



Draw suits England fine

AFP, Osaka

An unconvincing England scraped through to the second round of the World Cup here Wednesday surviving the "Group of Death" with a dour 0-0 draw against Nigeria.

Sven-Goran Eriksson's side advanced to a last 16 match against Group A winners Denmark in Niigata on Saturday but were never certain of the point they needed until the final whistle. Sweden won Group F after drawing 1-1 with Argentina.

Nigeria, already knocked out of the tournament and with nothing to play for other than pride, more than matched an English team who struggled to reproduce the form shown in last week's 1-0 victory over Argentina.

England coach Eriksson was nevertheless satisfied with the point.

"Our target was to qualify. That was very hot today, very difficult. But 0-0 is okay," Eriksson said. "We knew that the Nigerians would not want to lose and they would try to win. I think they played well."

"We had more chances than them but we didn't score today - let's hope we save that for Saturday," the Swede added. "The fact is that now we have to beat Denmark."

England captain David Beckham said the sweltering heat had made it difficult for his side.

"It was uncomfortable out there, just because of the heat as well," he said. "Nigeria had a few chances but we defended pretty well. We had quite a few chances but didn't

take them but we're happy with the draw at the end of the day," said Beckham adding that he was expecting a hard battle with Denmark.

"I think they're a bit like Sweden but we'll have to see, it will be a tough game."

England defender Rio Ferdinand said his side had achieved their goal of qualifying from what was regarded as the toughest first phase group.

"Nigeria came out and gave us a good game. We knew it wasn't going to be easy and they didn't disappoint us. (Denmark?) Yeah, we can't wait."

"We came here with the aim of getting out of the group and we did that. We're a young bunch so we're going to be very much up for the next phase," he said.

Nigeria coach Adegboye Onigbinde refused to be downbeat after reflecting on his team's first round exit from the competition. They had earlier lost narrowly to both Sweden and Argentina to finish with just one point.

"I sincerely believe it was the will of god that we didn't reach the second round because we played well enough to get at least a draw with Argentina and to have beaten Sweden hands down."

"I said when I came here to handle the team I had two objectives. One was not to be disgraced at this World Cup and two was to lay the found foundations for a new 'Super Eagles'."

"I think with what we saw this afternoon we have laid those founda-

tions. Within the next six months we'll have a very formidable team for Nigeria."

A disappointing afternoon for the English was summed up late in the game when substitute Teddy Sheringham scooped a shot over the bar from close range.

That was England's best chance of a dour second half where they failed to seriously test a Nigeria side showing five changes from their regular starting line-up.

Nigeria's "Super Eagles" were unable to create much either but with the speedy Julius Aghahowa in attack England's defence could never relax.

Aghahowa caused an early scare in the second half when some slack defending by Rio Ferdinand allowed the Shakhtar Donetsk player to go clear before he was closed down by the back-peddalling English cover.

England, needing a point to qualify for a place in the second round, came closest to breaking the deadlock on 44 minutes when a long-range shot from Paul Scholes was touched onto a post by Nigeria keeper Vincent Enyeama.

For most of a nervous opening 45 minutes, Nigeria looked by far the more comfortable of the two teams as England struggled to adapt to hot and humid conditions at the Osaka Nagai Stadium.

Aghahowa always looked threatening, his speed and movement causing problems for England's defence.



WHAT HAVE I DONE! A hapless South Africa custodian Andre Arendse (L) rues his mistake as Spain's Raul prepares to score his team's opening goal at Daejeon yesterday.

ENGLAND-BELLIED! A jubilant England supporter at the stands of Osaka's Nagai Stadium yesterday.

Rise and shine

AFP, London

From crowded pubs to schools and offices or simply the couch at home, millions of England fans enjoyed a football breakfast while watching their team's crucial World Cup game Wednesday against Nigeria.

The mood was less celebratory than when England beat arch-rivals Argentina in their previous game, although there was quiet satisfaction that the team's 0-0 draw against Nigeria had qualified it for the last 16.

In the Hogshead pub in London's financial centre, the biggest cheer of

the morning came on news that Argentina had been knocked out of the tournament by Sweden just minutes after England drew.

Many companies laid on bacon sandwiches and croissants and hired big-screen televisions to tempt staff in for the 7:30 am (0630 GMT) kick-off.

Some schools did likewise, offering pupils breakfast and the chance to see the game on large screens as well as delaying lessons until after the game.

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Opabunmi in exclusive club

REUTERS, Osaka

Nigerian teenager Femi Opabunmi became the third youngest player to play in the World Cup finals after taking to the pitch against England in their group F match.

Opabunmi, who plays for Shooting Stars Ibadan, was born in March 1985 and took the field aged 17 years and 101 days old.

The only younger players in World Cup history have been Norman Whiteside, who played for Northern Ireland in 1982, and Samuel Eto'o of Cameroon who

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TV angle

SHAYAN KHAN

Even the French team's fiercest critics could never have imagined they would make their exit from the World Cup in such fashion. You would expect them to at least go down in a blaze of glory. Far from it. Their timid surrender may overshadow everything else that will happen in Korea and Japan in the coming days. The truth is the defending champions never looked like defending champions. And not just in terms of the quality of their football. The French players coming into the

World Cup were playing with a swagger bordering on overconfidence, and during the World Cup, they stepped over the line. Les Bleus were expecting things to happen for them, rather than looking to go out and win the day. They placed trust in a God given right they never had. They will complain about how unlucky they were. But champions, when in trouble, rise to such a level that Lady Luck can't resist them. Lemerre's men were not good enough to do that. Their attitude was most unbecomingly

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Paraguay pull it off

AFP, Seogwipo

An inspired Paraguay staged an extraordinary comeback to beat Slovenia 3-1 here on Wednesday and reach the second phase of the World Cup despite spending much of their final Group B match with only ten men.

Paraguay, needing a two-goal win and for Spain to defeat South Africa in the other match, looked out for the count after Milenko Acimovic put Slovenia into a 1-0 half-time lead, netting seconds before the break.

But after some inspired tactical changes from veteran boss Cesare Maldini Paraguay came back to win with three goals from substitutes, Nelson Cuevas bagging a double either side of an effort from Jorge Campos.

The Paraguayans advanced to the last 16 by virtue of goals scored after they and the South Africans finished on four points.

Slovenia, rocked by the sending home of their star player Zlatko Zahovic after their first match, were only playing for pride.

But they benefited from the sending off of Paraguayan midfielder Carlos Paredes for a second bookable offence after just 22 minutes - until Slovenia's Nastja Ceh also went for an early bath for a high tackle with ten minutes left.

Charismatic Paraguayan goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert made a dreadful blunder as he allowed Acimovic's low shot to slide from his grasp and into the net to leave the Paraguayans a goal behind at the break.

At that stage the South Americans were on their way home.

But by the end they had found their self-belief with a vengeance - to book a meeting Saturday with Germany in this same stadium.

Acimovic almost made it 2-0 shortly after the restart, cutting in and blasting an effort which beat Chilavert but hit the crossbar.

Chilavert, desperate to become the first goalkeeper to score in the finals, came close to making amends with ten minutes left, a thunderous free-kick forcing an excellent save from Mladen Debanovic, who tipped his effort onto the bar.

By that stage the Paraguayans had turned the tables to go 2-1 up, despite the loss of Paredes.

After withstanding waves of Slovenian attacks Paraguay levelled when Cuevas finished a mazy run into the box with a crisp left-footed shot which found the back of the Slovenian net on 65 minutes.

Milan Osterc should have fired the Slovenians back in front in the 71st minute but his effort on the run was just wide.

Osterc then sent over a cross shot which Chilavert pushed onto the bar as Slovenia put the Paraguayans under the cost once more.

It looked as if Paraguay were on the way to blow their last chance of a place in the second phase - but Campos came from nowhere to fire them into an improbable lead on minutes from the edge of the box.

And Cuevas then tore goalwards to blast home an unstoppable drive

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MAN WITH BIONIC EARS! Referee Ali Buisjaim flashes the red card to Argentina's Claudio Caniggia who had made an obscene comment from the substitutes' bench yesterday.

Caniggia cameo!

REUTERS, Miyagi

Claudio Caniggia, who missed the 1990 World Cup final in Rome through suspension, was sent off on Wednesday for swearing at the referee without having kicked a ball in his third finals tournament.

"I shouted 'son of a bitch' at him and I think he heard some protests," Caniggia said, implying he did not believe referee Ali Buisjaim had understood his heated remark during Argentina's 1-1 draw with Sweden that put them out of the tournament.

Buisjaim surprised the crowd when he approached the Argentine bench and showed Caniggia the red card near the end of the first half of the group F match in Miyagi.

One of the other members of the Argentine squad started heading for the dressing room in place of Caniggia but officials insisted Caniggia was the one who left the pitch.

The Argentines on the bench had leapt to their feet in unison to protest when Buisjaim waved play on after Ariel Ortega fell as he was robbed of the ball near the touchline.

Caniggia, who missed the 1998 finals but played in the 1990 and 1994 tournaments scoring four goals, was on the bench for the first time after recovering from a knee injury.

In Italy in 1990, having helped Diego Maradona's Argentine defending champions reach their final

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Round 5, Draw in Chittagong on June 21

(Competition information, prizes and rules on June 7 issue)

The Daily Star RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 5 Ends June 20, 2002

Tick (Ö) the correct answers

1. Record of most World Cup finals appearances goes to	Joff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Matthaus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Milla	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Only country to play in every World Cup	Argentina	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brazil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Middle name of Diego Maradona is	Alberto	<input type="checkbox"/>	Armando	<input type="checkbox"/>	Admundo	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Which WC final was decided in penalty shoot-out	1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	1994	<input type="checkbox"/>	1990	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Who is this?	Figo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Raul	<input type="checkbox"/>	Batistuta	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms).....Age.....

Father's nameOccupation

Address

Telephone (if any)SignatureDate.....

Write with a ballpoint pen in clear BLOCK letters. Cut along the dotted lines and mail to OR drop in the Quiz Box at The Daily Star. You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 5."

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