

Juan Veron blasted English football claiming his time in the Premier League nearly made him quit football. Veron moved to Manchester United from Lazio in 2001 before swapping Old Trafford for Chelsea two years later. "England has a spectacular Premier League but that's it. They don't train very much and there were no proper warm-ups at Manchester United," said Veron. "I was never happy and my time there made me question the desire to

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CLASSY KLOSE: Striker Miroslav Klose sidefoots the ball past England goalkeeper David James (unseen) to make it 1-0 for Germany during their Round of 16 game at the Free State stadium in Bloemfontein yesterday. Germany won 4-1.

Germany bury England

AFP, Bloemfontein
Germany inflicted England's record World Cup finals defeat on Sunday after a 4-1 victory in their Last 16 match that was overshadowed by one of the worst refereeing mistakes in the tournament's history. Germany's superior movement and ruthless finishing made them worthy winners on an afternoon when England's defending was shockingly substandard and their talisman, Wayne Rooney, once again failed to deliver on the game's biggest stage. But there is no saying what would have happened if England had not been

denied a goal that would have levelled the match at 2-2 just before half-time, when a Frank Lampard shot

bounced off the underside of the bar and landed a yard over the goal-line. Matthew Upson had just

headed England back into the match after Miroslav Klose and Lukas Podolski had given Germany a two-

goal advantage. Two second-half goals for Thomas Mueller enabled the Germans to run up their most convincing win against their biggest rivals, but they were both scored on the counter-attack as England sought an equaliser they should not have been obliged to chase. Referee Jorge Larrionda's misjudgement was all the more inexplicable because he was well-placed to see the incident. Yet, after looking across at his linesman, he waved play on. England coach Fabio Capello said that the Lampard moment was the turning point. "The Lampard incident

was one of the most important in the match," said Capello. "The referee made one of the biggest mistakes, but Germany are a great team, we were caught out on the counter-attack. "This is football. Little things make all the difference."

The controversy over the incident will rumble on but England will also have to ask themselves some hard questions after what was, at times, a shambolic display. Klose was delighted with his team's efforts. "We were aggressive from the first minute, unlike in the Ghana game [which Germany

SCORE BOARD

GERMANY 4 - 1 ENGLAND
KLOSE 20, PODOLSKI 32, UPSON 37
MUELLER 67, 70

Germany (4-2-3-1): Manuel Neuer - Philipp Lahm, Per Mertesacker, Arne Friedrich, Jerome Boateng - Sami Khedira, Bastian Schweinsteiger - Thomas Müller (Piotr Trochowski 72), Mesut Ozil (Stefan Kiessling 83), Lukas Podolski - Miroslav Klose (Mario Gomez 72)

England (4-4-2): David James - Glen Johnson (Shaun Wright-Phillips 87), John Terry, Matthew Upson, Ashley Cole - James Milner (Joe Cole 64), Frank Lampard, Gareth Barry, Steven Gerrard (cap) - Wayne Rooney, Jermain Defoe (Emile Heskey 71)

KEY STATS

Germany	England
Shots (on target)	17(6) 18(7)
Corners	4 6
Possession	45% 55%
Yellow Cards	1 1

ROUND OF 16
Netherlands v Slovakia Time: 8.00pm Durban
Brazil v Chile Time: 12.30am(Tuesday) Johannesburg

TODAY'S MATCHES

TODAY'S POLL
Do you think Chile can pose a threat against Brazil?
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast your vote

WORLD CUP POLL
Will the England-Germany match go to penalties?
No 52.4%
Yes 33.3%
Unsure 14.3%
TOTAL VOTES: 84

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England's defender Glen Johnson (R) tries to jump over Germany striker Lukas Podolski during their World Cup round of 16 match in Bloemfontein yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

A "fairy tale" called Slovakia
Teams like Poland and Czechoslovakia have bore the brunt of their passion in the qualifiers. They got their first point against Kiwis. Against Paraguay they lost their way. But they turned around in the last match against the 2006 champions, Italy and send them out of the World Cup 2010 with a fast paced thriller and announced their arrival in the big league.
One of the youngest coach in Vladimir Weiss, star striker Robert Vittek scoring goals and wonder boy Marek Hamsik doing magic in the midfield, five million people of Slovakia are getting ready to ignite winning celebrations in Bratislava. But they have to cross a big hurdle called Netherlands. The Dutch has already sounded a warning to the predictors not to write them off, by topping their group with full points. Dirk Kyut, Sneijder, Arren Robben, Van Persie and Van Bommel are getting ready to the tear apart the Slovakian defense tonight to tatters. And believe it, they can.
The samba beats are also going to be heard in Ellis Park tonight. Eternal top favorites, Brazil are going to take on their South American counterparts Chile. Though it seems that the quality of Kaka, Fabiano, Maicon and Elano may be too hot to handle for Chile, but remember it is the knock out round. And if it wins, wine celebrations may be rampant, as Chile is the world's fifth largest wine exporter in the world or there maybe Macarena celebrations in Rio.

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