

Fernando Llorente's physical playing style has a secret -- the skin-tight shirt that makes him look like The Incredible Hulk, according to the striker himself. Llorente, who stands at a towering 1.95 metres, earned widespread praise for his match-turning performance in the 1-0 win over Portugal. "Everyone was laughing because the shirt was very tight on me and I looked like Hulk," the 25-year-old said. "But I feel very comfortable with it and it also helps my physical performance," he added.



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PHOTO: REUTERS

Uruguay striker Sebastian Abreu celebrates after scoring the winning goal in the penalty shootout of their World Cup quarterfinal against Ghana at the Soccer City stadium in Johannesburg yesterday.

Abreu breaks African hearts

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Uruguay ended Ghana's dream of being the first African team in the World Cup semifinals when they won a penalty shootout 4-2 after their quarterfinal finished 1-1 at the end of extra time on Friday.

Uruguay substitute Sebastian Abreu got the decisive penalty with a cheeky chip over goalkeeper Richard Kingson to set up a semifinal with Netherlands, who shocked Brazil 2-1.

The teams could not be separated after extra-time in a thrilling contest after Asamoah Gyan hit the bar with a penalty in the second minute of added time that was given when Uruguay striker Luis Suarez handled

on the line and was sent off.

Ghana had taken the lead with a speculative strike by Sulley Muntari just before the end of the first half of normal time but that was

cancelled out by a masterful Diego Forlan freekick 10 minutes after the interval that brought the sides level.

Ghana were bidding to become the first African side

to reach the semifinals while twice World Cup winners Uruguay were trying to reach the last four for the first time in 40 years.

In a game of wildly chang-

ing fortunes, Uruguay had dominated the opening stages as they worked hard to set strikers Forlan and Suarez free.

Ghana, despite enormous support from their fellow Africans packing the stadium, surrendered the ball too easily to a hard-tackling Uruguay midfield.

But they suddenly woke up, though, and won their first corner from which central defender Isaac Vorsah should have opened the scoring but only managed to head wide. Minutes later striker Asamoah Gyan was sent through only to shoot wide.

Uruguay's defence, which had only let in one goal on the way to the

quarterfinals, suffered a blow when captain Diego Lugano had to limp off and was replaced by Andres Scotti.

Then in added time at the end of the first half, Muntari struck a spectacular long-range drive to put Ghana ahead.

Ten minutes into the second half, Uruguay won a freekick just outside the area on the left and Forlan struck the ball perfectly, bending it over everyone's heads and beyond the despairing reach of Kingson for the equaliser.

Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez sent on striker Sebastian Abreu after 76 minutes in search of a winner but neither side could break

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SCORE BOARD

URUGUAY 1 - 1 GHANA
FORLAN 55 MUNTARI 45

Uruguay (5-3-2): Fernando Nestor Muslera, Diego Lugano (Andres Scotti, 38), Jorge Fucile, Mauricio Victorino, Diego Perez, Maximiliano Pereira, Egidio Rios, Alvaro Fernandez, A (Nicolas Lodeiro, 46), Edinson Cavani (Sebastian Abreu, 76), Luis Suarez, Diego Forlan

Ghana (4-5-1): Richard Kingson, Hans Sarpei, John Paintsil, John Mensah, Samuel Inkoom (Stephen Appiah, 74), Isaac Vorsah, Anthony Annan, Sulley Muntari (Dominic Adiyiah, 88), Kwadwo Asamoah, Kevin-Prince Boateng.

Red Card: Luis Suarez 119

KEY STATS

Uruguay	Ghana
Shots (on target)	15(7) 26(4)
Corners	12 8
Possession	43% 57%
Yellow Cards	3 3

QUARTERFINALS

Germany v Argentina Time: 8.00pm Cape Town
Paraguay v Spain Time: 12.30am(Sunday) Johannesburg

MAX Fairness for MAX Impression
MAX Skin-lightening
MAX Spots reduction
MAX Sun Protection

TODAY'S MATCHES

TODAY'S POLL

Who is the biggest influence in the Argentina team?
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast your vote

WORLD CUP POLL

Who will win the Brazil-Netherlands quarterfinal?
Brazil 70.0%
Netherlands 30.0%

TOTAL VOTES: 307

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Netherlands striker Arjen Robben shoots the ball past Brazil's defender Lacio during their quarterfinal clash at the Nelson Mandela Bay stadium in Port Elizabeth yesterday.
PHOTO: AFP

Messy brilliance, Ozil flamboyance

Brazil was leading by a goal against the Dutch brigade. And with the way, things were going, it looked the men from the Samba land were en route to the semi-finals. Of course the second half was still to go. Shifting radar, fan favorite Argentina faces arch rivals Germany in Cape Town.

Lionel Messi, the biggest ray of hopes for the Argentinean fans will be playing one of his most important matches of his life. A win for the blue and white will seal Messi's mantle as the most talented football in earth. Messi will be surrounded by German defense wall marshaled by Phillip Lahm. Carlos Tevez or Higuain will have to take full advantage and do what they have been doing best score goals. The duo have scored six already.

The Germans will take inspiration from their sublime form in the tournament and the fact they have prevailed over Argentina in their last two face offs in the World Cup. Ozil is the man, who has more than taken over the role of Michael Ballack. He is brilliant. Klose will make sure that he scores one or even two to get closer to the record of most goals scored by an individual. Mueller has shown respect to the worthy opponents but that will not deter him for scoring more. Podolski is lurking around too.

It will be a match of skill, counter attack, strategy and excitement. And great goals.

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