

# Do or die for England

**PREVIEW**  
AFP, Port Elizabeth

England, with John Terry's mutiny quelled, take on Slovenia here Wednesday knowing they must raise their game considerably or face the ignominy of crashing out of the World Cup at the group stages for the first time since 1958.

The opening 1-1 draw with the United States and the uninspiring goalless stalemate with Algeria has left a team hyped up as one of the pre-tournament favourites with little room for manoeuvre.

Three points against Slovenia will ensure England progress to the last 16 and a possible date with Germany.

Defeat and they will be heading for the airport, while a draw will leave their fate hanging on the result of the United States v Algeria game being played simultaneously in Pretoria.

The build-up to this defining moment for England and Fabio Capello, who is widely expected to resign should they lose, has been overshadowed by Terry's abortive challenge to the Italian's iron-fist reign.

While the former skipper will start against Slovenia,

Capello has left no doubt that he was enraged by the Chelsea defender's public comments of discord in the England camp.

Capello responded by demanding a "big performance" from Terry to make up for the player's "big mistake".

Underperforming Wayne Rooney, Steven Gerrard and co. left the pitch in Cape Town on Friday night with boos from a section of their fans ringing in their ears -- a sound even less appealing than the drone of the vuvuzela.

Capello says he is "mystified" at the gulf between

England's polished displays in qualifying and training and their toothless performances in Group C.

Yet as they approach this defining moment England can take heart from history.

In 1990 the Three Lions found themselves in a similar predicament.

Under then manager Bobby Robson they had opened their Italia '90 campaign with two draws, against the Republic of Ireland and Holland, leaving them requiring a win against Egypt to qualify.

They made it, and went on to reach the semifinals.

Capello believes his England

can emulate the class of 1990 and Les Bleus four years ago.

"I hope that after playing a big performance the minds of the players will be free and we can play like the England that I know," the Italian said.

The England boss must decide whether to make significant changes to his line-up.

One of Terry's gripes for example was Capello's refusal to play Joe Cole -- arguably England's best player in Germany four years ago.

With Jamie Carragher suspended, Matthew Upson will start alongside Terry in central defence while striker Emile Heskey could be replaced.

Unlike England, table toppers Slovenia need only a draw to progress after a 1-0 defeat of Algeria and a 2-2 draw with the United States.

Slovenia captain Robert Koren scents an upset.

"They (England) didn't show the type of football we expect of them," he said. "It gives us some hope, but we will see."

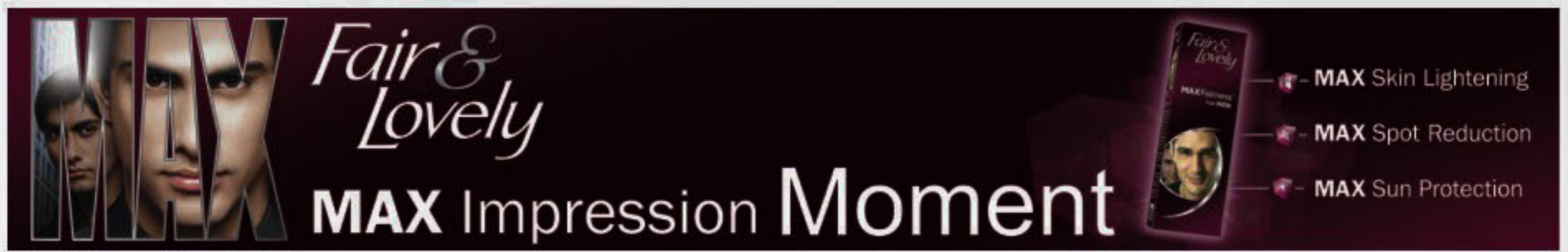
Whatever happens on the pitch an electric atmosphere is assured off it with England's sizeable travelling fan club set to wake up this sleepy Eastern Cape port.

Whether England wake up is another matter.



PHOTO: AFP

**WILL CAPELLO PICK COLE?** England midfielder Joe Cole (L) tries to dodge past goalkeeper David James (R) as they warm up ahead of a training session at the Royal Bafokeng Sports Campus near Rustenburg yesterday. Under-fire England take on Slovenia today in their third and final group match.



# Mountain to climb for Soccerroos

**PREVIEW**  
AFP, Nelspruit

Australia have the odds stacked against them as they bid to get past Serbia here Wednesday and hang on the Wednesday-Ghana result if they are to progress to the last 16 at the World Cup.

Australia, trailing in Group D with just one point, need to beat the Serbians and hope either group leaders Ghana win by any margin or Germany hammer the Ghanaians in the simultaneous match in Johannesburg.

It looks a tall order for the embattled Soccerroos, who have won only one of their overall nine World Cup games and find scoring goals difficult.

Australian bookmakers rate Serbia 5-6 odds-on

favourites with the Soccerroos at 3-1 to win Wednesday's match at the Mbombela Stadium with the Aussies listed at 10-1 to reach the last 16.

Apart from their fate being outside their control, the Aussies will also be without suspended senior players, Harry Kewell and Craig Moore, but on the plus side they will welcome back their talisman midfielder Tim Cahill from suspension.

It has been an ill-fated World Cup tournament for Australia, getting thumped 4-0 first-up by Germany, losing Cahill and Kewell to red cards in successive matches and defensive linchpin Moore banned after two yellow cards.

Coach Pim Verbeek, who brought just three recognised strikers to South Africa, has only Josh Kennedy and youngster Nikita Rukavitsya left

along with midfielders Cahill and Brett Holman to score the goals to get Australia through to the knockout phase.

Serbian coach Milovan Rajevac, whose Ghana team drew 1-1 with the 10-man Australians in Rustenburg last Saturday, believes Serbia will be too strong for the Soccerroos.

"I believe it's beyond them. Serbia have the quality and the players who are individually strong. That should be enough to see them through to the next round," Rajevac said.

While it's all or nothing for Australia, Serbia, on three points, could go through to the knockout phase with a draw.

Although they disappointed in their opening 1-0 loss to Ghana, Serbia bounced back to down Germany 1-0 and are poised to go through to the last 16.

Rajevac believes the imperative for Australia to score goals with open up their normally conservative game plan under Dutchman Verbeek.

"It's positive for Serbia that Australia have to open and attack," he said. "(Serbia coach) Radomir Antic knows Australia will have to attack Serbia and that will change the outlook of Australia's game totally."

Serbia will have plenty of attacking firepower with wingers Milos Krasic and Milan Jovanovic to supply giant striker Nikola Zigic.

Their defence is marshalled by Manchester United's Nemanja Vidic with Borussia Dortmund's Neven Subotic alongside him, Chelsea's Branislav Ivanovic at right back and Real Madrid-bound Aleksandar Kolarov on the left.

The Serbs will relish having under-manned Australia as their last hurdle to playing in the knockout round.

## Terry sorry

AFP, London

John Terry has apologised to Fabio Capello and his teammates after launching a failed coup against the Italian's leadership of England's faltering World Cup bid, in comments to a newspaper Tuesday.

The Chelsea defender admitted that he might have gone too far when he vowed Sunday to challenge Capello at a squad meeting, and stressed the manager had his "total support."

Versions of what went on in the meeting later that evening vary but leaks from inside the camp to the English media were unanimous in indicating that no other senior player had been prepared to back the Chelsea defender.

Apologising for his outburst, Terry told the Daily Mail paper Tuesday: "I went into yesterday's press conference with the intention of being honest."

"I was asked a question about Joe Cole and maybe I went too far. But it was never my intention to upset the manager or the players and if I did upset anyone, I apologise."

"I have told the manager he has my total support and I would like to stress that I don't believe I have been a disruptive influence in the camp."

"I would now like to put this episode behind me and concentrate on trying to win what is a massive game for England," he said, referring to the side's make-or-break match against Slovenia on Wednesday.

"All I was trying to do was to say how important it is to me to try to win the World Cup."

# Operation Desert Fox

**PREVIEW**  
AFP, Pretoria

United States will advance to the knockout rounds of the World Cup with a victory Wednesday over Algeria, but the Desert Foxes will try and sustain their own bid by ending American dreams.

Slovenia, the Group C leader on four points, face England, on two points after a pair of draws, while the US team, also on two points but with more goals than England, meet the Algerians, who drew England for their lone point.

"This group has proved there isn't an easy game," US defender Jay DeMerit said. "It's going to be an interesting last day."

Bottom line for the Americans -- win and they are in, lose and they are out.

"We need to keep them from scoring and keep scoring

ourselves," US veteran Clint Dempsey said. "Our game is good enough to win if we play our best."

The Americans have never won a World Cup game in which they fell behind, but they have battled back in 2010 for a 2-2 draw with Slovenia -- having a winning goal wiped out by a referee at the death -- and a 1-1 draw with England.

"My guess is there aren't many teams in this tournament that could have done what we did," US star midfielder Landon Donovan said. "That's what the American spirit is about."

US teams are only 2-10 with five drawn in World Cup group play since ending a 40-year Cup finals absence in 1990, but the latest edition is not one to ignore before the final whistle.

"This team keeps fighting until the end," US coach Bob Bradley said. "We have the experience of pushing games when we're behind. It's some-

thing we feel good about. It's a credit to the mentality of the players."

But there is some US concern about playing well before their rivals score.

"We seem to play better when we're behind and that's all got to change," US goalkeeper Tim Howard said.

"For whatever reason we seem to be very resilient. With a little more luck and concentration we can get on the right side of the scoresheet early on."

Scoring first will be especially important against an Algerian squad that has not scored at all.

"We're frustrated now that we've fallen behind too often," DeMerit said. "It's not always easy to put together that type of comeback."

"I wouldn't call it a 'Cry Wolf' situation. It would be a situation you hope you wouldn't get into in the first place. One thing about not starting as well as we like, when we do start well, we're going to be in good shape."

Algeria must win to have any chance at extending their first World Cup appearance in 24 years.

"Initially it will be a game that's going to be tight, seeing how things go," Dempsey said. "Algeria is a good team. They are athletic. We have to keep playing our game, try different things, mix up our passes."

The North Africans carry plenty of confidence into the match.

"If Algeria plays to its potential, we do not need to worry about our opponents," Foxes midfielder Karim Matmour said. "If we play our style, we can beat anyone."


Midfielders Karim Ziani and Yazid Mansouri set the tempo for Algeria, which was undone in a loss to Slovenia only after a red card dipped them to 10 men and made England pay for saying they barely knew any Foxes player.

"We showed that we were worthy of at least a minimum of respect," Rangers defender Madjid Bougherra said.


STANDINGS							
Teams	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Ghana	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Germany	2	1	0	1	4	1	3
Serbia	2	1	0	1	1	1	3
Australia	2	0	1	1	1	5	1



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Teams	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Slovenia	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
USA	2	0	2	0	3	3	2
England	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Algeria	2	0	1	1	0	1	1



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# Torres raps Jabulani

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Fernando Torres became the latest player to complain about the Jabulani World Cup ball after the Spain striker fluffed several scoring opportunities in Monday's 2-0 win over Honduras.

Coach Vicente del Bosque included Torres, who recently completed recovery from knee surgery, in his starting lineup for the Group H clash at Ellis Park and if he had shown his usual lethal touch the domi-

nant European champions could easily have matched Portugal's earlier 7-0 thrashing of North Korea.

"Personally speaking, I am very happy to have played but we need to practice a bit more with this Jabulani because we are having a bit of bother with it," Torres told reporters.

"But whereas the other day we couldn't score today we got two and we have to be happy that we managed to turn things around," he added, in reference to Spain's shock 1-0

defeat to Switzerland in last week's group opener.

The victory over Honduras put the Spanish bid for a first World Cup back on track and a win against Chile on Friday in their third and final group game would put them in the next round and set up a probable meeting with Brazil or Portugal.

Del Bosque and his players were disappointed not to have netted more goals on Monday, but said getting back to winning ways had lifted the group's spirits and removed some of the anxiety that crept into the squad after the Swiss game.

"We would have liked a bigger margin of victory but the win is positive for our mood and that's the route we have to follow," defender Sergio Ramos told reporters.

"We played a great match against a team that was always going to sit back from the start," he added.

"Fortunately, we now have our fate in our own hands against Chile and we'll be going for victory."

## FLIP SIDE OF THE FLAG

Ireland aren't at the World Cup, France beat them to the finals with an infamous handball from Thierry Henry. But the Irish flag was still being flown at the Brazil-Ivory Coast game. Curious about the Celtic connection the German Press Agency interrogated the flag bearer. Turns out he was South African and got his flags back to front. Ivory Coast's is striped orange, white and green; Ireland's has the same colours in reverse.

## MONKEY BUSINESS

According to the monkey at Chemnitz zoo, Germany are going out of the World Cup. Anton, the resident marmoset at the zoo in Eastern Germany went for the raisins from the "Ghana hand" of his zoo keeper and not the ones in the left hand representing Germany. German fans should not be too concerned by this particular animal oracle; previous zoo pundits have got their predictions completely wrong. Porcupine Leon predicted an Australian victory over Germany and hippo Petty a German win over Serbia.

## ADS STILL FLOWING FOR BALLACK

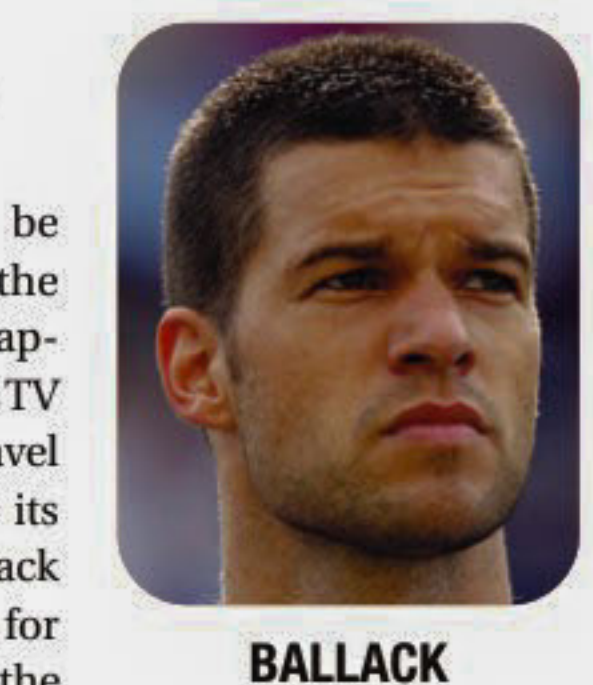
Michael Ballack may not be playing for Germany at the World Cup but the injured captain is present on the nation's TV in various ads. An online travel agent has swiftly adjusted its campaign and shows Ballack with a cast on his leg looking for a holiday destination. But the 33-year-old can also be seen in another ad running through an airport terminal, clearly made before he was injured on May 16 in the FA Cup final.

## ALL-RED FOR ENGLAND

England will take the unusual step of wearing an all-red strip for the crunch match with Slovenia.

And here's the good news; they have never lost in the outfit. England have historically worn red shirts with white shorts and red socks as an away strip option, occasionally going for navy blue shorts when white ones have clashed.

But they will go for the all-red option at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth on Wednesday for what is thought to be just the fifth time in Three Lions history.



BALLACK



BENAGLIO

## WRONG GAME TO BROADCAST

North Korea made good on its promise to carry the World Cup clash with Portugal live but a hail of goals from the European side left the commentator speechless, South Korean media reported Tuesday.

The communist state's Korean Central TV Broadcasting Station had aired recorded footage of the team's first group match against Brazil.

The North, making their first World Cup appearance for 44 years and ranked lowest among the finalists, put up a dogged defence against the five-time champions from South America before going down 1-2.

Apparently encouraged, the station aired Monday evening's game in real time -- reportedly the first-ever live World Cup broadcast in the soccer-mad nation.

