



Brazil striker Luis Fabiano celebrates after scoring his second goal against arch-rivals Argentina during their World Cup qualifier at the Gigante de Arroyito stadium in Rosario on Saturday. Fabiano scored a brace as a resolute Brazil comfortably held off the challenge of the Argentines to qualify for the World Cup finals.

Brazil slay old enemies

Qualify for World Cup

AGENCIES, Rosario



Brazil ruthlessly sealed their qualification for the World Cup in South Africa tonight, but Argentina's fate is looking ever more uncertain after this crushing defeat. Diego Maradona came into this match promising to attack Brazil, yet he could not have anticipated his side's defence rendering his team's threat so irrelevant. Argentina were woeful at the back and Brazil barely had to work for their goals.

Dunga's Brazil have drawn criticism for favouring solidity over flair. Yet all Dunga need do now is point to the sheer ineptitude of Argentina's defence.

They wilted at the mere sign of a high ball into their box and Elano's deliveries in particular seemed to induce Argentina into a state of paralysis. After a high-octane start in which Argentina snapped the ball around efficiently and gave Brazil

little time to play, the visitors took the lead after 24 minutes. It was a goal of unerring simplicity, Luisao, with barely a marker within six yards of him, heading Elano's

free-kick into the far corner.

Brazil barely deserved the lead, Argentina having made all the running. They might have led early on when Cesar had to be alert to deny Tevez. Set pieces change games though and an inability to clear them is fatal. A few minutes after the first, another Elano effort squirmed through the wall for Kaka to pull the ball back from the goal-line. Felipe Melo's shot was saved by Andujar, only for Luis Fabiano to sweep up the rebound. No Argentina defender had reacted.

Maxi Rodriguez might have reduced the arrears shortly afterwards when Tevez's persistence earned the midfielder a sight of goal. Cesar blocked brilliantly however and soon Argentina were flailing at another set-piece, Andujar just about denying Fabiano a second and Brazil a third.

By now thoughts were turning to just how many Brazil might rack up. After all, Argentina lost 6-1 in Bolivia not long ago. The high altitude was blamed then but a worrying 2-0 defeat in Ecuador in June

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Note: Top 4 teams qualify for the World Cup. Fifth-placed team enters a home-and-away playoff with the fourth-placed team from North, Central America and Caribbean zone.

-Brazil have qualified for the 2010 World Cup

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Double teen shock

AFP, New York

World number one Dinara Safina and three-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova crashed out of the US Open at the hands of teen titans on Saturday, aiding fellow Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova's title bid.

Petra Kvitova, a 19-year-old Czech who won her first WTA title in January at Hobart, and US giant-killer Melanie Oudin, two weeks shy of her 18th birthday, became the darlings of Flushing Meadows after their third-round shockers.

Kvitova, ranked 72nd, saved three match points in the 12th game of the final set and eliminated Safina 6-4, 2-6, 7-6(7/5).

"I'm very happy. It was amazing," said Kvitova, her voice cracking with emotion. "Second set I was very down. I was not focused. It was terrible. After that I concentrated on every ball and I won."

Safina will remain atop the rankings after the Open but is still searching for a first Grand Slam title and a way to play her best when it matters most.

"Third set, come back from down again having everything in my hands and just phhhhhhwww," Safina said. "She played some good points but still I let it go away again from my side. Three match points and I didn't do anything on them."

"Disappointing. Very disappointing."

Oudin stunned former world number one Sharapova 3-6, 6-4, 7-5 at Arthur Ashe Stadium by holding serve in the final game after six consecutive

quarterfinal berth against Russian 13th seed Nadia Petrova. "I still feel like I had my

chances even though it wasn't my best day," said Sharapova. "When you let those chances

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A dejected Maria Sharapova walks off the court after being defeated by US teenager Melanie Oudin in the 2nd round of the US Open at the Flushing Meadows in New York on Saturday.

MSC to finalise contracts today

SPORTS REPORTER

Having netted dashing opener Tamim Iqbal a couple of days ago, Mohammedan SC are all set to complete the official contracts with the cricketers at the club premises today.

Though the three-day players transfer of the Premier Division Cricket League will take place from September 29, but the Motijheel-based outfit might have been inspired to complete the players' contracts with the club following Tamim's somersault from Abahani.

The Sky Blues have so far only signed stars Mashrafe Mortaza and Shakib Al Hasan.

Former captain Khaled Mashud is likely to join the Motijheel-based outfit as the club officials claimed they confirmed the service of the wicketkeeper, who was supposed to play for Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

Mohammedan have so far

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Olaleken joins MSC camp

SPORTS REPORTER

Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola Olaleken and defender Dummy Emanuel joined Mohammedan SC's conditioning camp in Mymensingh yesterday.

Both of them arrived in the capital Saturday night and moved to Mymensingh from the airport, said MSC officials.

Bukola was one of the architects of Mohammedan's Federation Cup and Tk one-crore Super Cup triumphs last season and helped the Black and Whites finish behind champions Abahani having struck 10 goals in the B. League.

Mohammedan will start their campaign as they take on Feni Soccer Club on September 10 at Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Zia, Rajib in 2nd position

SPORTS REPORTER

Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman won his fifth round game to share the second position with compatriot Enamul Hossain Rajib at the end of the five rounds of the 4th Kolkata Open International Grandmasters Chess Tournament at Gorkey Sadan on Saturday.

Both the Bangladesh Grandmasters have four points each along with eight other players while Indian GM Sandipan Chanda enjoys solo lead in the meet earning 4.5 points from five outings.

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Top seed MSC can meet Abahani only in final

SPORTS REPORTER

CITYCELL FEDERATION CUP '09 Archrivals Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani will not meet each other on the battlefield until both of them reach the final of the Citycell Federation Cup as they were rated the two top seeded sides in the groupings of the season's curtain-raising tournament, beginning on September 10.

Champions Mohammedan were considered the number one seed in the warm-up tournament of the professional football league, the B. League, while last year's runners-up Abahani followed them as the second best which meant they will not face each other until the final, scheduled to be held on October 8.

Keeping four semifinalists of last season on top of each four groups, other 12 teams including three invited sides -- Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protishthan, Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Police -- were drawn in a ceremony which was held at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

The Black and Whites were placed in Group A along with depleted Brothers Union, BKSP.

Fixture

Date	Match	Venue
Sept 10	Dhaka MSC vs Feni Soccer Club	BNS
	BKSP vs Brothers Union	Army Stadium
Sept 11	City MSC vs Shukhara Jubo	BNS
	Arambagh KS vs Rahmatganj	Army Stadium
Sept 12	Farashganj SC vs Beanibazar SC	BNS
	Sk. Russell vs Bangladesh Army	Army Stadium
Sept 13	Dhaka Abahani vs Bangladesh Police	BNS
	Muktijoddha vs Ctg Abahani	Army Stadium

and Feni Soccer Club while the Sky Blues led Group D with a new look Muktijoddha Sangsad, Chittagong Abahani and Bangladesh Police.

Group B included last year's semifinalists Chittagong Mohammedan SC, Arambagh KS, Rahmatganj MFS and newcomers Shukhara Jubo Sangsad of Naryanganj while Farashganj SC, last year's semifinalists, Sheikh Russel KC, Bangladesh Army and newcomers Beanibazar SC of Sylhet.

Top two sides from each group will qualify for the quarterfinals to be held on October 1 and 2. The semifinals are billed for October 4 and 5.

Mohammedan will begin their campaign to defend the title taking on Feni Soccer Club in one of the two opening day matches at the Bangabandhu National Stadium while their old foes Abahani will play against Bangladesh Police on September 13.

After the first match, each team will get a three-day break before playing their next match and the tournament will remain suspended for eight days for the Eid-ul-Fitr and will resume on September 26.

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Groupings

GROUP A:	Dhaka Mohammedan SC, BKSP, Brothers Union and Feni Soccer Club.
GROUP B:	Ctg Mohammedan SC, Arambagh KS, Rahmatganj MFS and Shukhara Jubo Sangsad.
GROUP C:	Farashganj SC, Sheikh Russel KC, Bangladesh Army and Beanibazar SC.
GROUP D:	Dhaka Abahani, Muktijoddha Sangsad, Ctg Abahani and Bangladesh Police.



Edson Silva Dido (3rd from left), coach of the Bangladesh national football team, draws lots during the draw ceremony of the Citycell Federation Cup 2009 at the Hotel Sheraton yesterday.

Johnson lifts Aus

Cricket

AFP, London

Mitchell Johnson's rapid unbeaten 43 helped Australia to a total of 249 for eight in the second one-day international against England at London's on Sunday.

Johnson faced just 23 balls, hitting five fours and, together with Nathan Hauritz, shared an unbroken stand of 41 in 28 balls after the world champions were in danger of being bowled out inside their allotted 50 overs at 201 for eight in the 46th.

Callum Ferguson top-scored with 55, his second successive fifty after his man-of-the-match winning 71 not out in Australia's four-run win in Friday's first of a seven-match series at the Oval.

Changes of pace once more proved tough for Australia's top-order to handle and, as Johnson showed when he teed off in the closing stages, runs were easier to come by against the front-line quicks.

Australia made a steady start after England captain Andrew Strauss again won the toss.

But from 62 without loss, Australia lost two wickets for two runs in eight balls to be 64 for two.

Pace bowler Tim Bresnan, one of two

changes after coming replacing Yorkshire teammate and leg-spinner Adil Rashid, broke the opening stand.

But it needed a fine catch by a leaping Luke Wright at short extra-cover to dismiss Shane Watson for 34, featuring five fours, off a hard-hit drive.

Tim Paine fell soon afterwards when a skied flick off the deceptively lively Wright was safely held by Eoin Morgan, in for the injured Stuart Broad (neck), at mid-wicket.

Wright then captured the prize wicket of star batsman Michael Clarke, captaining Australia in the absence of the resting Ricky Ponting, for four.

Clarke trying to hook a short ball, only made through to wicketkeeper Matt Prior.

It now fell to Cameron White, who also made a fifty on Friday, and Ferguson to repair the damage.

They did so with a stand of 69 before occasional medium-pacer Ravi Bopara, struck first ball when White, on 42, trying to run him down to third man, got an edge which was well held by Prior, standing up to the stumps.

And 147 for four then became 155 for five when off-spinner Graeme Swann bowled Michael Hussey with a ball that turned past the outside edge as the left-hander pushed forward uncertainly.

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Andy, Lleyton ousted

AFP, New York

Andy Roddick's hopes of a second US Open crown, six years after his first, were blown apart by giant compatriot John Isner on Saturday in the first major upset of the men's tournament.

The six-foot-nine-inch (2.03m) product of the US collegiate system stunned the fifth seed and top US hope 7-6 (7/3), 6-3, 3-6, 5-7, 7-6 (7/5) in a 3 hours 51 minutes, third-round clash between two of the biggest servers in tennis.

There were scares also for top seed and defending champion Roger Federer and fourth seed Novak Djokovic. Both dropped their opening sets but both bounced back to win in four.

While defending champion and top seed Federer made it 14 in a row over former world No.1 Lleyton Hewitt with a 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 win, fourth-seeded Djokovic struggled to see off the challenge of US wildcard Jesse Witten 6-7 (2/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/2), 6-4.

The Isner-Roddick clash turned on two tie-breaks -- one in the first and one in the fifth. Both were won by 24-year-old Isner, who is back to full fitness after missing three months of the year with mononucleosis.

"Maybe I was a little bit fortunate to win tonight, but I played well and I think I deserved it," he said. "It hinged on a few points here and there."

"He brought it back and took it to the fifth set and from there it was anybody's game."

"I told myself, just hold serve, and if I could get to the tie-breaker I was confident."

"I can really do some damage here. I'm not finished yet."

With US No.2 Sam Querrey also going out in a 6-2, 7-5, 6-7 (6/8), 6-1 loss to French Open runner-up Robin Soderling of Sweden and James Blake losing 7-6 (7/2), 6-4, 6-4 to Tommy Robredo, Isner now represents the best chance of a first home win since Roddick in 2003.

It was a crushing blow for Roddick, who lost a marathon five-setter to Roger Federer in the Wimbledon final in July.

"Bottom line for the entire match is he played great in the breakers. I don't know if I missed a ball in one of the breakers. He played well when he had to."

Federer, seeking a sixth straight US title to match the 84-year-old record of Bill Tilden, was uncustomarily out first under a hot midday sun at the Arthur Ashe Stadium court and he was uncustomarily sluggish and careless.

In contrast, Hewitt, the champion in 2001 who is clawing his way back up the rankings after falling out of the top 100 in February, looked much the livelier and more enterprising.