I look at is I was lucky to win two of three matches here in third-set tiebreakers."



Germany's Juergen Klinsmann (R) tries to head the ball down before Bulgaria's Tzanko Tzvetanov gets to it during their World Cup quarter-final match at Giants Stadium on July 10. Bulgaria eliminated the world champions 2-1. — AFP photo



The jubilant Bulgarian World Cup soccer team poses for a victory picture after eliminating Germany 2-1 in their World Cup quarter-final match at the Giants Stadium on July 10. — AFP photo