



A mouth-watering battle

AFP, Paris

They have seen of old adversaries England without even needing penalties, but Germany can now look forward to an equally intense showdown with another old foe in the shape of Argentina.

Both nations have a rivalry going back decades with the English, and the Argentinians, of course, will later hope to duel with giant neighbours Brazil in the final.

Yet Saturday's showdown, which will have millions glued to television screens from Buenos Aires to Berlin, comes wrapped in tournament history.

The Germans saw off the Albiceleste 3-1 in their first meeting at the 1958 event, ahead of a goalless draw in 1966 on their way to a final loss to England.

Franz Beckenbauer played in that match and had graduated to the dugout when the Argentinians beat his German team 20 years later in a Mexico final that saw Diego Maradona inspire his side to a thrilling 3-2 win.

Four years later and the boot was on the other foot as a tough-tackling Argentina lost in the decider of the 1990 tournament to an Andreas Brehme penalty, leaving Maradona fuming after a bad-tempered showdown.

In 2006, Juergen Klinsmann's new-look

German side slipped through a quarterfinal meeting on penalties after over-cautious counterpart Jose Pekerman elected to leave Lionel Messi on the bench.

With Messi now the fulcrum of a side that looks unbeatable for pure fire-power, Maradona stands three games away from emulating Beckenbauer as the only man to have skipped and then coached a country to World Cup glory.

And el pibe de oro (the golden kid) is now bristling with confidence as he looks to show the world that he is more than just a dugout side-show.

"I feel like pulling on the jersey and playing myself," Maradona admitted after his charges beat Mexico 3-1 in the round of 16.

"They said I had no idea about how to coach, but suddenly I am winning matches and I am still the same guy."

Amid media speculation that he still does not know his best line-up, Maradona says confidently: "We will send out the best team to showcase our talents against Germany. We know Germany are a different team to Mexico. They are stronger, but we will field the right players to beat them."

Argentine daily Clarin says Argentina must now face German "tanks", but in-form striker Carlos Tevez says the South Americans do not fear Germany despite their three titles and the fact they've not

failed to reach the last eight since 1938.

"I was more afraid of Mexico -- they play better football," he said.

"(Germany) won their game and so reached the quarters, but they are not better than Argentina."

German striker Miroslav Klose, who helped rip England apart just as Maradona did in 1986, will win his 100th cap for the Germans and is looking forward to boosting his international goal tally, which now stands at 50.

And he begs to disagree with Tevez. "Argentina are a class up from England, but we can hurt them with our tactics and we have to believe in ourselves," says the 32-year-old, whose opening goal in the 4-1 win over England was his 12th at the World Cup - taking him level with no less than Pele.

Maradona's men endured a shambolic qualifying campaign, not least when they went down 6-1 in Bolivia.

But after getting through more than 100 players in Maradona's 19-month tenure, the record books at the finals show only two goals in the goals against column -- both consolation strikes, for South Korea in the group and then Mexico.

Ten goals scored in four games tell their own story, while the health of the Argentine attack is demonstrated by the fact that not one was netted by Senor Messi.

Spain hitting their stride

AFP, Cape Town

Spain are finally hitting their stride after crushing Portuguese hopes in a 1-0 round of 16 victory, with Paraguay the next target on their World Cup radar.

The European champions have long been fancied as a strong contender to win their first ever World Cup, but an opening defeat against Switzerland dented their prospects.

Coach Vicente Del Bosque blamed the hiccup on anxiety and they bounced back to defeat Chile and Honduras before David Villa put their Iberian arch-rivals Portugal to the sword late on Tuesday.

Playmaker Xavi, who was named man-of-the-match, said it was their best performance so far.

"We were on top of our game," he said. "Especially in the second half, when

we had control of the ball and played our best football. The goal did us a power of good and that's when we started hitting top form.

"Basically, we enjoyed our football. It was the best match we have played in the World Cup."

Spain had a second-half Villa strike to thank for their victory, with the in-form Barcelona forward grabbing his fourth goal of the tournament, chipping a rebound over goalkeeper Eduardo after his first shot was saved.

"Portugal were very tight at the back and their keeper was in great form," said Villa.

"They didn't make it easy for us, but I got one sight on goal and luckily it was enough."

Next up is Paraguay on Saturday in Johannesburg after the South Americans

beat Japan 5-3 in a penalty shoot-out following their 0-0 draw.

If Spain overcome that hurdle then Argentina or Germany await them in the semifinals, although Del Bosque is only looking ahead one match at a time.

"The match was extremely intense," he said of the Portugal encounter.

"It was quite even in the first half, but we always controlled the game and in the second half we were better than them."

"We had greater depth but it was a difficult game and our rivals were extremely solid."

He added that it would be a mistake to underestimate a Paraguay team playing in its first-ever World Cup quarterfinal.

"We shall not underestimate Paraguay and prepare for them with great respect," he said.



Netherlands players wave at photographers trying to capture a training session closed to media in Johannesburg yesterday. The Dutch take on Brazil in the first quarterfinal on Friday.

Ghana won't switch style

INTERNET, Undated

The Black Stars are looking to become the first African nation to reach the World Cup semifinals when they face Oscar Tabarez's men on July 2.

But Ghana coach Milovan Rajevac says his side will not change the style of play that has seen them reach this stage of the tournament.

"Uruguay have been very impressive," he said. "They have to be one of the best teams in the world."

"They deserve every respect and Forlan is a fine player."

"But we will play the way that has brought success so far."

Tevez embodies Argentine spirit

REUTERS, Pretoria

Carlos Tevez, Argentina's man of the people, has embodied the determination of his country to win a third World Cup.

"I want the Cup and let no one take it from me," said Tevez, who enjoys a popularity with Argentina's fans akin to that of coach Diego Maradona.

The commitment of the player who, like Maradona rose from a tough Buenos Aires shanty town, shone through with his two-goal performance in the 3-1 second round win over Mexico four days ago.

But Tevez, known by those closest to him as Carlitos, was not sure of his place in Maradona's side until the final build-up to the tournament.

He is the first to recognise he had a poor qualifying campaign in which he was sent off twice and missed a penalty away to Ecuador.

Tevez worked hard to regain Maradona's confidence and was rewarded when the coach came to the conclusion he could not leave him out.

"It's tough to leave Carlitos out," Maradona had said in Buenos Aires before Argentina left for South Africa.

A tactical switch freed up a place in attack and Tevez has slotted into a trident with Lionel Messi and Gonzalo Higuain.

"Diego came to my room one day and told me 'I know you're going to be brilliant'," Tevez told the Argentina Sports daily Ole.

World Player of the Year Messi has yet to get off the mark but Higuain and Tevez have contributed six of Argentina's 10 goals.

Iberians begin to dream

AFP, Madrid

Spain's hopes of lifting their first World Cup and adding it to their European crown gained all round approval from the previously sceptical Spanish media on Wednesday following the 1-0 win over Iberian rivals Portugal in their Last 16 match on Tuesday.

"Spain begins to dream" was the headline in El Pais, while ABC said that the "dream stays alive."

Spain's goalscorer David Villa, who took his tally to a joint top mark of four in the finals and edged him ever closer to all-time Spanish marksman Raul as his total went to 42 just two shy of the Real Madrid icon, received special praise.

"Villa relaunches Spain's dream," was the headline in El Mundo, beside a photograph of the Barcelona striker at the moment of the goal.



Poster boys fail to shine

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Images of Wayne Rooney, Cristiano Ronaldo and Samuel Eto'o are still festooned on posters all over South Africa -- but sadly for them that's their only involvement as the World Cup reaches its final stages.

Along with the likes of Didier Drogba of Ivory Coast,

without scoring a goal, and Torres, who has had an indifferent tournament without scoring either, are still involved with Argentina facing Germany in their quarterfinal and Spain playing Paraguay in theirs.

They still have time to leave an indelible mark on this World Cup but the chance has

form Rooney would lead England to the semi-finals at least.

Rooney though, was never on form, played without a smile as if he would rather be anywhere else, and although he came close to a goal in England's final Group C match against Slovenia, he had a miserable sullen cam-

pan. The second round tie

After returning from knee surgery shortly before the tournament, he has been totally outshone by Villa, who has netted four in four matches to draw to within two of Raul's national scoring record of 44.

Torres looks to be lacking the pace and strength that have made him such a terror for defenders in the past and is a shadow of the player who scored the brilliant winning goal in the Euro 2008 final against Germany.

"It's not easy coming back after an operation," the 26-year-old said last weekend. "I think I still have a little way to go before I am back at 100 percent, although I am close."

Torres at least, like Messi, is still involved. Messi, the World Player of the Year, has had a series of excellent games with Argentina seemingly on course for a final showdown with Brazil.

Of all the "poster boys" Messi still has the chance to etch his name on the finals just as Diego Maradona did in 1986.

The two big African stars of the pre-tournament build-up had moderate successes, even though their teams failed to survive the group stage.

Drogba played with a protective cast for Ivory Coast after fracturing his arm before the tournament, and at least had the satisfaction of becoming the first African to score a goal against Brazil in the World Cup when he netted in their 3-1 defeat at Soccer City.

Cameronian Eto'o managed to get on the scoresheet twice before his side also exited at the group stage. They never came close to emulating the 1990 Roger Milla campaign and will be remembered among the footnotes when the story of this tournament is recalled in the history books.



ROONEY



ETO'O



DROGBA



TORRES

Lionel Messi of Argentina and Fernando Torres of Spain, they were supposed to score goals, lead by example and have a battle royal to prove themselves as the world's best player.

It did not quite work out like that.

Messi, who has had an excellent tournament so far

gone, for at least another four years, for Rooney and Ronaldo. For Drogba, who will be 36 in 2014 and Eto'o, who will be 33, the chance may have gone for good.

Rooney undoubtedly had the worst World Cup of the lot.

The build-up to the tournament in England was dominated by stories of how an in-

against the Spaniards offered Ronaldo a great chance to shine but Portugal's direct method to counter their opponents' passing game left him with little service and his main chance came from a fierce, swerving free kick that Iker Casillas struggled to defend.

Frustrated by not being able to make darting runs and with his free kicks mostly flying into the stands, Ronaldo spent most of the tournament pouting.

His tournament ended sourly after he told journalists to "speak to Carlos Queiroz" when asked to explain the loss to Spain and then had to retract the comments in a statement.

Spain's Torres came in direct opposition to Ronaldo on Tuesday, with coach Vicente del Bosque deploying him in a two-pronged attack with strike partner David Villa.

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3rd One Toshiba 21" Colour TV YOU 3rd One Toshin Heat & Cool AC (1Ton) YOU
4th One Toshin 21" Colour TV YOU 4th One Toshiba 24" LCD TV YOU
5th One Toshin Microwave Oven (23L) and YOU 5th One 21" Toshin Colour TV and YOU

The Daily Star - RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 5 Ends July 02, 2010
Tick (✓) the correct answers
1. How many goals did Fernando Torres score in WC qualifying? 0 1 5
2. How many teams participated in the first World Cup in 1930? 12 16 13
3. Which was the first team to not score in the World Cup final? Germany Netherlands Argentina
4. Who is the only player to have scored goals for two different teams in the World Cup finals? Suker Prosinecki Stankovic
5. 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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