

## Sport

Uruguay go down

## Argentina ride on Palermo



ASUNCION, Paraguay, July 2 (Reuters/Internet): Boca Juniors' prolific goalscorer Martin Palermo

claimed his first two goals for Argentina on Thursday as the Copa America, which has made a hugely promising start, produced two more top quality games.

Palermo, a somewhat cumbersome looking blond-haired striker, helped Argentina to a 3-1 win over Ecuador in one of two hugely entertaining Group C games. In the other, a vibrant Colombia beat Uruguay, who share Argentina's record of 14 Copa America titles, by a single goal.

The only black mark was the two red cards shown to Uruguay, who had captain Diego Lopez and Federico Magallanes sent off in the second half.

The competition has already provided plenty of fireworks, including a five-goal opening match between Peru and Japan and Brazil's 7-0 thrashing of Venezuela on Wednesday, a game that included a magical goal by 19-year-old Ronaldinho.

## ARGENTINA-ECUADOR

Palermo, who despite his record for Boca is still a reserve for his country, was only called up after European-based Gabriel Batistuta and Hernan Crespo asked to be rested.

He staked his claim for a regular place in the best way possible.

In the 54th minute, he received a crossfield pass from his Boca team-mate Guillermo Barros Schelotto, pulled the ball down and then blasted a left-foot shot past Jose Cevallos.

Eight minutes later, he scored with a right-foot volley on the turn after Ecuador failed to head clear a free kick from the right.

Ecuador was far from disgraced but paid for poor marking in defense, which also allowed Diego Simeone to give Argentina a 13th-minute lead. After causing the Argentine defense constant problems with skillful attacking football, Ecuador got a deserved consolation in the 77th minute when Ivan Kaviedes scored direct from a free kick.

## COLOMBIA-URUGUAY

Colombia, fielding a new-look team of young players after a decade of dependence on stalwarts such as Carlos Valderrama, was simply too strong for Uruguay, which, like Argentina, agreed to rest some European-based players after a long season with their clubs.

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Colombia, playing the same neat football as ever but with more purpose and bite than in the past, could have won by more if their finishing had been better. Hamilton Ricard was the main culprit, missing three acceptable chances in the first half.

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"We were daring and outlandish," claimed coach Javier Alvarez. "This is a team that always wants to score goals and put on a show."

They are unlikely to match, however, the effort by Ronaldinho Assis, which some feel can be compared to Pele's legendary goal in the 1958 World Cup. But his more famous namesake Ronaldo, who scored two goals

against Venezuela, said Thursday: "It is a goal that will go down in history."

The action continues Friday with host Paraguay, held to a 0-0 draw by Bolivia, meeting guest Japan in a match the Paraguayans are under huge pressure to win in Group A. This is preceded by Peru vs. Bolivia in a double bill at the Defenders of the Chaco stadium.

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