



Portugal midfielder Miguel Veloso (L) hugs star playmaker Cristiano Ronaldo as goalkeeper Eduardo looks on during a training session at the Bekker High School in Magaliesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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PREVIEW

Portugal's point to prove

AFP, Cape Town

Portugal and North Korea clash in a game crucial to their World Cup fortunes on Monday, reviving memories of their classic encounter at the 1966 World Cup. The Portuguese were held to a goalless draw by Ivory Coast in their Group G opener while North Korea lost 2-1 to Brazil, but they won praise for putting up such a stellar fight. The Koreans got almost everyone behind the ball to blunt Brazil's natural samba flair and they will need more of the same if they want to tame Portugal and their captain Cristiano Ronaldo. Their meeting comes 44 years after North Korea's one-and-only previous World Cup appearance in 1966 when they staged a remarkable run to the quarterfinals only to be beaten 5-3 by Portugal. That match witnessed one of the greatest World Cup comebacks ever, with North Korea up 3-0 before four goals by the legendary Eusebio helped his team romp to victory.

The odds Monday are stacked against the Koreans. They are ranked 105 in the world to Portugal's three, but they showed enough mettle against Brazil to suggest it will be a close encounter. North Korea's danger man is their Japanese-based striker Jong Tae-Se, who has attracted the attention of VfL Bochum, with the German side interested in signing him. Jong plans to keep himself in the shop window and is keen to get on the scoresheet.

"I'm going to try to improve for the next game and score my first goal," he said. "Portugal are a top-class team, like Brazil, and it is going to be very hard but we're going to keep trying to make it." While the pariah north Asian nation has proved its footballing credentials, it has also lived up to its reputation as being reclusive, with media access limited. They cancelled a scheduled press conference on Friday, just hours after being con-

fronted by rumours that four of their players -- Kim Myong-Won, An Chol-Hyok, Kim Kyong-Il and Pak Sung-Hyok - had defected. FIFA denied this. Portugal coach Carlos Queiroz, meanwhile, said his team need to be more aggressive than they were against the Ivory Coast, whose tactics were containment and then counter-attacks. "We'll need to take more risks in our next match and that goes for both teams," he said. "But it's always difficult to play against a team that stacks its defense and waits for its opponent to make a mistake." He is expected to make one change, with midfielder Simao Sabrosa brought back in place of Danny. A concern is Ronaldo's goal-drought for his country with the world's most expensive footballer not scoring in an official game since the 2008 European Championships. But Ronaldo, who is on a yellow card and had his appeal against it turned down on

Friday, remains confident. "I would have far preferred to come away with three points against Ivory Coast than the man of the match award but we have to continue fighting," said the Real Madrid star, who will miss their clash with Brazil if booked again. "We now have to play North Korea, we still have every chance of making it into the next round." Defender Paulo Ferreira is equally optimistic, but he knows they need to move up a gear. "Obviously, we need to play better in the second match and we know it'll be difficult against North Korea, but we'll give everything we have to get a victory," he said.



THE KNOWLEDGE. Jong Tae-Se is known as the People's Rooney. Cristiano Ronaldo scored his first and only WC goal against Iran.

World Cup's beer boon

REUTERS, Detroit

Jason King loves the boost in business that the world's biggest soccer tournament brings to his bar, especially early in the morning when World Cup fans order 2-dollar Budweiser beers with their steak-and-egg breakfasts. While no one is saying World Cup soccer will bump the National Football League from its perch as the most popular US spectator sport, bars from New York to Houston to San Francisco enjoyed the early-morning crowds that boosted business this week. "We wouldn't have a single person here because we wouldn't even be open yet," said King, general manager of the Claddagh Irish Pub outside Detroit where about 100 fans clad in red, white and blue drank beer at 10am and cheered for the US team playing against Slovenia on Friday. King, wearing a red shirt touting his bar's status as an official sponsor of US Soccer, said business was up as much as 15 percent in the first week and dinner business has not suffered. At a Claddagh in Columbus, Ohio, the first US game against England drew thousands of fans. Soccer is a growing sport in the United States and the World Cup, being played in South Africa, will help if TV audiences are any indication. The US soccer team's game versus England drew almost 17 million viewers between Walt Disney Co's ABC network and Spanish-language Univision [UVN.U], making it the country's most-viewed first-round World Cup match ever. The first five matches of the tournament drew around double the audience that tuned in four years ago. Many fans are heading to their neighborhood bars to catch the action and knock back \$5 mimosas or a Guinness beer or two. "It is definitely helping business," said Ariel Williams, manager of Dave's Tavern in Manhattan. "A lot of soccer fans love the beer." In Houston, David Perez, general manager

of Kelly's Wet Spot, said it has "absolutely" been worth it to open the bar early. "We've seen about a 20 percent increase in our weekend business," he said. At Steff's Sports Bar near San Francisco's financial district, lunchtime viewers of the France-Mexico match on Thursday spilled out on to 2nd Street. The bartender said business had been good all week. Not everyone was happy about that. Sitting at the bar, Peter Younger, a shipping executive and passionate fan of the sport, said he didn't think the Steff's crowd compared to those that turned out to watch Champions League matches from Europe. "A lot of these people don't really know the game, whereas people watching the Champions League do," he said. And the crowds can ebb and flow depending on who's playing, with US games or neighborhood favorites drawing big crowds. "There have been some days when it's been just a couple of my friends and some days when there has been 30 or 40 people," said Nick Menage, general manager of Little Woodrow's in midtown Houston, which opens at 6:30 to show games. "It's not like the NCAA tournament," said Kris Samiec, bartender at Mrs. Murphy & Sons Irish Bistro in Chicago. Some complained that Americans prefer the comforts of home to hitting the bars. "Big TV not make a difference," said Nestor Sarmiento, who owns the Carchiofoni bar and restaurant in the Corona neighborhood of Queens, where a 60-inch high-definition plasma screen was showing the action. "People prefer to watch games at home on Latin American channels seen via satellite," he added as three people including a reporter watched the Greece and Nigeria game. "Everybody has the dish. Eight years ago was better."

'ENGLAND A DISGRACE' An England fan who breached security to get into the team's dressing room after their lacklustre 0-0 draw with Algeria told them: "You are a disgrace", the Sunday Mirror reported. Pavlos Joseph, 32, said he was looking for the toilet after the game when he mistakenly found his way into the dressing room in Cape Town, where he stumbled upon David Beckham and a naked Joe Cole. "Suddenly David spoke. He took a step towards me and said, 'Whoa, who are you?'" Joseph told the paper. "I said, 'I'm Pavlos and I actually need the toilet.' For a moment, no-one said a word. Then I thought, 'What the heck. I'm in the England dressing room. Why not say something?'" "I looked David straight in the eye and said, 'David, we've spent a lot of money getting here. This is a disgrace. What are you going to do about it?'" Joseph managed to add that the team's performance was "woeful and not good enough" before being told to leave by an official, he said. Beckham brushed off the incident Saturday, saying it had been "blown out of proportion". "He didn't comment on the performance. He literally walked in, said hello," the star, who is not playing at the tournament, told reporters. RODDICK IRKED, VENUS CLUELESS US men's tennis number one Andy Roddick said Saturday he was seething about a disallowed winner in the United States' World Cup football match with Slovenia. Roddick was fuming about Maurice Edu's disallowed headed goal in the dying seconds that would have won it for the United States in their 2-2 draw with Slovenia on Friday. "I understand the rules of football so well that apparently when two Slovenian guys mug an American guy the American guy gets called for a foul. That's how well I understand the rules," Roddick said. Wisely, Roddick avoided watching England's dismal goalless draw with Algeria, the other game in the United States' group. "I did not watch the England game. I decided to take advantage of no traffic and go into the city and have some dinner. You'd be amazed how quickly you can get down there when an England game is on." Meanwhile Venus Williams said she was forced into watching the United States match by her sister Serena. "I actually enjoyed the American game," she said.

Anelka unapologetic

AFP, Knysna

Shamed France striker Nicolas Anelka could have remained with the World Cup squad had he taken up the offer of apologising to coach Raymond Domenech after his foul mouthed tirade of abuse at Domenech. Domenech told TFI on Sunday that it had not been a confrontation out of the ordinary but a normal reaction from a player under pressure. Anelka had exploded when Domenech had told him to play in a different fashion in the second-half of the Group A match with Mexico -- the coach then told him he was replacing him after his abusive reaction and Anelka was sent home in disgrace on Saturday after it was revealed in L'Equipe the nature of his remarks. "It was not a confrontation," said 57-year-old Domenech, who is facing a sad end to his reign as France face likely elimination after Tuesday's final Group A matches. "People cannot imagine the pressure. We are in a dressing-room, the coach says something to a player who is already under pressure, he can react angrily, and with strong words." Domenech, whose popularity has plummeted since he unexpectedly guided them to the penalty shootout loss to Italy in the 2006

World Cup final, conceded that Anelka's reaction had not been appropriate. "He did not react in the most suitable fashion, but it was just a guy sitting in his corner and muttering -- that would not have mattered had it stayed there," said Domenech. "What was important was that it made the front page of a newspaper, and that exposes the internal life of the squad. "I sorted out the problem internally, and as far as I was concerned it was done and dusted. "I had another chat with him (Anelka). The next day (Friday) and I left open the possibility for him to apologise, something which he did not want to do." Domenech, who is the first French coach to take the team to three successive major championships, conceded that outbursts like Anelka's did nothing in terms of setting an example to the young supporters. "The decision to exclude him was the right one," said Domenech, who prior to the finals surpassed Michel Hidalgo as the France coach to have been in charge of the most matches. "I am sorry for the children for whom the French team represents something. "He (Anelka) does not have the right to say such things."

PREVIEW

Unknown territory for the battlers

REUTERS, Port Elizabeth

The thought of Chile against Switzerland as a top-of-the-table clash in the same group as World Cup favourites Spain would have been inconceivable only a few days ago. But both teams are in the unlikely position of joint Group H leaders after the Swiss stunned the Spaniards 1-0 and Chile beat Honduras by the same scoreline to seal their first win at a World Cup in 48 years. Although far from a mouth-watering matchup, Monday's encounter has taken on added significance that might just be enough to wake sleepy Port Elizabeth from its World Cup snooze. The defeats for Spain and Honduras, who meet later on Monday in Johannesburg, means a win for either Switzerland or Chile would give them one foot in the next round. The winning side may be able to advance with a defeat in their final game. Chile's last win in the finals until their 1-0 win over Honduras had come in the 3rd/4th place playoff as hosts in 1962. They had since qualified for the World Cup four times but failed to win any group matches. Both sides have vowed not to get ahead of themselves and expect the match to be a physical encounter fought more in the air than on the ground. Chile's players will try to break down a tight Swiss defence and a packed midfield and avoid falling into the same trap as Spain, who dominated their match but lost out to a goal against the run of play. "We definitely have to be careful because with very little



possession the Swiss still managed to beat Spain," defender Gary Medelsaid. "We know that we have to be much more mobile than the Spanish, to create some space, to open up their defence, which looks very closed." Chile's leading striker Humberto Suazo is likely to return from a hamstring injury to lead a three-man attack. Suazo has played only 45 minutes of competitive soccer since late April and he would likely replace playmaker Jorge Valdivia. Doubts remain over whether Valdivia is fit to play after he picked up a minor injury against Honduras.

THE KNOWLEDGE. Chile finished third in the 1962 World Cup. Alexander Frei's two goals were Switzerland's highest at the 2006 tournament.

Team officials expect him to recover, although Valdivia's wife said otherwise and told Chilean television he would likely miss Monday's game. Switzerland's coach Ottmar Hitzfeld believes his team are the underdogs against Chile, a match he said would be mentally tougher than their win over Spain. He described Chile's attack-minded players as "fantastic" and said his team would defend tightly and restrict the movement of a free-flowing side that finished ahead of strongly favoured Argentina in qualifying. "We have to play with a cool head and not give Chile chances," Hitzfeld said. "If we lose our heads, we don't stand a chance." Striker Alex Frei and midfielder Valon Behrami, who missed the first game due to injuries, have resumed training and were both fully fit, although it was not certain top striker Frei would start in the game, he said.

World Cup ONE TWOS. Includes photos of players Roddick and Kaita. Text: 'I was excited. We almost got three. But I'm not sure what happened.' 'I don't understand any of the rules in soccer. So when something happens, I'm confused. I don't know. I'm learning slowly.' 'Hopefully there will be more soccer on in the US so that way people like me can get a little more hip.' DEATH THREATS FOR KAITA Nigeria midfielder Sani Kaita has received death threats following his red card in the Super Eagles' 2-1 defeat to Greece on Friday. Nigeria were 1-0 up when Kaita was sent off for aiming a kick at Greece defender Vasileios Torosidis. Torosidis went on to score the winning goal, a goal that puts Nigeria's qualification for the second round in serious doubt. The Alania Vladikavkaz player revealed after the game that he had received death threats via email. "Yes, I have received some threats to my life," Kaita said. "They were sent to my email but I'm not disturbed about that because as a Muslim, only God decides who lives and who dies." "Everything on this Earth is in God's hands, whether it is your life or whatever and unless God allows it, no-one has the power to kill me. Only God knows what will happen tomorrow. He holds our destiny. That is what my religion teaches me." The incident is a chilling reminder of the fate of Colombia defender Andres Escobar, who was murdered after the 1994 World Cup, the killing believed to have been provoked by an own goal he scored against USA. VUVUZELA GOES TO AMERICA Get your ear plugs ready, the Vuvuzela is going global. The Florida Marlins baseball team handed out free horns to the first 15,000 fans through the gate for their game with the Tampa Bay Rays on Saturday. Not surprisingly, as anyone who has watched a World Cup match would know, the result was a night of constant, vibrating noise. The Marlins, who often struggle to draw good crowds, frequently put on bands and other attractions on Saturdays. "We try to create either a sound or visual giveaway," said Marlins' vice president of marketing Sean Flynn. "This is probably the loudest item we've had."