



MEETING THE LION: Germany captain Philipp Lahm pets a young lion at a Lanseria reserve yesterday, as the three-time champions appeared relaxed ahead of their second round against England on June 27.

Dunga displeased

AFP, Durban

Brazil coach Dunga spent much of the time during his team's goalless draw in their final Group G match with Portugal gesticulating wildly and berating his players.

"I'm not happy," he said. "We always play to win. We even tried to attack in the last five minutes. Portugal didn't attack. They just wanted to defend."

"It was a difficult game. The Portugal team defended from midfield back and made it tough for us to penetrate their defence, which we continued to try to do right until the end."

"We had a quite a few fouls. Nevertheless, we had three or four opportunities on goal."

Brazil had already qualified for the round of 16 after wins over North Korea and Ivory Coast, but Portugal needed at least a draw to advance.

"Portugal adopted a very normal tactical approach. They wanted a draw," said Dunga, who skipped Brazil to glory in the 1994 World Cup.

"Whenever the opposition is defending at its utmost and all the players are in midfield, with very little space, the quality of passing suffers."

"We tried to play down the flanks, but our insistence on winning perhaps affected our passing game."

"Saying that, it was a good collective performance from us."

Brazil dominated possession (61 percent), Dunga saying it had been a tactic to try to break down the European team.

"Ball possession is always one characteristic of our play," he said. "Technique is important but we didn't have a chance to show that today. We tried hard to keep the ball and tire Portugal out."

Dunga also played down any possible effect that suspended playmaker Kaka or injured Elano would have had on the outcome of the game.

"They're obviously both exceptional players. But the way Portugal played would have made it difficult for either of them to help us play in a different way."

Henry felt 'sidelined'

AFP, Paris

Former France captain Thierry Henry said on Friday he felt sidelined after playing only a cameo role in his country's disastrous World Cup campaign, but insisted the squad were still to show support for Nicolas Anelka.

"I felt sidelined. People didn't speak to me as they used to," Henry told Canal Plus television in his first interview since France crashed out following a miserable tournament, which ended with a humiliating defeat to hosts South Africa that left them bottom of their group.

Henry, the only survivor of France's 1998 World Cup triumph, said he was "no longer" the big brother figure that the squad's younger members looked up to.

"Previously, people talked to me more, I was at the forefront," said the 32-year-old.

But that changed when coach Raymond Domenech indicated before the tournament that Henry would be relegated to the substitutes' bench.

"When you no longer have credibility in a group it becomes difficult," admitted the former Arsenal and Barcelona star, who appears set to wind down his career in Major League Soccer in the United States.

"I felt snubbed and after a bit your pride takes a knock."

France, finalists in 2006, limped out of the World Cup early after a 0-0 draw with Uruguay and defeats by Mexico and South Africa.

Their campaign exploded in controversy on Saturday when Chelsea striker Anelka was sent home for a foul-mouthed rant at Domenech,

with the players boycotting the following day's training session in protest.

"My first explanation for the fiasco is that we did not play well. We weren't up to it," said Henry.

Asked to comment more specifically on the Anelka episode, which made international headline news after L'Equipe sports daily quoted the striker's outburst on its front page, Henry said: "Perhaps there was something beforehand (between Anelka and Domenech) - maybe a malaise."

He added: "What struck me above all was how it got plastered on page one. What I do know is that those were not Nico's words. I know what he said but I'm not Nicolas Anelka. I shall let Nico say what he has to say."

"I think we had to show our support for Nicolas. Those weren't his words."

But in retrospect, Henry, who said his meeting with French president Nicolas Sarkozy on Thursday "went well", conceded that the decision to refuse to train was unwise.

"With hindsight, you can say it was a mistake," he said.

Henry also hinted that there is no longer the same respect for veterans as there was when he first broke into the France team 13 years ago.

"When I first got capped you waited to see where the veterans were going to sit on the coach. At Monaco (as a teenager), I got sent to clean the balls even after I had won the World Cup."

"Maybe there is no longer that respect. But it's a problem in society generally, isn't it?"

Spain, Chile make Round 2

FROM PAGE 17

Spain and Chile - who next must go up against five-time champions Brazil - finished with six points while the Swiss ended up on four.

The Swiss gamble of dropping record goalscorer Alexander Frei and pairing Blaise Nkufo with Eren Derdiyok up front backfired as Ottmar Hitzfeld's side missed a host of chances, as befitted a side with only three goals in their past seven internationals.

The Swiss started the match knowing they needed to score twice to guarantee a berth in the knockout phase but they squandered chance after chance in chilly Bloemfontein.

Gokhan Inler dragged a left-footed strike wide from the edge of the penalty box after 10 minutes in a half-full Free State Stadium.

And minutes later Derdiyok was presented with a clear scoring chance following a pin-

point cross from the right by Tranquillo Barnetta, but headed wide.

Midway through the second period, Hitzfeld sent Frei on for Nkufo in a bid to find a way past their opponents, who came into the match rooted at the bottom of Group H after two defeats.

But Honduras continued to threaten as the game became stretched with Alvarez forcing Swiss goalkeeper Diego Benaglio to tip over.

But with time ebbing away Frei had a couple of half chances and Stephan Lichtsteiner drove over from the edge of the penalty box as Swiss frustration began to show.

The Swiss created a sensation by beating Spain in their opening Group game but then lost to the Chileans by the only goal to leave the outcome of the whole group riding on the last game.

Abahani rope in five Pakistanis

SPORTS REPORTER

Title contenders Abahani drafted in five hockey players from Pakistan including penalty corner specialist Sohail Abbas, for the ongoing Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League.

All five of them trained yesterday afternoon at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium and four of them are expected to play their first match against Dhaka Mariner Youngs on June 28.

Joint secretary of Abahani hockey committee Shahidullah Dolon informed that they would register four players today and sign one before the match against rivals Mohammedan next month.

Abahani jointly lead the points table along with Mohammedan with full 12 points from four matches.

Premier Div hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Mariner Youngs recorded a 3-2 win over Shadharan Bima KS in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Taher Ali, Abdus Sabur and Ripon Kumar Mohanta scored one goal each for Mariner while Ashraf Islam Shishu and Prashanta Dey netted one apiece for the losing side.

In the day's other match, Bangladesh SC and Police AC played out a 1-1 draw. Sumon gave Bangladesh SC the lead in the 23rd minute while Rana Das levelled the in the 60th minute.

Sr. Div football

SPORTS REPORTER

Jatrabari KC brought high-flying Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club down handling the defending champions a lone-goal defeat in the Bashundhara Senior Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Moeen separated both sides in the 30th minute to award Jatrabari third win in eight matches while inflicting first defeat in eight matches to Fakirerpool.

Mobility, accuracy required: Martino

REUTERS, Polokwane

Paraguay will have to improve their passing and start to convert chances if they want to make it through to the World Cup quarterfinals, coach Gerardo Martino says.

The Argentine-born coach was not pleased with Paraguay's performance in a disappointing 0-0 draw against New Zealand that was enough to take them into the last 16.

They now face Japan in the second round on Tuesday.

"We were not very mobile and we were quite inaccurate," he told reporters after the match. "We had a lot of problems in an area where we didn't expect, and that was in attack."



ESPN

2010 FIFA World Cup
ROUND OF 16
Uruguay v South Korea
Live from 8:00pm
USA v Ghana
Live from 12:30am (Sunday)

STAR Sports & SuperSport5

Wimbledon Championships
Third Round
Live from 5:00pm

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Div Hockey League

Abahani v Ajax
Time: 4:30pm
Venue: Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium

The fall and fall of Marcello Lippi

ATTIQUE ANAM

South Africa 2010 is unfolding itself as one of the most unpredictable World Cup in recent times. Just two days after current runners up France's humiliating exit from the World Cup, reigning world champions Italy found the same route with a 2-3 defeat against Slovakia.

The Slovaks deservedly moved to the round of sixteen behind Paraguay who topped the group with a 0-0 draw against New Zealand. The Kiwis too head home but with heads held high.

From group E, Japan qualified with an superlative 3-1 win over Denmark while already qualified Netherlands made sure they kept their hundred percent record with a comfortable 2-1 win over Cameroon.

It was the first time since 1974 that the Azzurri have been knocked out from the group stages and their first ever campaign where they failed to get a single victory. The loss also marked the end of the Lippi era in Italian football.

After the humiliation, Italy coach Marcello Lippi took all the blame. In his own admission, he had failed to motivate his side having done so successfully four years ago.

After lifting the trophy four

years ago, Lippi had become a recluse for two years before returning after he was handed the job back following the disappointment of Euro 2008. But this was not the Lippi of the old; complacency had evidently set in. Known for his cool and calm personality throughout his career, he became increasingly arrogant in his style of dictating things and fell out with the media right through his second term.

Italy's recent performances had been very dismal to say



the least. The signs of a falling giant were very much reflected in the performance of the Confederations Cup last year, where Italy were embarrassed by bitter rivals Brazil 3-0 and then lost to Egypt to bow out in the group stage. They also lost to Brazil 2-0 in another friendly last year. It went from bad to worse in 2010, as they had not managed a win in their three matches they played prior to the World Cup. But the former Juventus tactician was unable to read

the writing on the wall. Lippi kept faith with his squad, which is a blend of his old guard with a few young and inexperienced players. He forgot that the likes of Cannavaro, Gattuso, Zambrotta, and laquinta are not only four years older, they are way past their prime. He also excluded some of the more creative players in Serie A, notably Antonio Cassano, Mario Ballotelli, and Fabrizio Miccoli in the name of team spirit which meant that the finished product was a very ordinary side, feeble in defending and short of imagination while attacking.

To make matters worse for the side, Lippi continued to change his formation fielding three different starting systems in as many games, and also tinkered with position of the players which created confusion and some resentment among the players at not being able to deliver.

The result was evident, the much-venerated Italian defence was shambolic

Football topples cricket

AFP, Cardiff

England cricket captain Andrew Strauss admits the eyes of the nation may be turned to the football World Cup in South Africa when his side play Australia in the third one-day international in Manchester on Sunday.

Victory at Lancashire's Old Trafford ground -- which shares its name with the nearby home of football giants Manchester United -- will give England an unbeatable 3-0 lead over the world champions in the five-match series.

But with the England football team playing Germany, their arch-rivals, in the last 16 of the World Cup in Bloemfontein in a match that kicks-off at 3pm local time (1400GMT) on Sunday -- midway through the cricket clash -- Strauss conceded a majority of English sports fans would be turning their attention to events in South Africa.

"Most people in the country will probably say the football is more important," Strauss told reporters after England's four-wicket win over oldest rivals Australia in the second one-day international in Cardiff here on Thursday. "We will see things differently."

Lancashire chiefs have decided against screening the football match on a giant screen at their Old Trafford because, with a capacity crowd of 22,500 expected, they have safety concerns.

However, fans will be able to go in and out of the ground to watch the football in nearby pubs.

Paul Burnham, co founder of the Barmy Army, an England cricket supporters' group, said Friday: "It's just nice that we are in the next round (of the football World Cup) to be honest, and I'm not that upset -- it's much better than not being in it."

"Your best way around it is to listen to the football and watch the cricket."

"It's not as if you are not going to know if a goal has been scored, that is for sure!"

"It could be a brilliant day if we beat the Germans and then beat the Australians as well, that would be wonderful."

Lancashire chief executive Jim Cumbes said while there were worries about the cost of obtaining a licence from world football governing body FIFA to screen the match, safety was the club's primary concern.

"We did do it once before in 2002 (when England played Denmark at the World Cup), but it was the third day of a

Test match with about 14,000 people in the ground, and around eight or nine thousand went to watch on a big screen in the back car park," Cumbes said.

"We were worried with this one that if we did the same, we might have 22,000 trying to get into the car park, and we just can't accommodate that."

"This is nothing to do with 'this is a cricket match so we are not showing the football' because I will be the first to want to know what the score is," added Cumbes, himself a former professional footballer as well as cricketer.

"We have televisions at bars around the perimeter of the ground, but we thought if we left those on, there could be crushing problems there as well. It is a safety issue, that is purely the consideration."

Meanwhile leading British bookmaker William Hill are offering odds of 10/1 on a combined 'treble' bet that England win their football and cricket matches, and that an English driver takes the chequered flag in the European Grand Prix in Valencia on Sunday.

"It is a massive weekend for English sport and if all three win this is going to be one of the worst weekends in bookmaking history," said Hill's spokesman Rupert Adams, never one to understate a case.

Federer, Williams thru'

AFP, London



Exhausted record-breaker John Isner tumbled out of Wimbledon straight sets Friday as Roger Federer and Venus Williams booked their places in the second week.

Meanwhile Kim Clijsters and Justine Henin set up a fourth-round clash of the Belgian comeback queens, and third seed Novak Djokovic set up a tie with the in-form Lleyton Hewitt.

Isner dragged his battered body back to the All England Club after his epic, record-shattering encounter with

French qualifier Nicolas Mahut.

The American 23rd seed was clearly feeling the strain, losing his second round match 6-0, 6-3, 6-2 to Thiemo de Bakker of the Netherlands.

Less than 20 hours earlier, Isner eventually defeated Mahut 6-4, 3-6, 6-7 (7/9), 7-6 (7/3), 70-68 after 11 hours and five minutes and an incredible 183 games.

"I was just low on fuel out there. I didn't really have a chance," Isner said.

"I have never been this exhausted before."

Men's defending champion Roger Federer finally got through a match without dropping a set when he saw off Frenchman Arnaud Clement.

Federer had dropped three

sets during unusually sloppy displays against unheralded pair Alejandro Falla and Ilija Bozoljac in the previous two rounds.

But the Swiss top seed gave a sublime display to set up a clash with Austrian 16th seed Jurgen Melzer.

In the women's draw, five-times Wimbledon champion Venus Williams saw off Russian seed Alisa Kleybanova, 6-4, 6-2.

"These players I'm playing against, I definitely feel I'm holding them at bay," the world number two said.

She faces Australia's in-form Jarmila Groth in round four.

Meanwhile Belgian duo Clijsters and Henin set up a fourth-round encounter after

they both saw off Russian seeds in straight sets.

The former world number ones are both seeking to add the Wimbledon crown to their already impressive list of titles after coming out of retirement.

On Clijsters' last appearance at Wimbledon in 2006, she was beaten by Henin in the semi-finals.

"Against someone like Justine... you have to bring your best if you want to have a chance to win," Clijsters said.

Eighth seed Clijsters brushed aside 27th seed Maria Kirilenko 6-3, 6-3 on Court Two.

Henin, the 17th seed, made her first appearance back on Centre Court since coming out of retirement. She last contested Wimbledon in 2007.

She defeated 12th seed Nadia Petrova 6-1, 6-4.

Serbian men's third seed Djokovic saw off Spain's Albert Montanes, the 28th seed, in straight sets.

He next faces Australia's 2002 Wimbledon winner Hewitt, who beat Gael Monfils, also in straight sets.

Lu Yen-Hsun became the first man from Taiwan to make it through to a Grand Slam fourth round when his German opponent Florian Mayer pulled out at 6-4, 6-4, 2-1 down.

Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic also made it through.

Russian 13th seed Mikhail Youzhny was beaten in five sets by Frenchman Paul-Henri Mathieu in a delayed second round match.

In the women's draw, Serbian fourth seed Jelena Jankovic beat Ukraine's 28th-seeded Alona Bondarenko 6-0, 6-3.



Belgium's Kim Clijsters stretches to make a forehand return against Russia's Maria Kirilenko in the Wimbledon third round match at the All England Tennis Club in London yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP