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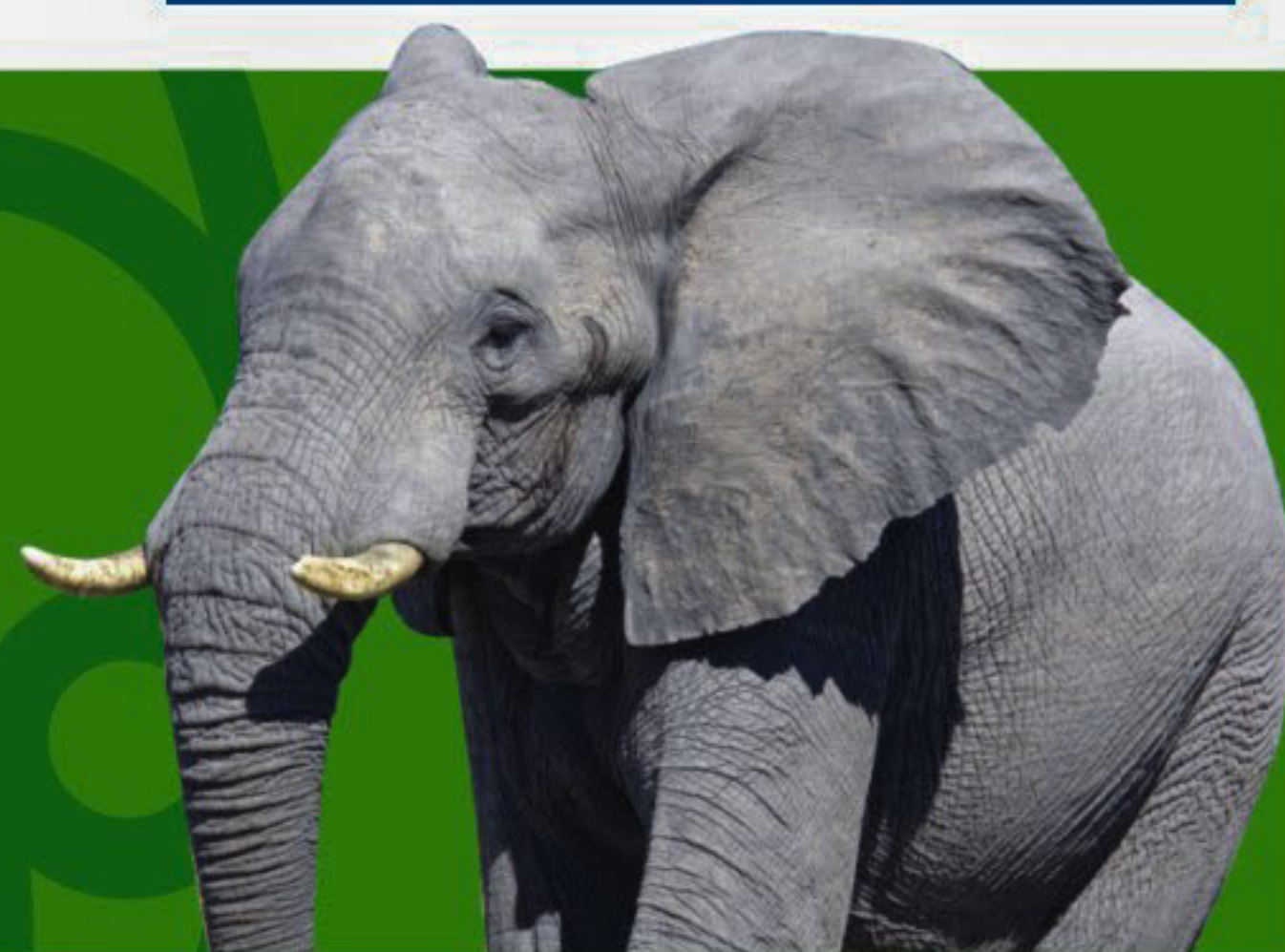


WORLD CUP SPECIAL

Elephant delays US training

The USA training session ahead of their World Cup opener with England was briefly delayed after an elephant blocked the route of the team bus. "Everybody had their cell phones out, pictures were being taken," coach Bob Bradley said. "It was cool," Captain Carlos Bocanegra added. "A big elephant, just eating on the path out of our hotel." A team spokesman said the squad had to wait around

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Star SPORT

DHAKA SUNDAY JUNE 13, 2010, E-mail: sports@thedailystar.net



United States midfielder Clint Dempsey (L) is ecstatic after scoring the equalising goal against England during their Group C first round match at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium in Rustenburg last night.

PHOTO: AFP

Clint pegs English back

AFP, Rustenburg

England's hopes of a winning start to their World Cup campaign were shattered by an extraordinary blunder by goalkeeper Robert Green that gifted the United States their equaliser in a 1-1 draw here on Saturday.

England captain Steven Gerrard gave his side a dream start to their Group C campaign with a fourth minute strike at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium.

But Fabio Capello's men were sent back to square one when Green let in Clint Dempsey's tame, 25-yard shot five minutes from half-time.

England had gone ahead from their first foray into opposition territory.

Picking up a Glen Johnson throw-in from the right, Frank Lampard threaded a pass that was flicked on by Wayne Rooney to Emile Heskey on the edge of the area.

The Aston Villa striker got in front of Jay DeMerit and his first-time ball anticipated an untracked run by Gerrard, who prod-

SCORE BOARD

ENGLAND 1 - 1 USA
GERRARD 4 DEMPSEY 40

England (4-4-2): Robert Green - Glen Johnson, John Terry, Ledley King (Jamie Carragher 46), Ashley Cole - Aaron Lennon, Frank Lampard, Steven Gerrard (cap), James Milner (Shaun Wright-Phillips 31) - Wayne Rooney, Emile Heskey (Peter Crouch 79)

United States (4-4-2): Tim Howard - Steve Cherundolo, Jay Demerit, Oguchi Onyewu, Carlos Bocanegra (cap) - Clint Dempsey, Michael Bradley, Ricardo Clark, Landon Donovan - Jozy Altidore (Stuart Holden 86), Robert Findley (Edson Buddle 77)

Referee: Carlos Simon (BRA)
Venue: Royal Bafokeng Stadium, Rustenburg

KEY STATS

England	USA
Shots (on target)	
8(6)	12(4)
Corners	
8	4
Possession	
57%	43%
Yellow Cards	
3	3

ded the ball past Tim Howard with the outside of his boot.

That might have precipitated a collapse from less resilient sides but the Americans were soon creating problems, particularly down the right.

England had a significant let-off when Jozy Altidore headed Landon Donovan's chip wide after out jumping Ledley King but they generally looked in control of the match until Green's 40th-minute blunder. Gerrard was partly culpable, having

allowed Dempsey to twist away from him on the edge of the area but still there seemed no danger as the West Ham goalkeeper knelt to gather a shot directed straight at him.

Somewhat the man Capello had selected ahead of the more experienced David James allowed the ball to spin off his right glove and over the line.

England hit back through Glen Johnson, who tested Tim Howard after a mazy run to the edge of the area, but they were unable to restore their advantage before the interval.

Heskey should have done so soon after the restart, when Aaron Lennon's first-time pass sent him clear of a flat-footed American defence. But the striker's shot was unleashed too early and straight at Howard.

England's frustration was clear as Jamie Carragher, on as a second half substitute for King, and Gerrard picked up bookings in quick succession for late challenges.

Because of Mandela

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM

The man they call Madiba was missing in grievous circumstances, but the Bafana Bafana used that as inspiration to play out a high-octane tournament opener against Mexico. Elsewhere, karma (or the ghost of Rep. Ireland past) came back to bite Thierry Henry as the French, for the third tournament running, managed only a draw from their first

Mexico more tournaments than any, and it they came blazing; terrifying the South Africans with some intricate movement. Chief architect was Giovani dos Santos and he and Carlos Vela combined superbly to run the host's ragged. The occasion seemed to overawe the South Africans and they were lucky to go into the break all-square.

All that changed in the second half as South Africa came out all guns blazing and a swift counterattack soon

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TODAY'S POLL

Like 2002 and 2006, can Germany get off to a flying start this time around too?

Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast your vote

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WORLD CUP POLL

Can USA spring a surprise against England?

Yes 59.1%
No 40.9%

TOTAL VOTES: 147

 Algeria v Slovenia Time: 5.30pm	 Polokwane Serbia v Ghana	Time: 8.00pm Pretoria Germany v
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TODAY'S MATCHES

MAX Fairness for MAX Impression

- MAX Skin Lightening
- MAX Spot Reduction
- MAX Sun Protection

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A fan blows a vuvuzela prior to the Argentina-Nigeria World Cup Group B match at Ellis Park stadium in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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