



BRAVO PARAGUAY: Residents of the Paraguayan capital Asuncion jubilate after their team entered the second - AFP photo round by beating Nigeria on June 24.

England vs Colombia: A fight to the death

LENS, June 25 (AFP): England and Colombia are gearing up for their high octane final group clash here on Friday with this little former coal-mining town on red alert in case of hooliganism by England's notorious supporters.

A Lens police officer is fighting for his life after German hooligans caused trouble here last week and further problems are expected with the invasion of England fans in the short trip across the Channel.

England supporters have already run amok in Marseille though Toulouse had an easier time with confrontations by police and fans ending peaceably by comparison.

Lille perfect Jacques Franquet gave no figures for the police presence but said security would be boosted at the city's two train stations and at the airport and at checkpoints on the border with Belgium.

Off licence liquor sales will be banned after 10 am (2000 GMT) as well as drinking on

TOULOUSE, June 25 (AP):

Celso Ayala scored

Paraguay attacked, for a

change. Nigeria did not, for a

Paraguay's first goal of the

World Cup after just 51 seconds

and the South Americans went

on to beat a listless Nigeria 3-1

Wednesday to reach the round

regular starters in their lineup.

had already clinched first place

in Group D by beating Spain

mark, second in Group C, in the

second round Sunday at Saint-

Denis, while Paraguay - with

five points take on hosts France

hind Paraguay despite routing

bottom Bulgaria 6-1 Wednesday

win and we did," Paraguay

coach Paulo Cesar Carpeggiani

said. "But tomorrow is another

day and we have to start think-

Rufai, warned not to read too

alarm," he said. "We took the

game seriously but not to the

much into Nigeria's first loss.

Nigerian goalkeeper, Peter

"There is no cause for-

ing about the next round."

Spain finished one point be-

"We are euphoric. We had to

The Super Eagles face Den-

and Bulgaria for six points.

at Lens the same day.

Nigeria, who used just four

change.

of 16.

at Lens.

streets Bars will be allowed to stay open until 2 am however.

Bordeaux and St Etienne are almost certainly hoping for the right results to avoid England's fans should England, as is unlikely, top the group, they would play in Bordeaux, but if they finished second. It would be St Etienne who would have to take special security measures.

Colombia will be out for victor to qualify and wipe away the memory of their 1994 campaign as favourites when defender Andres Escobar was murdered days after his own goal against hosts USA.

A Carlos Valderrama pass for a Preciado late goal against Tunisia has given cause for optimism in a country beleaguered 285h drug and corruption problems.

Colombia coach Henan Dario Gomez is predicting a footballing fight to the death in this winner takes all fixture.

Their two previous encounters, both played in England, in

1990 and in 1995 ended in 0-0-

Paraguay pounce on

Nigerian apathy

point of going out there willing

to die on the pitch, like we usu-

showed this match would be

nothing like their two dour 0-0

draws earlier in the tourna-

fastest World Cup goal since Brayan Robson's 27-second

strike for England against

France in Bilbao, Spain, in

ball down the right flank and

was fouled along the side of the

lofted the ensuing free-kick and

a completely unimpeded Ayala

was able to head home. He beat

poorly positioned 'keeper Peter

Rufai to the ball and no Nige-

rian defender made a serious ef-

"Finally the goal arrived,"

said Benitez, who went on to

score Paraguay's second in the

59th minute. "This is the result

of hard work by the entire

the Super Eagles did not take

header from Augustine

Eguavoen off the line in the

long to turn things around.

After the disastrous start,

Ayala cleared a dangerous

fort to get there first.

penalty area.

team."

Paraguay immediately

Ayala's header was the

Miguel Benitez brought the

Defender Francisco Arce

and 1-1 draw. Gomez was pleased with his midfield but concerned about a defence that lacked cohesion.

In the only change to the team that started the Tunisia game, suspended left back Jose Fernando Santa will be replaced by Antonio Moreno, the only other left-sided defender in the squad.

who scored the goal against Tunisia, will again be on the substitutes bench despite being leading scorer in the Colombian league last season. Preciado has yet to complete

Up front, a Leider Preciado.

full international he came on for the last 30 minutes against Tunisia and in unlikely to be used against England.

Antony de Avila and Adolfo Valencia are set to spearhead the attack and the two are already plotting England's down-

A victory over England would do much to extinguish the lingering controversy over the banishment of Faustino

10th, and no one stopped winger Wilson Oruma's shot one

minute later. Kanu released Ti-

jani Babangida into the right

side of the box and the Ajax of

Amsterdam sparkplug slipped

by two defenders before sliding

the ball to an unmarked Oruma,

who drove it in from near the

keeper, Jose Luis Chilavert,

made three reflex saves over the

next six minutes to keep the

score 1-1. He pushed Sunday

Oliseh's 25-metre blast just

wide of the post, slapped away a

fierce header by Taribo West

and then got a leg on a 15-metre shot from Rashed Yekini.

But that was about all from

Paraguay came out strong af-

ter the interval, earning four

corners in as many minutes

and threatening to regain the

lead in the 51st, when Hugo

Brizuela's shot from the edge of

the penalty area was pushed

aside by an outstretched Rufai

at the base of the post. Two

minutes later, defender Ben

Nigeria were on their heels,

Iroha cleared a loose ball off

responding only in the 57th,

when Yekini's weak chance was

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Paraguay's flamboyant

penalty spot.

Nigeria.

Rufai's line.

Asprilla for criticising Gomez

The coach also said the had enough and was quitting after the World Cup.

after the opening game against

Romania.

Meanwhile teenager Michael Owen is posed to start for England. Owen, at 18 the youngest member of the England squad, was in fine form when he came on as a substitute in England's 2-1 loss to Romania on Monday, scoring the team's only goal and looking a vast improvement on the pedestrian Teddy Sheringham.

England coach Glenn Hoddle is now set to partner Own with Alan Sharer in attack.

Shearer has been trustrated by the lack of opportunities coming his way at France '98. "It's very frustrating I've only had one chance in two games and I scored from that," he said. Shearer is believed to want, unlike Hoddle, Manchester United star David Beckham to start the

finished second, it would be St

LENS, France, June 25 (AFP/ Internet): England and Colombia are gearing up for their high-octane final group clash here on Friday with this little former coal-mining town on red alert in case of hooliganism by England's notorious sup-

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Should England, as is unlikely, top the group, they would

boosting their border force from about 200 to more than 1.000 ahead of the matches play in Bordeaux, but if they Thursday and Friday.

Etienne who would have to take

The newspaper Le Monde, in its Thursday edition, cited an

intelligence memo as saying

that German extremists plan to

travel to Lens "to combat the

English enemy and try to gain

the title of 'best hooligans of

no immediate comment on the

newspaper report, and Lens

Mayor Andre Delelis said in a

statement released Thursday

that security "should be more

A Lens spokeswoman, Is-

efficient than it was last Sun-

abelle Isaert, insisted "the kids

got the message" when officials

jailed several Germans after

Sunday's rioting and quickly

sentenced three of them to a

vately confirmed the hundreds

of police to be deployed for the

match were alerted about the

possibility of German-English

privately said they were taking

the development seriously

They stepped up checks o

France-bound motorists by

German police have also

But a ministry source pri-

year in prison.

clashes.

The interior ministry had

special security measures.

Europe.'

British bookmaker on any LONDON, June 25 (AFP/ Internet): A businessman has placed what is believed to be the biggest bet in the history of ager) Glenn Hoddle. British gambling on England to beat Colombia at the World Cup

on Friday, the bookmakers William Hill said Thursday. The punter ignored England's defeat against Romania

on Monday to place 200,000 pounds (320,000 dollars), at odds of 4-5. A spokesman for William

Hill said: "We are not aware of - any larger bet ever struck with a

Britain's biggest bet

"It is certainly a huge vote of confidence for (England man-

The spokesman added that the World Cup in France was on target to produce a betting turnover of 100 million pounds (165 million dollars), which would make it the biggest betting event of all time.

Rival bookmaker Ladbrokes reported a surge in business after increasing the odds of England winning the entire tournament to 33-1 following the team's defeat by Romania on Monday.

But within 15 minutes of opening, the company was forced to cut the odds to 20-1 and have now trimmed them further to 16-1.

Spokesman Sean Boyce said: "Over the last 24 hours I've felt like Michael Caine in that Zulu film. We're trying to hold our ground but all we can see is punters ... thousands of them."

Brazil are still favourites to win, af odds of 11-4.

Bonev delivers parting shot

LENS, France, June 25 (AFP Internet): Bulgaria coach Hristo Bonev slammed his team as he quit here on Wednesday after watching his side destroyed 6-1 by a rampaging Spain.

"I can't go on in charge after the way the team has played in this World Cup. I have principles," said a shocked Bonev. "Tonight simply showed the

state of our team, and how bad they were," he added. "The future of the team and the young players who come in will be up to my successor.

Bulgaria, who reached the semi-finals four years in the United States, were given a demonstration by a

sparkling Spanish side. Striker Hristo Stoichkov, who made his name in USA 94. was pulled off at half-time.

Two days before the match Stoichkov and Luboslav Penev were punished by Bonev for staying out overnight in Paris.

Spain sparkle in vain

"I am a man of principles

Asked what changes he

King Juan Carlos and Queen

Sofia looked on as Spain

demonstrated speed and skill

unseen in their first two World

Cup matches. They controlled

possession for much of the

took the opportunity to bid

farewell to Spain's goalkeeper

Andone Zubizarreta, who is ex-

pected to formally announced

tion for the best goalkeeper in

the world and the best person,"

said, Clemente, who blamed the

press for having too harshly

criticised the 'keeper following

sixth minute when Fernando

Hiero converted a penalty after

defender Ivoylo Iordanov

brought down Luis Enrique

Etxeberria raced down the right

to cross to the Barcelona all-

Twelve minutes later, Joseba

a blunder in the opening game .

Spain took the lead in the

"I'd like to call for recogni-

his retirement Thursday.

After the game, Clemente

-AFP photo

ADIOS ANDONI: Spain's record-breaking goalkeeper

Andoni Zubizarreta gets a consolatory pat from

understudy Santiago Canzares after the match with

Bulgaria on June 24. Zubizarreta announced his

LENS, June 25 (AP): Spain and after this result, I can't confinally shone, but just too late. The Spaniards redeemed template continuing," he said. themselves Wednesday by pummelling Bulgaria 6-1, but it would like to make in the team. Bonev replied: "That you will was all in vain because the vichave to ask the next trainer." tory couldn't prevent them from

retirement shortly after.

Instead, Paraguay advanced into the elimination rounds. clinching second place in Group D — or "Group of Death" — by beating Nigeria 3-1 in a simultaneous match. The Africans earlier took first place, with

being ousted from the World

wins over Spain and Bulgaria. News of Paraguay's lead had reached the players and the Spaniards did not even bother to celebrate after each of their three goals in the last 10 min-

"The game showed you can't always get what you hope for," said Spain coach Javier Clemente. "Today things looked as if they were working out for us but Nigeria didn't win and you have to accept that.

"I am sad, but life goes on. The pride and prestige of the team were clearly demon-

Spain came into their 10th World Cup as one of the favourites but a 3-2 defeat against Nigeria followed by a 0-0 draw against Paraguay left it totally dependent on the final game they were the first of the

top seeds to be eliminated. "When we went into the lead 4-1 and I heard Paraguay was winning I just couldn't believe it," said Spanish defender Car-

los Aguilera. "We came here with such hopes. Today we gave everything and all for nothing." Spain have been knocked out three times before in the

first round, in 1962, 1966 and 1978. Their best placing was fourth in 1950. After the match, Bulgarian coach Hristo Bonev indicated

he would resign.

rounder, who beat two Bulgarian defenders to send the ball from 8 metres past Zdravkov.

against Nigeria.

Martinez in the area.

Spain pressed on with a series of flowing attacks, with a pace Bulgaria's aging veterans could not match.

Bulgaria's, star attackers Hristo Stoichkov and Emil

Kostadinov were out-marked with ease by Rafael Alkorta and Miguel Angel Nadal. Luis Enrique set up Spain's third goal on a fast break from

midfield in the 53rd minute. finding Fernando Morientes who drilled it low from 14 metres into the 'keeper's left-hand

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Japan hope to end on high note

AIX-LES-BAINS, France, June 25 (AFP): Japan's desperate for their first goal and first win to crown their debut in the World Cup finals, have vowed to play attacking football against Jamaica on Friday. Coach Takeshi Okada said

he would tinker with his previous system, which focused on a tight three-back defence but lacked firepower resulting in narrow 1-0 losses to two-time champions Argentina and Croatia. "I will change the positions

sive." he said after Japan wound up their training at their base camp here "I am trying to make everyone think about our offensive side to score a goal." But the only change is ex-

and make it a little more offen-

pected to see Norio Omura recalled for the suspended defender Eisuke Pakanishi. But Jamaica's Brazilian

coach Rene Simoes refused to be downcast after losing 3-1 to Croatia and 5-0 to Argentina. "Just being here was great for Jamaica and if we take the

chances we've been making we should finish on a high note." Okada did not elaborate but he could possibly pull one of his

five midfielders closer to the defenders and allow playmaker

Hidetoshi Nakata and Hiroshi Nanami a free rein supporting the attack.

Shoji Jo, the new target man who forced Kazu Miura, Asia's best known footballer, out of the World Cup squad, said he was raring to end his scoring drought over nine internation-

"It's going to be quite an exciting match," said the 23-yearold Yokohama Marinos striker. "Jamaica cannot come out as

hard as Argentina and Croatia. We are powerful enough to stop them," he said. "I believe Jamaica will slip up somewhere and that's when we go for it." However, Jamaica, studded

with implants from Britain, have already gone one-up on Japan. The bubbly Reggaee Boy lost two games as well but managed to score a goal with Wimbledon midfielder Robbie Earle heading home in the 3-1 defeat by Croatia.

Left back Hideki Soma said Japan's early goal would force Jamaica to give up as they did in their 5-0 humiliation at the hands of Argentina on Sunday.

"We haven't done what we aimed to do I want to win the last match," said Soma, one of Brazil legend Zico's players at

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A Bulgarian girl wraps herself with a national flag at Lens on June 24. - AFP photo

