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# Star SPORT

DHAKA SATURDAY JUNE 12, 2010, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net



France captain Patrice Evra (L) retains the ball under pressure from three Uruguay players in their first round Group A match at the Green Point stadium in Cape Town yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Sterile France held by 10 men

## SOCCERNET

Uruguay youngster Nicolas Lodeiro became the first player to be sent off at the 2010 World Cup as his side played out a 0-0 draw against a lacklustre France in Group A.

Raymond Domenech's side, who drew their first two group games in 2006 before going on to reach the final, struggled for ideas against a well-drilled South American outfit.

Winger Sidney Govou had by far the clearest chance to score for France in only the seventh minute, side-footing a Franck Ribery cross wide with the goal gaping. Uruguay even played the last nine minutes with ten men after substitute Nicolas Lodeiro's dismissal.

France, who are in South Africa thanks to William Gallas' highly controversial goal in their qualification play-off against the Republic of Ireland, left former captain Thierry Henry on the bench with Manchester United left-back Patrice Evra having inherited the armband.

Uruguay, meanwhile, boasted two of European club football's most potent goalscorers up front at Green Point Stadium in



was cautioned for a cynical shirt pull while Ribery joined him in the book before the break.

France striker Nicolas Anelka headed over while at the other end a bending Forlan effort from the edge of the box forced Hugo Lloris to save.

Playmaker Yoann Gourcuff had two speculative efforts on goal as the half-time whistle approached.

Egidio Arevalo and Forlan both had chances early in the second half but neither could find the target for the two-time World Cup winning South Americans.

France were probing for the killer pass but Bordeaux talisman Gourcuff was repeatedly denied by a well-drilled Uruguay defence.

Mauricio Victorino was carded for a late lunge on Evra in the 59th minute and Ribery blasted wide from the resulting training-ground set-piece by Gourcuff.

Uruguay boss Oscar Tabarez sent on Lodeiro for Ignacio Gonzalez and he was booked within a minute. In the 66th minute Lloris dropped a catch under pressure from Suarez, who could not capitalise before Jeremy Toulalan was booked for a lunge on Uruguay wing-back

Alvaro Pereira two minutes later.

Domenech sacrificed Anelka to send on Henry in the 71st minute to the delight of the 64,100 crowd, which was mainly comprised of locals.

Forlan had a 73rd-minute sight of goal when he dragged a first-time effort wide from Suarez's flick-on, before his strike partner was swapped for veteran substitute Sebastian Abreu.

Domenech threw Chelsea's Florent Malouda on for the disappointing Gourcuff but still they were devoid of cutting edge. Lodeiro's hapless cameo was ended abruptly in the 81st minute when he was carded again for a late and high challenge on Bacary Sagna.

Domenech's last throw of the dice was to throw on Andre Pierre Gignac for Govou with five minutes left but even his predatory instincts were insufficient and French appeals for a penalty were dismissed when Henry's stab towards goal seemed to hit Victorino's lower arm in the 89th minute.

That, however, was as close as they came, with Henry hitting the wall from a free-kick and for the third World Cup in a row, France failed to win their opening game.

**TOTAL VOTES: 161**

**TODAY'S POLL**  
Can USA spring a surprise against England?

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**WORLD CUP POLL**  
What will be the result in the France-Uruguay match?

France wins 62.3%  
Uruguay wins 23.0%  
Draw 14.8%

**South Korea v Greece**  
Time: 5.30pm  
Port Elizabeth

**Argentina v Nigeria**  
Time: 8.00pm  
Johannesburg

**England v USA**  
Time: 12.30am (Sunday)  
Rustenburg

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MAX Fairness for MAX Impression  
MAX Sun Protection  
MAX Spot Reduction  
MAX Skin Lightening

**TODAY'S MATCHES**

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**N97**

A Mexican supporter talks on his mobile phone as he watches the gala opening ceremony of the FIFA World Cup at the Soccer City in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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