



PHOTO: AFP

CAMERA CAUGHT ON CAMERA! Senegal's hero of the day Henri Camara dancing after putting his country through to the quarterfinals at Oita yesterday.

Dakar the place to be

REUTERS, Dakar

Senegal led Africa in a massive whoop of joy on Sunday as its team beat Sweden to become only the second from the continent ever to reach the quarter-finals of the World Cup.

The streets of the capital Dakar were lost under a wave of red, gold

and green national colours that topped even the party after Senegal beat reigning champions and former colonial power France in the tournament's opening match.

Some held high the pictures of marabouts -- spiritual leaders in the local brand of Islam -- thanked for Henri Camara's golden goal in extra time that secured the 2-1 victory

over a team that finished top of the toughest first-round group.

"My marabout called me at five-o'clock this morning to go out and prepare the banners because Senegal is going to win the match," said student Bocker Seck.

Daniel Dabo, a fellow student from the southern Casamance province where Christians and

animists have fought a long separatist war, said: "I went to make offerings for Senegal and killed a chicken. God has respected my wishes."

Cars crammed with more supporters and flags than seemed possible hooted in celebration and chased wandering sheep from the roads of dusty suburbs as they jostled towards the jammed traffic at the heart of the city.

But the celebration stretched across a continent whose other standard-bearers fell by the wayside in the first round.

"There was a huge shout here after the goal. Everybody is so happy," said Robert Loufimpou, a taxi driver in the Congolese capital of Brazzaville, who was among thousands displaced by fighting that left about 100 dead last week.

"Senegal's result is great for Africa," he said.

Cameroon, who in 1990 became the first African team to reach the quarter-finals, did not live up to their promise as African champions. A superstar-packed Nigerian side failed to qualify and South Africa and Tunisia were also eliminated.

Suddenly Senegal, playing in the World Cup finals for the first time, has become the footballing capital

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PHOTO: AFP

LOOKING FOR LOVED ONES: Wives and girl friends of Spanish footballers take photos of the action in the middle at Suwon yesterday.

Foreigners are cool

REUTERS, Yokohama

Never before has it been so fashionable, or so worthwhile, to employ a specialist foreign coach to contest the World Cup finals.

The scenes of ecstasy in Seoul and Tokyo, Dakar and London, not to mention the dramas seen in Dublin, owe much to the work of men whose birthplaces were far-flung from the capitals of their adopted sporting nations.

Germany may have been the first team from the last 16 to reach the quarter-finals, but they are one of the exceptions, in sticking with a former German player in Rudi Voeller, that helps prove the new rule in international soccer.

England, under Swede Sven-Goran Eriksson, were the second team through to the last eight and

owed much of their success to the applied intelligence of their unflappable coach.

But Eriksson was just one of seven 'foreign' coaches of the 32 who started the World Cup finals and, after the completion of the group games, five remained.

The vanquished trio included only one man who was disappointed with the outcome, German Winfried Shafer who had been expected to help Cameroon reach the second round.

The other two, Serb Bora Milutinovic and Colombian Hernan Dario Gomez, had no such illusions since both China and Ecuador were delighted merely to have qualified for the finals for the first time.

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Casillas points at lady luck

REUTERS, Suwon

Spain's goalkeeper Iker Casillas said luck had been the main factor after his saves helped his team win their World Cup second round match against Ireland 3-2 in a penalty shootout.

"To save penalties is all about luck," Casillas said. "It would have been unfair for us to go out after they equalised with a penalty in the last minute."

The match ended 1-1 after extra time.

Spain coach Jose Antonio Camacho said the referee had made a mistake by giving Ireland a penalty in the last minute of normal time.

"We suffered a lot, we had to play almost the whole of extra time with

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BRAZIL VS BELGIUM

Cavalier days over

AFP/REUTERS, Kobe

Brazil's superstar strikers are expecting to face their toughest test of the World Cup so far when they come up against underdogs Belgium in the last 16 here Monday.

With 11 goals in three first round matches, a Ronaldo-inspired Brazil turned Group C into a free-flowing fiesta, overcoming Turkey before cutting loose with big wins over China and Costa Rica.

Now the serious business begins, with a mouth-watering quarterfinal against England the prize if they can negotiate Belgium.

While Belgium have a proud World Cup record and a recent history of nicking important results, Ronaldo is adamant the South Americans will have too much firepower for Robert Waseige's Red Devils.

"We watched the Belgium-Russia match on Friday and we studied the video," he said. "We have nothing to fear from this team and there's no cause for alarm."

"All we have to do is concentrate on playing our game everything depends on us. The important thing is to know that we can play the way we did in the group stage," the Inter Milan star said.

Brazil's performances in the first phase have turned pre-tournament predictions upside down.

Scolari stood accused of betraying Brazilian football's heritage earlier this year, favouring a physi-

cal, rugged game instead of the classic flamboyant style of old.

Yet the World Cup has so far seen all the hallmarks associated with classic Brazil sides - free-kicks, an overhead kick, and, most worryingly for Scolari, defensive failings.

Scolari is anxious to tighten up his defence against a Belgium expected to hang back in numbers and look for opportunities on the counter attack.

"They put a lot of people behind the ball against Russia and made it difficult for them," Scolari said. "They defend very well and we may have to take our time."

Ronaldo believes Belgium will be playing a dangerous game if they opt for a policy of containment.

"The Belgians can't try to play safe, they're obliged to attack and push up, and that will create space," he said.

So he has forced his talented team to spend long hours in front of the video.

Scolari said he would show his players replays of their worst half hour in Thursday's 5-2 win over Costa Rica when, despite the con

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PLUS-MINUS

Following is an analysis of the comparative strengths and weaknesses of Brazil and Belgium:

BRAZIL STRENGTHS: With 11 goals to its credit, Brazil's attack is the best of the World Cup alongside Germany. Ronaldo, with four goals, is refinding his best form after two-and-a-half years of injury misery while the ungainly-looking Rivaldo, who has also scored in each game, is also living up to his billing. Neither can afford to be left alone for even a split second.

BRAZIL WEAKNESSES: Coach Luiz Felipe Scolari has expressed exasperation at

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Diego for free!

AFP, Panama

Argentine football legend Maradona claimed here Saturday he is ready to take over the reins of the national team, and do it for free into the bargain.

"I would coach the national team for free," said Maradona, who is here on holiday at the invitation of friend and boxing legend Roberto Duran.

"I've always said it and I'll say it again: I would coach the national team and I don't need a single real (Argentine currency) to do so."

"I'm ready to take over as soon as I'm asked," added Maradona, who then deflected questions about

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Bangladesh united

AFP, Dhaka

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her arch-rival Sheikh Hasina Wajed might not agree on any issue, but they have one thing in common -- they are fans of the Brazilian football team.

Both like football and amid their busy schedule, the two leaders find time to watch World Cup matches, a national daily reported Sunday.

It said sources close to both Zia and Sheikh Hasina have confirmed that they were fans of the Brazilian football team.

Bangladeshi President Shahabuddin Ahmed also regularly watches World Cup matches.

World Cup fever has caught on in this football-crazy nation and Brazilian flags dominate the skyline of most Bangladeshi cities and towns.



PHOTO: AFP

THERE'S THE STAIRWAY TO QUARTER FINALS! Brazil coach Luis Felipe Scolari (L) draws the attention of Ronaldo, Luizaoa and Denilson to something during practice at Kobe yesterday.

Larsson's swansong

REUTERS, Oita

Striker Henrik Larsson announced his retirement from international football after Sweden's 2-1 World Cup second round defeat to Senegal on Sunday.

"I'm finished, there will be no more," the 30-year-old, who has scored 24 goals in 72 appearances, told reporters.

"I've been thinking about it for a while, and now my family must come first."

Larsson, who will continue to play club football with Scottish champions Celtic, revealed his decision to his team mates and coaches Lars Lagerback and Tommy Soderberg amid emotional dressing room scenes after the match in Oita, won by Senegal with a 104th minute golden goal.

As he shook hands with each squad member, he explained he did not want to stay on for the European

championship in 2004.

"It's too far away to the next big event," said Larsson, who has two young children.

"It's hard to leave the family at

home for long periods, and the travelling is tough."

Larsson scored Sweden's 11th-

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PHOTO: AFP

LAST TIME HE FLIES: Sweden striker Henrik Larsson celebrating his strike against Senegal at Oita yesterday.

CUP CORNER

INTERNET, Brussels

Belgium's press do not seem too hopeful going into their second round World Cup match against the samba stars of Brazil.

Praising their team's mental strength at getting through the group stage, the Belgian newspapers have gone from one extreme to another.

The newspapers calling for manager Robert Waseige's head after a draw against Tunisia will be brushing up on their dancing technique.

"On Monday we will dance the Samba," said the Gazet Van Antwerpen.

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TODAY'S MATCHES

<p>Mexico vs USA Venue: Jeonju Time: 12:30 pm</p>	<p>Brazil vs Belgium Venue: Kobe Time: 5:30 pm</p>
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