



HE'S BACK: Striker Fernando Torres points in delight at teammate Pedro (not in picture) after coolly scoring Spain's fifth goal in a 6-0 rout of Poland at the Nueva Condomina Stadium in Murcia on Tuesday. The Liverpool hero, who underwent knee surgery in April, came on as a second-half substitute and fired home from a Pedro cross.

Clint eyes 1950 repeat

AFP, Irene

US playmaker Clint Dempsey sees his American World Cup squad on the verge of doing something special in South Africa, possibly a Saturday repeat of a 1950 shock World Cup upset of England.

Dempsey, a veteran at Fulham of England's Premiership, knows well the talent that make England a formidable first-match foe in their Group C showdown, but he also knows the faith his teammates have in themselves even as others doubt.

England figure to be a favourite with an all-time 7-2 record against the US squad, but the Americans look back at a 1-0 stunner over England at the 1950 World Cup in Brazil and understand anything is possible.

"If we didn't believe we could (beat England again), why would we be here? It would not be right if we didn't feel we could do something special," Dempsey said. "Hopefully we can do something special like we did in the Confederations Cup."

Dempsey scored goals in three consecutive matches in the Confederations Cup last year in South Africa, leading the Americans to a shock upset of Spain to snap a 35-match win streak and a 2-0 lead on Brazil before losing in the final.

"Nobody thought we could make the final," Dempsey said. "It doesn't matter what people think. It matters inside the group what they think of themselves."

"I hope they say, 'Why not?' You can't live in fear. You have to go out and try to do something special."

The 27-year-old midfielder has gone from testing his skills in scorching conditions on the west Texas dirt as a youth to shining for Fulham, a stunning goal to beat Juventus in the Europa League leaving no doubt of his ability.

Torres plays, scores

Portugal steamroll Mozambique

AGENCIES



Fernando Torres scored in Spain's 6-0 rout of Poland on Tuesday as the Liverpool striker handed the European champions a timely World Cup boost.

The 26-year-old, who underwent knee surgery in April, was on target in the 75th minute of the friendly international with a cool, sharp finish from a cross by Pedro after coming on as a second-half substitute.

It was Torres's 24th international goal and came just 10 minutes after he replaced David Villa.

"It's almost two months since I played so I am happy to have scored," said Torres.

Coach Vicente Del Bosque admitted he was delighted by the return to form of the man who netted the winner in the Euro 2008 final against Germany.

THE KNOWLEDGE
Cristiano Ronaldo had the most shots without scoring in the qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup: 35 attempts, 0 goals.

"We have finished our preparations and we can go to South Africa in good spirits," he said.

The only cloud on the horizon for Spain was a leg injury to playmaker Andres Iniesta, who will undergo a scan on Wednesday, although Del Bosque said he believed it was

nothing major.

Portugal were counting the cost after in-form Manchester United winger Nani was ruled out of the entire tournament after injuring his collarbone in training, dealing a blow to his country's chances.

As a forlorn Nani watched from the sidelines, Portugal eased to a 3-0 win over Mozambique in Johannesburg on Tuesday with Hugo Almeida scoring twice.

Portugal coach Carlos Queiroz admitted Nani was a "sad" loss. "But the most important thing is the cohesion of the team and that we all play together to get over it," he said.

Queiroz was however given a boost after seeing defensive midfielder Pepe back in action after the Real Madrid player had been sidelined for six months with a knee injury.

Australia in Cahill scare

SOCCERNET

Tim Cahill is Australia's biggest injury doubt ahead of their World Cup opener against Germany on Sunday.

While Harry Kewell, whose much-discussed groin injury has dominated the Socceroos' build-up to the 2010 World Cup, was able to participate in an intense two-hour training session on Tuesday, Cahill was little more than a spectator.

The Everton midfielder is still recovering from a neck injury sustained during the first half of Saturday's 3-1 loss in a warm-up match against the United States and, while the rest of Pim Verbeek's squad engaged in a full-scale practice match, Cahill was having shooting practice alone on the side of the pitch.

The sight of Cahill by far Australia's most prolific scorer in recent years being unable to join in training just five days out from the Socceroos' opening game is a major concern.

Swiss hold Elephants

SOCCERNET

Ivory Coast completed their World Cup warm-up campaign with a disappointing 1-1 draw against Swiss second division club Lausanne.

Inevitably, the question on everyone's minds was the fitness of the absent Didier Drogba, all the more so as his teammates squandered a host of chances in the game.

Lausanne went ahead against the run of play with a header by defender Guillaume Katz, one of the only chances they created in a lacklustre affair. Lille's Gerinho equalised to spare coach Sven Goran Eriksson's blushes as he gave all his other striking options a run out.

Whether Drogba will play in South Africa remained uncertain. Team spokesman Ouattara Hegaud said no decision had yet been taken, and under FIFA's rules a replacement can be drafted in as late as 24 hours before the side's first match, which is against Portugal on June 15.

Hammam's Asian hope

AFP, Cape Town

Asian Football Confederation president Mohamed Bin Hammam is tipping at least two teams from the region to make the World Cup round of 16.

The Qatari did not say which teams he favoured, but was upbeat about their chances.

"Our best wishes for a successful competition go to Asia's four representatives. Our hearts will follow their performances as they fly the Asian flag in this World Cup," he said.

"I expect at least two Asian teams to reach the round of 16."

Champs land in SA

AGENCIES



Reigning champions Italy arrived in South Africa on Wednesday to defend their crown after tournament favourites Spain showed off their firepower as they scored six times in their final warm-up game.

Coach Marcello Lippi's Italian squad, which includes nine of the players in the squad which triumphed four years ago in Germany, were guarded by dozens of police after their plane touched down at Johannesburg airport.

They headed off to the Leriba Golf Lodge, just outside Pretoria, to prepare for their opening Group F match against Paraguay in Cape Town on Monday.

The Italians' arrival ups the tempo two days before Friday's big kickoff when the host nation take on Mexico in front of 90,000 spectators including former president Nelson Mandela at Johannesburg's Soccer City stadium.

Italy have rarely shone since their triumph against France in the 2006 final in Berlin, but the country's football federation chief Giancarlo Abete insisted it would be a mistake to write off Lippi's squad.

"Italy are world champions, that should not be forgotten but you cannot deny that other teams have done better than us in the last few years," Abete said on the plane to South Africa.

"For everyone the favourites are Brazil, Spain, Argentina and England, but we've got great belief."

"For Italy we're talking about tradition and in big competitions our strengths

show through."

But history is against the Italians no country has won back-to-back World Cups since Brazil in 1962.

THE KNOWLEDGE

Brazil hold the record for most consecutive wins at the World Cup (11, set in 2006). Next is Italy with 7 (ending 1938).

Lippi has already lost key man Andrea Pirlo to a calf strain for the Paraguay game and the playmaker faces a race against time to be involved in any of the group games.

Meanwhile, Italy midfielder Daniele De Rossi

says that winning this World Cup would be an improvement on four years ago.

However, the 26-year-old Roma talisman is under no illusions about the scale of the task facing his side.

Speaking to Spanish newspaper Marca, he said: "Winning this World Cup would mean improving on what we did in Germany and we will try to do that."

"The motivations are there like always when you put on the Italy shirt. We are all coming off a tough year, but we are improving."

"World Cup games are never easy. It's true, we don't have Argentina, Germany or England in the group stages, but still it won't be easy."

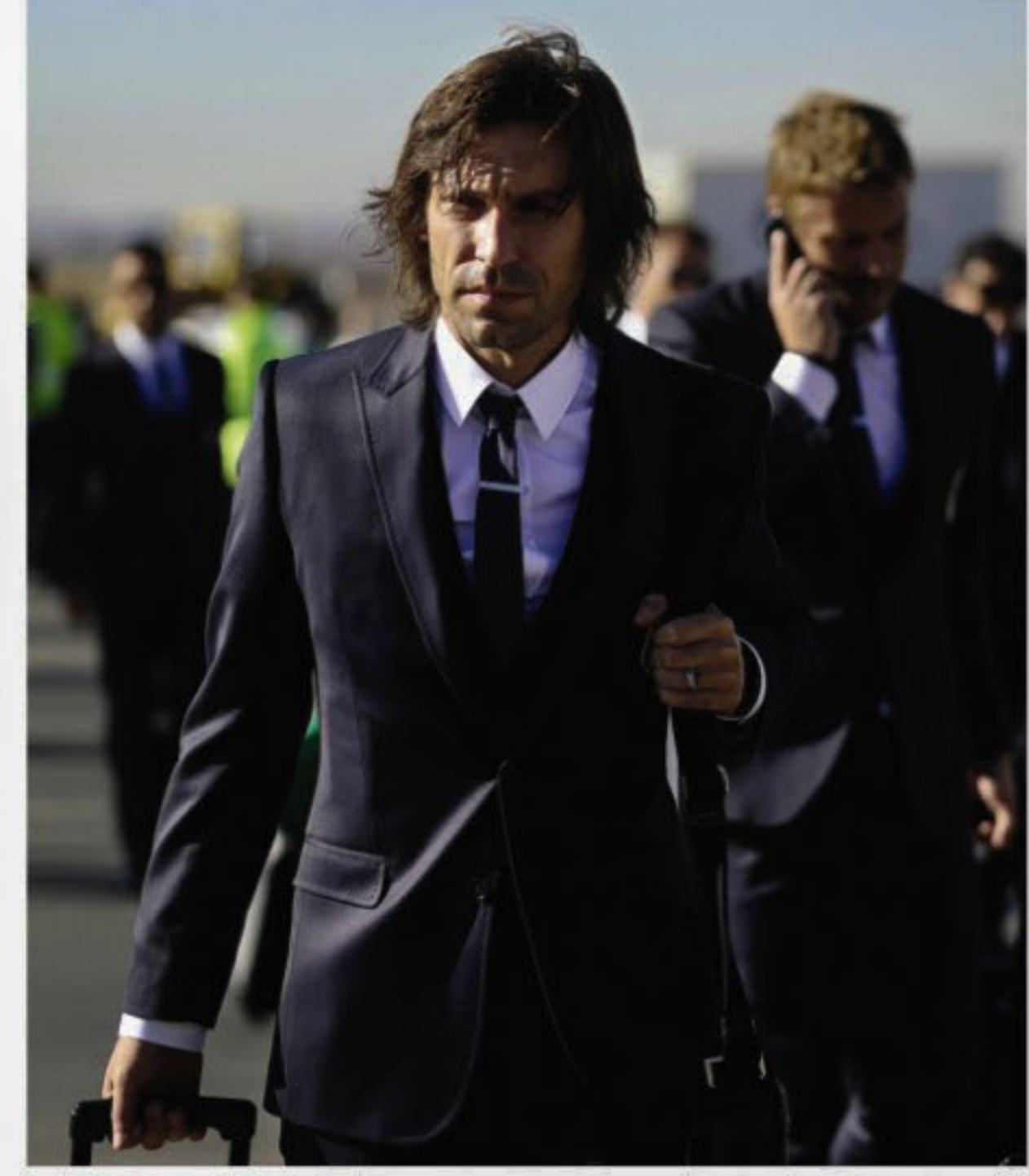


PHOTO: AFP

THEY CALL HIM THE ARCHITECT: Italy's Andrea Pirlo walks off the OR Tambo International Airport tarmac after touching down in Johannesburg on Tuesday. The defending champions will miss the influential midfielder for the first two matches as Pirlo will be back on June 24 to play against Slovakia.

Vidic fears England

SOCCERNET



Serbia defender Nemanja Vidic is hoping to avoid England in the second round should both nations make it out of their World Cup groups.

England are favourites to top Group C while Serbia face a tough battle to get out of Group D, which also features Germany, Ghana and Australia.

The winners of each group play the runners-up of the other in the second round, but Vidic is hoping his homeland won't have to meet the country where he plies his club trade with Manchester United in the second round.

Vidic's day-to-day knowledge of the Premier League's English stars has him convinced they are a team worth avoiding if possible. An England-Serbia clash would see Vidic marking his club teammate Wayne Rooney a fate any defender could be forgiven for fearing given the striker's form this season.

"If we got to the second round I would like to miss England," said Vidic, now widely recognised

as one of the best defenders in the world.

"England are the strongest team we could play, so I would prefer to avoid them. I play in England. I play against these players and I train with some of them every day."

"But it is best to focus on the first game because success at the World Cup for Serbia would be to reach the second round. If we do that we would be happy. After that everything else is extra."

At 28-years-old and playing for a nation that is not guaranteed to qualify for every World Cup, Vidic is aware this may be his last chance to make an impact on the biggest stage, and he intends to leave South Africa with no personal regrets, whatever the results.

"It is a big thing for anyone to play at a World Cup," he said.

"I am no different. But I don't just want to play. I want to do well. I want to achieve something I can be proud of."

"I have reached an age where it could be my last World Cup so I will give everything I can to make it a positive experience, for both myself and the team."



PHOTO: AFP

England defender John Terry (2nd from L) shares a joke with his teammates during a stint of spot-jogging at the Royal Bafokeng Sports Campus near Rustenburg on Tuesday.

The Daily Star

RANGS TOSHIBA

World cup QUIZ 2010

...THIS CAN BE YOURS

ROUND 3, DRAW IN RAJSHAHI ON JUNE 16

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS (ROUNDS 1-5)		PRIZES FOR BUMPER ROUND		
Prize	Item	Winner	Prize	
1st	One 8 CFT Toshiba Refrigerator	YOU	1st	One Toshiba 32" LCD TV
2nd	One Toshiba 24" LCD TV	YOU	2nd	One 15CFT Toshiba Refrigerator
3rd	One Toshiba 21" Colour TV	YOU	3rd	One TOSHIN Heat & Cool AC (1Ton)
4th	One Toshiba 21" Colour TV	YOU	4th	One Toshiba 24" LCD TV
5th	One Toshiba Microwave Oven (23L)	and YOU	5th	One 21" TOSHIN Colour TV

(See May 23 issue of the Star Sport for competition information and rules)

Prizes for the audience (For First Five Rounds)	Prizes for the audience (For Bumper Round)
1st. 20L Toshin Microwave Oven	1st. Toshiba Washing Machine
2nd. 14" Toshin Colour TV	2nd. 21" Toshin Colour TV
3rd. 3 Toshiba DVD Players	3rd. 20L Toshin Microwave Woven
	4th. Two Toshiba DVD Players

QUIZ SCHEDULE				
Round & Draw	Starts	Ends	Answers must reach by 12pm	Lucky Draw for prizes
2. Chittagong	May 28	June 05	June 07	June 11
3. Rajshahi	June 06	June 14	June 15	June 16
4. Khulna	June 15	June 23	June 25	June 29
5. Sylhet	June 24	July 02	July 04	July 06
Bumper Round, Dhaka	July 03	July 11	July 13	July 16

The Daily Star - RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 3 Ends June 14, 2010

Tick (✓) the correct answers

1. Who is the captain of France in this year's World Cup?	Henry <input type="checkbox"/>	Evra <input type="checkbox"/>	Gallas <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Pele scored his first World Cup goal against	Wales <input type="checkbox"/>	Sweden <input type="checkbox"/>	Italy <input type="checkbox"/>
3. How many World Cup matches did Gary Lineker play?	18 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Which stadium will host this year's World Cup final?	Ellis Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer City <input type="checkbox"/>	Mandela Bay <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Who is this player?	Lucio <input type="checkbox"/>	Marquez <input type="checkbox"/>	Branco <input type="checkbox"/>

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms)..... Age.....
 Father's name..... Occupation.....
 Address.....
 Telephone (if any)..... Signature..... Date.....

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, 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215.
 Rajshahi readers can also drop entries at Rangs Toshiba Showroom, Ajo Patti More, Rajshahi.
 You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 3".

READ The Daily Star TO CATCH THE WORLD CUP FEVER

