

# Thrilling draw in opener

SOCCERNET

Rafael Marquez denied hosts South Africa a dream start to the World Cup with his goal 11 minutes from time earning Mexico a deserved draw at Soccer City.

After struggling through the first half, the home side came out firing after the break and took the lead through Siphiwe Tshabalala.

But after missing plenty of chances to build on their advantage, they saw their lead cancelled out by the Barcelona defender.

Katlego Mphela could have snatched victory at the death, but his strike found the base of the post as both sides had to settle for a share of the spoils.

After an entertaining opening ceremony in Johannesburg, Bafana Bafana failed to make the most of their advantage, much to the disappointment of the 85,000 crowd.

The visitors almost stunned their hosts inside the first 120 seconds, but were thwarted by a last-ditch block by Aaron Mokoena.

It came after Paul Aguilar's cross from the right was not convincingly cleared by Itumeleng Khune and Giovani dos Santos' shot was repelled by the South Africa captain with an empty net gaping.

Steven Pienaar sent South Africa's only real early chance - a 25-yard free-kick - disappointingly over, while Efraim Juarez became the first player to be booked at the World Cup for trying to slow down play.

Dos Santos again came close when a quick counter-attack resulted in the Galatasaray forward striking a rising shot narrowly wide.

There was a slightly nervy moment for Mexico after 22 minutes when Oscar Perez fumbled and then re-gathered Pienaar's cross.

Fortunately for the goalkeeper, there were no attacking players close enough to capitalise.

Bongani Khumalo then diverted another Dos Santos shot away for a corner, before there was a lucky off-side escape when Khune flapped at a corner - but came so far he played Carlos Vela offside as the Arsenal forward latched on to a flick-on and tapped in. The home side finally came out of their shell in the closing moments of the half - Mphela failing to connect with Tshabalala's well-floated cross and Kagisho Dikgacoi heading a corner wide.

Lucas Thwala, who was stretched down the left in the opening 45 minutes, was replaced by Tsepo Masilela at half time as Carlos Alberto Parreira looked to shore up in defence.

But it was in attack where they prospered, taking the lead through a fine Tshabalala effort after 55 minutes.

The Kaizer Chiefs midfielder was put through on the left by an excellent ball from Teko Modise and unleashed a powerful cross-



**A SPECTACULAR FIRST GOAL:** South Africa midfielder Siphiwe Tshabalala (R) shoots to score the opening goal of the World Cup during their Group A first round match against Mexico at the Soccer City stadium in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SCORE BOARD	
<b>SOUTH AFRICA 1 - 1 MEXICO</b>	
<b>TSHABALALA 55 MARQUEZ 79</b>	
<b>South Africa (4-5-1):</b> Itumeleng Khune, Siboniso Gaxa, Aaron Mokoena, Lucas Thwala (Tsepo Masilela, 46), Bongani Khumalo, Siphiwe Tshabalala, Steven Pienaar (Bernard Parker, 83), Teko Modise, Renelwe Letsholonyane, Kagisho Dikgacoi, Katlego Mphela	
<b>Mexico (4-3-3):</b> Oscar Perez, Francisco Rodriguez, Carlos Salcido, Rafael Marquez, Ricardo Osorio, Paul Aguilar (Andres Guardado, 55), Efraim Juarez, Gerardo Torrado, Giovani Dos Santos, Guillermo Franco (Javier Hernandez, 73), Carlos Vela (Cuahtemoc Blanco, 69)	
<b>Venue:</b> Soccer City Stadium, Johannesburg	
<b>Attendance:</b> 83,548	

KEY STATS	
<b>S Africa</b>	<b>Mexico</b>
<b>Shots (on target)</b>	
<b>10(3)</b>	<b>16(3)</b>
<b>Corners</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Possession</b>	
<b>35%</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Yellow Cards</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

goal shot that gave Perez no chance.

The home side were clearly lifted by the goal and Modise should have doubled the advantage after the hour mark when Mphela's shot was deflected into his path six yards out - but he struck his effort wide.

Veteran Cuahtemoc Blanco was thrown into the mix in place of Vela, but again it was the home side through Modise who engineered a good chance, but failed to capitalise.

Javier Hernandez also entered the fray but it was another substitute that set up the equaliser - Guardado's cross from the left looping over the head of Mokoena and Marquez took a touch before firing in.

Mphela showed good pace minutes from time when he outpaced Rodriguez, but his shot could not beat the post.

## Drogba may play opener

THE GUARDIAN

Ivory Coast captain, Didier Drogba, could start their opening World Cup game against Portugal next week, coach Sven-Goran Eriksson said yesterday.

The 32-year-old Drogba broke his arm during a friendly against Japan last Saturday, and needed surgery.

"If the game had been today [Friday] or tomorrow, he wouldn't play. But there are still some days. He might play against Portugal," Eriksson said after the team's arrival.

Ivory Coast play Portugal next Tuesday in Group G in the coastal city of Port Elizabeth. They have been drawn in a tough group which includes North Korea and five-time champions Brazil.

"It is a difficult group, but we will be well prepared and we will do everything to play well against the other teams," Eriksson said.

## Kaka's form worries Pele

SOCCERNET

Brazilian legend Pele says he is concerned by the form of the country's playmaker Kaka heading into the World Cup finals in South Africa.

Kaka experienced a difficult first season at Real Madrid as he suffered from poor form and a succession of fitness problems. He was overshadowed by fellow new signing Cristiano Ronaldo and will come up against his teammate in Group G when Brazil face Portugal.

While Brazil coach Dunga has forged a Brazil side that is less dependent on flair than its predecessors, with Ronaldinho failing to make the squad at all, Kaka is the key creative influence on the side and Pele is praying he hits his stride at the finals. "Kaka worries me," Pele said. "He is very important to our team. He is a key player for our attack and midfield. But God willing he will be in good form."

## Most see Brazil as winners

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Soccer fans from 23 countries are tipping five-time world champions Brazil to win the first ever World Cup finals held on African soil, a Reuters-Ipsos poll found on Friday.

Soccer buffs from South Africa agreed with that prediction, according to a separate poll of more than 2,500 supporters from the host nation said, with optimistic fans of the home team backing their beloved Bafana Bafana [the boys] to come second.

"I think Brazil will win because they have training secrets which we don't know yet here in South Africa," said Primrose Pendu in Johannesburg.

"I think Brazil will be against Bafana Bafana in the final and I will be so nervous watching," she said.

### PREVIEW

# Diego set to attack

AFP, Johannesburg

Diego Maradona is set to unleash his formidable trio of goal poachers to get Argentina off to a flying start at the World Cup against Nigeria here on Saturday.

The two-time world champions boast a salivating forward line of Lionel Messi, Carlos Tevez and Gonzalo Higuain and coach Maradona in tinkering with pitching in all three in an attacking 3-4-3 formation at Ellis Park.

Between them the dazzling trio netted more than 80 league goals last term for Barcelona, Manchester City and Real Madrid.

Argentine fans' favourite Tevez said he hoped to "get the chance to show the coach what I can do. We have great players [and] don't feel my place is assured."

The Argentines may have stumbled across the finish line in qualification for South Africa 2010, but Maradona has



PHOTO: AFP

**THE MEN WHO MATTER:** Lionel Messi and his Argentina captain Javier Mascherano (L) gesticulate during a training session at the University's High Performance Centre in Pretoria on Thursday. The eyes of the world would surely be on Messi as the two-time world champions take on Nigeria today.

### THE KNOWLEDGE

Carlos Tevez has scored just nine goals for Argentina and only two in the World Cup, one in qualifying and one in the finals (in 2006).

at his disposal a squad of sumptuous talent in his first World Cup as coach.

Indications are that Maradona, who inspired Argentina as the world's greatest player to World Cup triumph in 1986, will go with a three-man backline enabling him to field a three-man strikeforce.

Marseille centre-half Gabriel Heinze said this week

that "Argentina will always go after the game" and not sit tight and be ultra-cautious.

Saturday's opening Group B game offers Messi, the world's best player, the ideal stage to stake an early claim as the star of the tournament, given his sensational club form with Barcelona.

"Player for player, there is no better national team than ours," Messi said.

"At this stage I don't have to prove anything. I've come there to do things well for me and for my teammates."

Heinze moved to ease the enormous burden of expectations on Messi to perform, saying that Argentina is not dependent on the diminutive playmaker.

"Everybody expects something whenever Lionel touches the ball, that's normal, he's the best in the world and is in his best moment, but Argentina do not depend on him but on the group," Heinze said.

"It's incredible what he does but he is one more player and he can make mistakes."

"I believe it's the team that makes you win these very difficult tournaments."

Argentina have beaten Nigeria twice at the World Cup -- 1-0 in 2002 and 2-1 in 1994 - and will be favoured to do so again.

The mood inside Africa's most populous nation is not overly optimistic about the Super Eagles' chances against Argentina.

But their veteran Portsmouth striker Nwankwo

## Maradona's Messi hope

AFP, Pretoria

Argentina coach Diego Maradona on Friday expressed his belief that Barcelona's Argentine superstar Lionel Messi can emulate his own achievements from 24 years ago.

"I would love to see that, I certainly would appreciate it if he had the same impact on the World Cup as I had in 1986," he said.

"But I think behind Lionel there's a whole team that should back him up and he should be the cherry on the cake."

"I just wish from the bottom of my heart that Messi gets to showcase his talents and has his best performance of all time."

Kanu holds out hope that Nigeria will not be intimidated in what will be their first competitive game under Swedish coach Lars Lagerback.

"Argentina have the big-name players and everyone respects them. We also acknowledge that they are good and great players," he said.

"But Argentina also have the same respect for us because they know the quality of our team and know that there is plenty that we can come up with at anytime."

All the same the pressure will be on Argentina to come through their opening match in South Africa with a win to set a platform for a crack at a third world title.

Everton defender Yobo faces one of the most challenging assignments in world football -- trying to stop Messi. The reigning world footballer of the year possesses all the skills and is a real handful. How Yobo and the Nigerian defence cope with his threat will play a major part in the outcome

# The Daily Star

## RANGS TOSHIBA

World cup **QUIZ** 2010

Best Choice for Colourful Life

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### ROUND 3, DRAW IN RAJSHAHI ON JUNE 16

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

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

#### Prizes for the audience (For First Five Rounds)

1st. 20L Toshin Microwave Oven  
2nd. 14" Toshin Colour TV  
3rd. 3 Toshiba DVD Players

#### Prizes for the audience (For Bumper Round)

1st. Toshiba Washing Machine  
2nd. 21" Toshin Colour TV  
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
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
<b>Bumper Round, Dhaka</b>	<b>July 03</b>	<b>July 11</b>	<b>July 13</b>	<b>July 16</b>

### 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, Alo Patti More, Rajshahi.  
You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 3".

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