

Turkey face Croatia in pick of draw

INTERNET, Undated



Turkey and Croatia will face each other for a place in the Euro 2012 tournament, with the play-off draw completed this afternoon in Krakow.

Estonia will take on Republic of Ireland, while Czech Republic and Montenegro will play one another and Bosnia and Herzegovina take on Portugal.

Turkey came second in Group A to Germany, while Croatia missed out on an automatic spot in the tournament by two points to Greece. Croatia will be looking for revenge after losing to Turkey on penalties in the Euro 2008 quarterfinal.

Ireland, meanwhile, lost out on automatic qualification to Russia in a including Armenia. The doubt be defeat Estonia to a in the group one point.

PLAYOFF DRAW

Turkey v Croatia
Estonia v Ireland
Czech Republic v Montenegro
Bosnia v Portugal

Czech Republic will be hoping to get past Montenegro, but will find it tough, with both teams boasting top form at the moment. Czech beat Lithuania 4-1 in their last group stage match, while Montenegro took a respectable 2-2 draw against Group G leaders England.

And Bosnia and Herzegovina will be hoping that their form in the group stages, which took them to within one point of automatic qualifiers France, will come into play when they take on Portugal, who have suffered from poor form that saw them lose the top spot on their group table to Denmark in the last match.

The matches will take place between the 11th and 12th November, with the second-leg matches to follow on the 15th.



Former Poland forward Zbigniew Boniek holds a card showing Czech Republic during the Euro 2012 qualifying playoff draw ceremony in Krakow yesterday.

PHOTO:
REUTERS

Tevez to be disciplined

Football

REUTERS, London

Manchester City striker Carlos Tevez will face disciplinary proceedings for alleged breaches of contract after manager Roberto Mancini had said he refused to come on as a substitute in a Champions League game, the club announced on Wednesday.

Tevez was suspended last month while the club investigated his conduct in the match at Bayern Munich on September 27. According to Mancini, the Argentine international refused to come on during the 2-0 defeat.

"The club has been conducting an investigation into the events of 27 September at the Allianz Arena," City said in a statement on their website (www.mfc.co.uk).

"The club has now reached a stage in its investigation where it has concluded there is a case for Carlos Tevez to answer of alleged breaches of contract.

"Accordingly the club has informed him that he will face disciplinary proceedings and the hearing will be convened shortly. Carlos will be required to report to Roberto Mancini for training

on Thursday."

According to Mancini, he instructed Tevez to come off the bench with around 35 minutes of the game to go and the player refused.

The Italian also said Tevez was "finished" at City while he was manager.

The Argentine has since said he was not asked to come on but to warm up, and he felt he had already warmed up sufficiently.

His adviser Kia Joorabchian said last week the striker was the victim of mis-translated comments and never refused to play against Bayern.

Tevez has been seeking a way out of Manchester for some time. Last December he put in a transfer request that the club turned down while he lodged another at the end of last season citing family reasons.

He made scathing comments about Manchester on an Argentine chat show in June, saying the city "has nothing" and is "very expensive" and that he was "never going back to Manchester, not even on holiday".

Tevez nevertheless returned after a planned move to Brazilian club Corinthians fell through but was stripped of the club captaincy and found himself

relegated to the bench as compatriot Sergio Aguero was paired with Edin Dzeko up front.

The 27-year-old Tevez, the joint top scorer in the Premier League last season, joined City from Manchester United for a fee of around 32 million pounds (\$50.4 million) at the start of the 2009-10 season.

Professional Footballers Association (PFA) chief Gordon Taylor said the evidence against Tevez "justified" a disciplinary hearing.

"If the evidence justifies a flagrant breach, for example a direct refusal to play, then (a sacking) is a possibility. If the evidence shows a reluctance just to warm up...then you'd look at his previous record of behaviour and if this was the first occasion," Taylor told Sky Sports News.

"It's a big situation but it has got to be decided proportionately.

"I think at the moment a lot of people are asking for his head...but they've got to remember he's always done well for the club in the past...and at the moment I would feel it doesn't justify a termination (of his contract)."

Duo feels the heat

REUTERS, Milan



The pressure is starting to tell on Serie A champions AC Milan, where forwards Antonio Cassano and Zlatan Ibrahimovic have both complained of tiredness and stress.

AC Milan chief executive Adriano Galliani, whose side host Palermo on Saturday, said that he was unworried by the situation, although the Italian Footballers Association (AIC) says it is time to help players confront the problem.

Cassano, 29, who scored twice for Italy in a 3-0 win over Northern Ireland on Tuesday, told RAI television that he had already made retirement plans.

"I'll play for another three or three-and-a-half years," he said. "I want to have a good Euro (2012), a good World Cup and a regular place for the national team.

"I've been involved with the national side for 10 years and have only 25 caps, I'm always in and out of the team. I'll quit at 32 or 33 at the latest, I'll get out of football and enjoy life with my family.

"Football has been the most beautiful thing in the world for me but despite that, I'm exhausted. I'm stressed, for the last 13 years, whatever I say has been wrong."

Last week, Sweden forward Ibrahimovic

said that he had started to think about retirement, when he said he would be able to enjoy life.

He also complained he was tired and not enjoying the game as much as before.

AIC president Damiano Tommassi told the ANSA news agency said the problem needed to be confronted.

"It's one of our objectives," he said. "We have started a project to help players, from 17 years onwards, to deal with pressure.

"They are boys and their toughest game is to be themselves and not have to put on a mask."

Galliani said he was confident the pair's form would not be affected.

"I'm not worried," he told reporters. "I'm not a psychologist, but I speak to the players in private and everything is fine.

"After 25 years of management at Milan, I know how to do it. I've spoken to Ibrahimovic, he absolutely wants to play. There's nothing else to comment.

Milan, a modest 15th in the table after taking only five points from five games, have been hit by injuries this season but should at least have Brazil forward Robinho fit again for Saturday.

"I'm fine, happy and recovered," the former Santos, Real Madrid and Manchester City forward told reporters.

Platini lauds Poland

AFP, Warsaw

UEFA president Michel Platini on Wednesday lauded Poland's preparations for Euro 2012, and said concerns over fellow-host Ukraine's ability to get ready had largely subsided.

"I am a very happy president, because we have wonderful stadiums, and infrastructure which is ready pretty much everywhere," Platini said in the new national stadium in the Polish capital Warsaw, where the European Championships kick off on June 8, 2012.

Platini, who visited Ukraine last month, was this week on his latest inspection tour of Poland's four host cities: Warsaw, plus Wroclaw in the southwest, Poznan in the west, and the Baltic port of Gdansk.

"I can say that, after having seen the four cities, the four stadiums, the four airports and all the roads, that preparations for Euro 2012 are going very, very well," the former France international told reporters.

Two weeks ago Platini had delivered a similar message in the Ukrainian capital Kiev -- one of the country's four host cities along with Kharkiv and Donetsk and Lviv -- saying he felt "completely reassured" despite "small problems".

Terry backs stadium bid

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea captain John Terry has called for fans to back the club's bid to repurchase the freehold of Stamford Bridge paving the way for the Blues to move to a new 60,000 seater stadium.

Terry told the club's official website, www.chelseafc.com: "Obviously, I have great memories of Stamford Bridge.

"But what excites me is the thought of my kids, who are Chelsea through and through, being able to grow up watching the team play in a big stadium.

"We're talking about the next generation of kids beyond that as well. It excites me because I know for sure that we can grow."

He added: "For us to go further, we might need to move, and we have to trust our owner (Roman Abramovich).

"He has been amazing since he bought the club, along with our fans as well. No one is saying it is going to be an immediate change but we need to be looking.

"We have to remember that London is a hotspot, west London especially, and big development companies can build substantial flats and penthouses here, and if we're not putting our name in the hat for these sites, then without a doubt they'll be snapped up by developers."

Several supporters' groups have united to try to convince shareholders of Chelsea Pitch Owners (CPO) - who have been in possession of the land beneath Stamford Bridge since the 1990s - to vote against the club's proposal.

Terry is the CPO president.

The 'Say No CPO' campaign plan to distribute 10,000 leaflets before this weekend's Premier League match against Everton.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Manchester City striker Carlos Tevez arrives at the club's Carrington training ground yesterday.

SPORTS POLL WEEKLY QUESTION

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India v England

First ODI (D/N)

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Quarterfinals

Live from 12:00pm

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Sportscentre India

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