

Donovan at the death

SOCCERNET

USA have topped Group C as Landon Donovan hit a late winner against Algeria to give them a 1-0 win. Clint Dempsey's first-half goal was wrongly ruled out for offside but Donovan struck with seconds left to leapfrog England.

The United States, watched on by former President Bill Clinton, dominated for large periods and created a host of chances but looked set to be denied by a mixture of the woodwork, good goalkeeping and poor finishing.

However, Donovan popped up right at the end to slot into the net and send the Americans through as Group C winners ahead of England, who beat Slovenia in the other game. USA will now play the second-placed team from Group D, which includes Ghana, Germany, Serbia and Australia.

Algeria, who have never progressed to the second round of the World Cup, hit the woodwork early on and created a couple of other chances but were unable to net their first goal of the finals as they tumbled out.

They also finished with 10 men after captain Anther Yahia was sent off for a second booking late on in Pretoria.

Algeria coach Rabah Saadane, knowing his side could not afford a third successive match without a goal, made one change to the team that held England 0-0, bringing in AEK Athens striker Rafik Djebbour for Ryad Boudebouz.

USA boss Bob Bradley, meanwhile, made three changes. Algeria started brightly and almost took the lead in the sixth minute when Djebbour rattled the crossbar.

US defender Jay DeMerit failed to cut out a long punt forward and Djebbour stole in behind him, controlled the ball on his chest before smashing a volley against the crossbar from 12 yards out.

It was also a big let-off for the Americans, but Bradley's side would return the favour with interest during the



LANDING THE KILLER GOAL: United States midfielder Landon Donovan (C) is ecstatic after scoring a dramatic last-gasp winner against Algeria during their Group C first round match at the Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

USA	Algeria	
Shots (on target)	20(8)	19(3)
Corners	4	6
Possession	54%	46%
Yellow Cards	2	2

USA 1 - 0 ALGERIA
DONOVAN 90

USA (4-4-2): Tim Howard, Jonathan Bornstein (DaMarcus Beasley 80), Jay Demerit, Carlos Bocanegra (cap), Steve Cherundolo, Clint Dempsey, Michael Bradley, Maurice Edu (Edson Buddle 64), Landon Donovan, Herculez Gomez (Benny Feilhaber 46), Jozy Altidore

Algeria (3-4-2-1): Rais M'Bohli, Madjid Bougherra, Rafik Halliche, Anther Yahia (cap), Foued Kadir, Hassan Yebda, Medhi Lacen, Nadir Belhadj, Karim Matmour (Rafik Saifi 85), Karim Ziani (Adlène Guédioura 69), Rafik Djebbour (Abdelkader Ghezzal 65)

Red Card: Anther Yahia 93'

Venue: Loftus Versfeld Stadium

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remainder of the period as they spurned a number of good chances themselves.

Herculez Gomez brought a save out of Rais M'Bohli, before the US thought they had taken the lead in the 20th minute when Gomez, having seen his first effort saved, saw his cross-shot turned in at the far post by Clint Dempsey. However, the effort was chalked off for a marginal offside that seemed questionable.

The Americans were denied a winning goal in their last match against Slovenia when Maurice Edu's late strike was controversially disallowed, but it was not to prove as decisive a decision this time round.

After a slow start USA were starting to look increasingly dangerous and they created two great chances around the 35th minute.

Dempsey saw the first saved by M'Bohli after being put through by a great pass by Donovan, and then Jozy Altidore blazed horribly over after the influential Donovan had dinked the ball past M'Bohli to set up a magnificent opening.

The Desert Foxes were still posing problems of their own though, and Karim Matmour earned a corner after testing Tim Howard with a long-range thunderbolt as the half ended in stalemate.

Poetic justice

AFP, Dublin

Irish newspapers revelled on Wednesday in France's humiliating exit from the World Cup describing it as poetic justice for Thierry Henry's handball which kept Ireland from going to South Africa.

"Justice Poétique", commented the Irish Examiner, adding that South Africa's 2-1 victory over France on Tuesday to put them out of the tournament as a "just end to France's tour de farce".

It said Thierry "Le Hand of Dieu" Henry's handball seven months ago, which helped France qualify at Ireland's expense, was never far from the minds of those watching the match in Ireland.

The defeat was a "Final act for Les Miserables" and the "disgraced French squad" ended up last in Group A "with performances on and off the field of play which were more 'les boules' than world-class soccer."

Ireland was furious last November after a clear handball by striker Henry, which set up what turned out to be the decisive goal in their play-off, went unpunished.

The Irish Times said: "France's nightmare World Cup finally ends with inglorious exit".

"It has been the Year of the French. For all the wrong reasons. Yesterday in Bloemfontein, the descent of the French team into disunion and outright anarchy was made complete by South Africa's glorious swan song."

And it added: "France came into South Africa as the popular villains of the cast and exit to gleeful farewells."

"Au revoir!" said the Irish Independent, "Forgive us for gloating but it's allez les bleus, all the way home."

"Perhaps it was la karma or whatever the French is for gypsy curse, but the team which cheated us out of making it to South Africa will return home today in almost complete humiliation."

Everything's right in Diego's camp

REUTERS, Polokwane

Argentina's defenders needed an infantile error to get noticed during the group phase of the World Cup where their attack has hogged the limelight.

The attack, with Lionel Messi, Gonzalo Higuain and Carlos Tevez, plus Diego Milito and Sergio Agüero among the reserves, makes defending easy, said captain Javier Mascherano.

"Many [people] think we remain unbalanced but that's also a benefit for us because if you put four or five players in the top half of the field your rivals have to defend with more men and will attack you less," Mascherano told reporters.

Martin Demichelis, who scored Argentina's first goal in Tuesday's 2-0 win over Greece, allowed a South Korean forward to rob him and pull a goal back during the 4-1 victory last week.

Coach Diego Maradona has in fact achieved a balance in his team that owes much to the defensive work the forwards are prepared to do.

"The team is very solid, it's in good shape," he said after his virtual reserve side's win against the Greeks sent Argentina into a second round meeting with Mexico.

"Maybe we have lapses like with [Giorgios] Samaras in the second half...it could have cost us a goal."

The Greece striker squeezed between centre backs Demichelis and Nicolas Burdisso but shot wide.

The linchpin is Mascherano, ably replaced by Mario Bolatti on Tuesday, whom Maradona described as doing the job of a wind-screen wiper across the middle of the field.

Maradona, looking ahead to the meeting with Javier Aguirre's Mexicans, said: "They all did the job I asked of them."

"I'm going to field the best I've got because now it's do or die. The class of the so-called big teams comes into the reckoning."

"We'll attack them looking for their weak points with our best prepared players, hoping...to get it right as we have done so far."

"That's why I rested 'Masche' [Mascherano] and the Gringo [Gabriel Heinze], and [Carlos] Tevez and [Gonzalo] Higuain."

Champions on sticky pitch

PREVIEW

REUTERS, Johannesburg

World champions Italy need a win against Slovakia on Thursday to ensure they stumble into the World Cup second round and all eyes will be on captain Fabio Cannavaro after mistakes in the first two matches led to goals.

The fall from grace of the 2006 world player-of-the-year, who inspired the Azzurri to glory four years ago with his superb defending, underlines how inferior Italy look at this World Cup.

A third error from the 36-year-old at Johannesburg's Ellis Park in their last Group F match on Thursday could let the Slovaks in and prompt a humiliating early exit for the holders.

Cannavaro failed to jump to stop Paraguay's goal in a 1-1 draw while he made a hash of dealing with a free kick when Shane Smeltz put New Zealand ahead in Sunday's shock 1-1 scoreline.

"We are a team, it's not right and we don't want to

look for who was at fault," Cannavaro bluntly told reporters.

A lack of height, pace and confidence is hampering Cannavaro, who looks a completely different player to four years ago when almost nothing got past his own personal brick wall.

The wisdom of coach Marcello Lippi taking a man at the very back end of his career to South Africa was tacitly questioned in Italy but his hero status meant open criticism was rare.

Now Gazzetta dello Sport has run a poll asking if Cannavaro should be dropped and 69.2 per cent of 23,000 voters said yes.

The Juventus defender, who will quit international soccer and enjoy a semi-retirement at Dubai's Al Ahli from July, will, though, stay in the team because reserve centre backs Leonardo Bonucci and Salvatore Bocchetti are very inexperienced.

It is not just Italy's defence that has laboured with the midfield failing to show any invention and the attack



PHOTO: AFP

CAN HE BE THE DIFFERENCE? Italy's star playmaker Andrea Pirlo runs with the ball at Irene's Southdown College on Monday ahead of their crucial encounter against Slovakia. Pirlo returns from injury and is set to play some part during the match.

blunted.

Lippi hopes top creative midfielder Andrea Pirlo can return to the starting lineup after missing the first two games with a calf injury but his participation is not certain.

Goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon is poised to miss out again with a back problem while Lippi could bring in Antonio Di Natale or Giampaolo Pazzini up front with Alberto Gilardino out of form.

"Not everything has gone well but we don't need to see the glass half empty," Lippi said. "Our World Cup could start here."

A draw is enough for sheepish Italy to sneak through with three points if



group leaders Paraguay beat New Zealand.

Famous slow starters Italy went through with three draws at the group stage in 1982 before they picked up the pace and went on to claim the trophy by beating Germany in the final.

Slovakia have a point and can only progress if they win, although that might not suffice if New Zealand defeat Paraguay but the South Americans keep a better goal difference.

Coach Vladimir Weiss has been uncomfortable with the media recently, with his playing son saying the team are fed up with unrealistic expectations from fans in their first World Cup.

"There is a lot of criticism from back home, we're doing everything we can. We've not won a game yet but we've still got a chance so we're positive," Vladimir Weiss Jr told reporters.

They only had one shot on target in Sunday's 2-0 defeat by Paraguay so the nippy Miroslav Stoch could come in after injury.

THE KNOWLEDGE

Andrea Pirlo is one of few European footballers with Roman ancestry.

Standings	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Paraguay	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Italy	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
New Zealand	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Slovakia	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

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ROUND 5, DRAW IN SYLHET ON JULY 06

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

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

Prizes for the audience (For First Five Rounds)		Prizes for the audience (For Bumper Round)	
1st	20L TOSHIBA Microwave Oven	1st	TOSHIBA Washing Machine
2nd	14" TOSHIBA Colour TV	2nd	21" TOSHIBA Colour TV
3rd	20L TOSHIBA Microwave Oven	3rd	20L TOSHIBA Microwave Oven
4th	3 TOSHIBA DVD Players	4th	Two TOSHIBA DVD Players

QUIZ SCHEDULE

Round & Draw	Starts	Ends	Answers must reach by 12pm	Lucky Draw for prizes
4. Khulna	June 15	June 23	June 25	June 29
5. Sylhet	June 24	July 02	July 04	July 06
Bumper Round, Dhaka	July 03	July 11	July 13	July 16

The Daily Star - RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 5 Ends July 02, 2010

Tick (✓) the correct answers

- How many goals did Fernando Torres score in WC qualifying? 0 1 5
- How many teams participated in the first World Cup in 1930? 12 16 13
- Which was the first team to not score in the World Cup final? Germany Netherlands Argentina
- Who is the only player to have scored goals for two different teams in the World Cup finals? Suker Prosinecki Stankovic
- Who is this player? Bolatti De Rossi Podolski

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.
 Sylhet readers can also drop entries at Rangs Toshiba Showroom, Dorga Gate, Sylhet.
 You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 5".

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