



JOY RIDE: A young boy in Frankfurt takes a ride with the German flag in hand after their 4-0 win over Argentina in the quarterfinals on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

Loew on a high

REUTERS, Cape Town

Germany coach Joachim Loew believes his young team have the country's first World Cup triumph for 20 years within their grasp after demolishing an Argentina side he suggested were now past their prime on Saturday.

"There is still a lot for us to achieve," said a calm Loew, following the three-time winners' mesmerising 4-0 trouncing.

"There are still two matches to go. We have got it in our own grasp to win the big prize," the 50-year-old told reporters.

Germany, who won the title in 1954, 1974 and 1990, looked sharper against their much-fancied opponents, whom they also beat at the same stage of the 2006 tournament on penalties.

But spot kicks were not needed this time as Germany outran, outsmarted and outclassed Argentina, making them look like a team past their best.

"Our players are younger, faster. Some of the Argentine players perhaps do not have this speed anymore," said Loew, who in his first World Cup in charge has already seen Germany's youngest World Cup team since 1934 fire four goals past England and Argentina.

"In today's victory we were highly disciplined, but we were also willing to put in the extra effort," he said.

After 20-year-old Thomas Mueller put them ahead in the third minute with a glancing header, the Germans stepped on the gas in the second half with Miroslav Klose adding one either side of an Arne Friedrich goal.

"We knew at half time we would need to get a second goal because we knew Argentina would put a lot of pressure on us in the second half," he said.

"I am very proud of this team, the great way we played in the second half was first class. The team played like champions," Loew said.

Germany will now play Spain in the semifinal on Wednesday.

Press hail 'dream team'

REUTERS, Berlin

German newspapers predicted a World Cup triumph and poured scorn on coach Diego Maradona as "an over-the-hill gunfighter" after Argentina were ruthlessly dispatched 4-0 in the World Cup quarterfinals.

Saturday's win over Maradona's Argentina in Cape Town came less than a week after Joachim Loew's Germany team had equally clinically ended England's hopes 4-1 in the second round.

The latest resounding victory sent the normally hypercritical German media -- and its public -- into raptures on Sunday.

"Thanks, you heroes!" wrote Bild am Sonntag newspaper.

"Unbelievable! Germany beats Argentina 4-0. Four to Zero!" Bild am Sonntag's normally difficult-to-please columnist Guenter Netzer, the former international, could hardly contain himself.

"It was more than a victory, it was a demonstration of 'Uebermacht' (superiority)," wrote Netzer, now a popular TV pundit. "It was one of the best performances from a Germany team that I've ever seen."

Netzer admitted he was wrong with his earlier public doubts about Miroslav Klose and Lukas Podolski. "I never would have thought they would have played such a strong World Cup."

Former Germany coach Juergen Klinsmann, who led the team to third place in 2006 and is now a TV analyst, was also full of praise for the team and his successor, Joachim Loew.

"The team seems to have a lot of fun and that's the base for attractive football -- and Jogi (Loew) is doing an awesome job," Klinsmann told Reuters.

Millions of fans have packed public viewing venues and were given credit by Loew for helping motivate the team. More than 350,000 watched on giant screens set up in central Berlin.

Dropping their normal reluctance towards flag waving, German fans have wrapped themselves in their black, red and gold flags and celebrated with an unprecedented level of patriotism.

"Deutschland einig Zauberland" (Germany united Magic Land) wrote the Sueddeutsche Zeitung.

"The 4-0 win over Argentina wasn't only due to Germany's dominance on the pitch but also due to Loew's superior tactics," wrote the newspaper's columnist Thomas Hummel.

"Diego Maradona looked like an over-the-hill gunfighter in a Western film."

"Maradona was a bundle of nerves before the match, hugging some of the players as if someone in their family had just died."

"The over-the-top show of emotions might not have led to Germany getting the early goal but it may have helped. The Germans by contrast seemed to be calm and collected from the start."

Other newspapers expressed surprise at the team's strength.

"A dream team," wrote the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

"All of Germany is going berserk over these incredible lopsided victories over England and now Argentina."

"Anyone who three weeks ago would have predicted a 4-1 win over England and then a 4-0 destruction of Argentina would have been ridiculed as a hopelessly naive football novice. Loew's team proved against Argentina they are world-class."

Welt am Sonntag said Germany must be a top favourite now.

"The title is within our grasp," wrote Welt am Sonntag columnist Stefan Frommann. "With courage and strength the German footballers were knocking on the gates to heaven. The happy ending for the midsummer fairy tale is getting closer."

'This is madness'

INTERNET

Germany goalscorer Thomas Mueller opened the scoring against Argentina, but little did he know that his Mannschaft would go on to put three more past the Albiceleste.

After the match his reactions read almost as stream-of-consciousness, such as his joy.

"Germany's rocking right now, and rightly so. This is madness, what's happened here today," he beamed.

"If you come here and beat Argentina 4-0 it's hard to find the words."

Mueller put the Germans' success down to the esprit du corps within the camp.

"The star? That was the whole team, once again," he said.

"Each one of us played to his limits, and everyone fought purely for their cause, giving everything they had."

Mueller is suspended for the semifinal, but won't let that get in the way of his dreams of a final appearance.

"Top scorer? Well, if I want to do that I need to hope that my colleagues do everything right in the semis, then maybe I can hit another in the final," he smiled.

"I am very proud of this team, the great way we played in the second half was first class. The team played like champions," Loew said.

Germany will now play Spain in the semifinal on Wednesday.

Hardest day of my life: Diego

REUTERS, Cape Town

A broken Diego Maradona, his demeanour far removed from the exuberance of his previous World Cup news conferences, said Argentina's 4-0 thrashing by Germany on Saturday was the hardest day of his life.

"Today, close to the 50 years I will be on October 30, this is the hardest thing I've experienced," Maradona said.

"This was (like) a punch from Muhammad Ali. I have no strength for anything."

"The day I quit playing football could (have been) similar but this is much harder," Maradona said after Argentina's worst defeat at the finals since a 6-1 rout by Czechoslovakia in 1958.

Maradona said he could not talk so soon about the future after his team again failed to reach the last four.

They have not done so since 1990, the year he relinquished the World Cup in the final in Italy having lifted it four years

earlier as captain.

"I'll have to think carefully about (the future)... I must speak to my family, the players, there's a lot (to discuss)," Maradona said.

With a hint that the future was uncertain, he said: "This wasn't the expected finale (for us), but whoever comes in must carry on this path which is the one Argentines like."

"I thanked (the players and coaching staff) for the job they did, that's all. I didn't speak about the future," Maradona said, having emerged from a gloomy changing room.

He said he had no doubts that his team had played as they should have, despite often being given the run-around by a far sharper and quicker German side.

"I could go tomorrow, but I want these kids to go on showing the real Argentine football," he said.

"I have realised as coach and player that the football

INTERNET

Before the quarterfinal between Argentina and Germany, it was all about Diego Maradona. After the Albiceleste were drubbed 4-0 in Cape Town, it's all about the Mannschaft.

Joachim Loew's young and exuberant team were even more devastating at the Green Point Stadium than they were against England in the last round, and with Brazil also out and Spain still far from convincing, the World Cup is suddenly their oyster.

Even the normally reserved German chancellor Angela Merkel was up and down in her seat as though she had a particularly amorous Silvio Berlusconi behind her. When she went to congratulate the players in the changing room afterwards, they all chanted "Speech! Speech!" as she entered the room, a real testament to the unity in Loew's squad.

No wonder Lionel Messi was reduced to tears, and a broken Maradona all but confirmed he will quit as manager. This match was not a World Cup elimination, it was a public execution. Even goalkeeper Manuel Neuer admitted to being dumbfounded and mesmerised by his teammates' swift and instinctive coun-

ter-attacks.

Still, at least now we're spared the sight of Maradona streaking through the streets of Buenos Aires, as he had promised to do if they won the trophy.

It feels like a huge turnaround in fortunes for Germany, even though they also reached at least the last four of the last two major tournaments as well.

This time, however, they are doing it without several key players, not least injured captain Michael Ballack. His smug expression at the final whistle is a stark contrast to David Beckham's permanent frown throughout his role as England squad cheerleader. A big reason for both of those previous successes is Miroslav Klose, whose brace saw him equal Gerd Muller's World Cup record of 14 goals and put his own international strike rate at better than one-in-two. On his 100th appearance. Mein Gott!

Klose has now scored as many goals in South Africa as he did all season for Bayern Munich. However, his record of seven goals in eight qualifying matches justified his place in the team, and how.

If he goes on to eclipse Der Bomber in this tournament - and who would bet against it? - then he deserves his own nickname. His teammates may call him Miro, but Early Boers likes Der Flipper.

But Klose isn't the only one monopolising the jaw-dropping statistics: Thomas Mueller, his heir apparent, has scored with each of his four shots on target in South Africa. Germany are the first team to score four goals in three different games since Brazil in 1970, and they handed Argentina their biggest World Cup defeat in over 50 years.

It's amazing to think that, despite their incredible record in international competition, they are still managing to settle some scores as they storm through this tournament.

Beating England laid to rest the ghost of the 5-1 hammering they suffered in Munich, and the myopic Ecuadorean linesman in that match also saw them inadvertently avenge a 44-year-old monkey on their back regarding Geoff Hurst's 'Wembley goal'.

Defeating Argentina so emphatically puts to bed any hangover from the penalty shootout win at the same stage four years ago, which ended in a melee in which Leandro Cufré delivered a unprovoked flying kick to the nether regions of Per Mertesacker.

Now, they have a chance to avenge their Euro 2008 final defeat at the hands of Spain. On this form, they will take some stopping.



GOD WASN'T WITH DIEGO: A dejected Diego Maradona walks off after Argentina went down 4-0 against Germany in the quarterfinals at the Green Point stadium in Cape Town on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

the (Argentine) people like is this, searching permanently (for goals), playing, rotating. I don't think Argentina have another style.

"With the (early) lead, Germany began to get ideas that they had not had previously in this World Cup," Maradona said.

"This (loss) doesn't knock my pride in my players because I know the result is not a reflection of what happened on the pitch. They put in their chances, we also had some."

Germany ended Argentina's run of 10 matches unbeaten at the World Cup dating back to their 1-0 loss to England in Japan in 2002 and including the 1-1 draw with Germany in the 2006 quarterfinal which they lost on penalties.

Maradona, who took charge in late 2008, has won 18 and lost six of his matches as coach though the majority of the defeats came in a disappointing qualifying campaign last year.

Messi ends in tears

AFP, Cape Town

Lionel Messi came into the World Cup with the expectation that he would light up the tournament, but the Barcelona superstar left on Saturday empty-handed, without a goal and in floods of tears.

It is not something the world footballer of the year and Argentina's talisman is used to.

Despite being just 23, Messi has won almost every accolade there is and already has

an impressive medal collection that few other players, if any, can match.

Sitting in his personal trophy cabinet is already a World Cup winner's medal, but from 2005 at junior level.

The one still missing is the one he wants the most -- a World Cup winner as a senior.

He must now wait until he is 27 for another chance after Germany crushed Messi and his Argentine teammates 4-0 in the quarterfinals on Saturday.

Coach Diego Maradona

said he could not explain why Messi failed to score, but defended him, claiming the Barcelona star had a good tournament.

"It was either because the ball was not in the right spot or because the goalies were good. But he played a great World Cup," said Maradona, who revealed that Messi was in tears afterwards.

"To see Messi cry in the dressing room, well, to say that if in some way he didn't honour our Argentine colours then that is stupid."

Maradona gave Messi a free role in the match and the striker opted to operate down the middle.

As expected, he was dangerous whenever he got the ball, blazing past a defender in the first half but his pass to Carlos Tevez was hit too hard and the move fizzled out.

Minutes later he flicked another pass to Tevez but goalkeeper Manuel Neuer was quickly off his line to avert the threat.

Messi was tireless and seeing more of the ball. He had a chance to get his first World Cup goal on 31 minutes but he skied a freekick from 25 yards out.

He had another crack at goal on the half-time whistle, but like his earlier effort it too went whistling over the bar without troubling the goalkeeper.

Argentina were giving him the ball at every opportunity in the hope that he could weave his magic and get them back in the game, but once Germany's second goal went in his tournament was effectively over.

German coach coach Joachim Loew said his team was successful in snuffing out the Messi threat.

"We expected the Argentine line-up and knew Messi would fall back into midfield," he said.

"He is a key player so we tried to keep him under control by putting him under pressure and staying close to him."

"We knew that if we attacked Messi in an unfair way, he'd play the ball away and we would have free kicks against us, so our defence was spot on."



MISERABLE MESSI: Lionel Messi can't contain his emotions after Argentina's humiliating 4-0 defeat to Germany in the quarterfinals at the Green Point stadium in Cape Town on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

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BUMPER ROUND, DRAW IN DHAKA ON JULY 16

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS (ROUNDS 1-5)		PRIZES FOR BUMPER ROUND		
Prize	Item	Winner	Prize	
1st	One 8 CFT 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 Toshin Heat & Cool AC (1Ton)
4th	One Toshiba 21" Colour TV	YOU	4th	One Toshiba 24" LCD TV
5th	One Toshin Microwave Oven (23L)	and YOU		

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

Prizes for the audience (For First Five Rounds)

1st. 20L Toshin Microwave Oven
2nd. 14" Toshin Colour TV
3rd. 3 Toshiba DVD Players

Prizes for the audience (For Bumper Round)

1st. Toshiba Washing Machine
2nd. 21" Toshin Colour TV
3rd. 20L Toshin Microwave Oven
4th. Two Toshiba DVD Players

QUIZ SCHEDULE

Round & Draw	Starts	Ends	Answers must reach by 12pm	Lucky Draw for prizes
5. Sylhet	June 24	July 02	July 04	July 06

The Daily Star - RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Bumper Round Ends July 11, 2010

Tick (✓) the correct answers

- Who was the highest scorer in 2002 World Cup? Creso Ronaldo Podolski
- Who headed in the last goal of World Cup 2006? Materazzi Ballack Willtord
- How many teams participated in the World Cup 1994? 24 30 32
- What was the name of the official ball of World Cup 1970? Magpie Discogs Telstar
- Who is this player? Miliito Villa Melo

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.
 You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz Bumper Round"

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