

Germany hold Poland

AFP, Hamburg



Germany kicked-off their World Cup finals preparations with their youngest-ever side holding Poland to a goalless draw on Tuesday although the home crowd were not happy and whistled them off the pitch at the end.

With 13 of his squad involved in Saturday's German Cup final when Bayern Munich play Borussia Dortmund in Berlin, Germany coach Joachim Loew named eight debutants for the friendly in Hamburg and his entire starting eleven had a combined total of just 13 caps.

It was the youngest German side ever named -- with an average aged of 21.45 -- in the 106-year history of German Football Association (DFB) internationals, beating the previous record of 21.5 for a 1908 international against Switzerland.

Several of them did enough to impress the coach in the first of three pre-World Cup friendlies with matches against Cameroon and Armenia to come.

However, it remains to be seen who stays in when the squad will be cut to 25 or 26 players on Wednesday before later being reduced to the definitive 23 who Loew will take to the World Cup.

Of the starting side against Poland, only captain Julian Draxler has a realistic chance of lining up to face Portugal in Germany's Group G opener in Salvador on June 16.

Schalke's promising trio of left-wing Draxler, 20, attacking midfielder Max Meyer, 18, and right-wing Leon Goretzka, 19, had their first run out for the senior national side having all risen through the junior ranks, with playmaker Meyer comfortable on the ball without dazzling.

Hoffenheim's 21-year-old striker Kevin Volland had a few half chances up front as he played the first half, while at the other end Poland's defensive midfielder Mateusz Klich forced Germany goalkeeper Ron-Robert Zieler into a save with half an hour gone.

With his side not going to Brazil, Poland coach Adam Nawalka left out his Dortmund stars in striker Robert Lewandowski and right-back Lukasz Piszczek with Southampton's veteran goalkeeper Artur Boruc captaining the side with Werder Bremen striker Ludovic Obraniak playing up front.

The opening half was a low-key affair with Germany in control despite their inexperience, while Poland were always dangerous on the counter-attack, but all too often their efforts petered out and Stuttgart's Antonio Ruediger's 32nd-minute header was the Germans best chance of the opening half.

Augsburg's Andre Hahn, who came on for the second half, squandered a great chance to grab the winner six minutes from time when his bicycle kick failed to beat



PHOTO: AFP

Germany striker Kevin Volland (R) chase after the ball during their international friendly against Poland in Hamburg on Tuesday.

Demichelis in, Tevez out

REUTERS, Buenos Aires



Central defender M a r t i n Demichelis, a Premier League winner with Manchester City in his first season in England, earned a surprise call-up on

Tuesday to Argentina's provisional 30-man World Cup squad.

However, there was no last-minute surprise place for Juventus striker Carlos Tevez, who has never been in coach Alejandro Sabella's plans despite his fine form in Serie A.

Demichelis, a veteran of the 2010 finals, had not been called up by Sabella since being dropped after a 1-1 draw at home to Bolivia in a South American qualifier in November 2011.



The 33-year-old, who has 37 caps, put behind him a poor Champions League last-16 performance against Barcelona in February, when he conceded a penalty and was sent off, to secure his place in the centre of the City defence in the title run-in.

Sabella, whose team have often looked unbalanced with a brilliant attack and ordinary rearguard, has noted Demichelis's recent form as he looks to improve his defence for Argentina's tilt at a third World Cup

triumph in Brazil.

Another surprise call-up is Catania midfielder Fabian Rinaudo, who won one of his four caps under Sabella in 2011, and is regarded as cover in case regular midfielders Fernando Gago or Augusto Fernandez fail to recover from injury in time to be included in the definitive squad on June 2.

Right back Gabriel Mercado has earned a chance thanks to his performances for River Plate, who can lift the Argentine league title this weekend.

Sabella named Gago of Boca Juniors, Fernandez of Celta Vigo and Real Madrid's Angel Di Maria who all hope to be fit in time for the tournament in Brazil starting on June 12 in which Argentina face Iran, Bosnia and Nigeria in Group F.

Di Maria is fighting to be fit for Real's Champions League final against Atletico Madrid on May 24.

PROVISIONAL SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Sergio Romero (Sampdoria), Mariano Andujar (Catania), Agustin Orion (Boca Juniors)
Defenders: Pablo Zabaleta (Manchester City), Federico Fernandez (Napoli), Ezequiel Garay (Benfica), Marcos Rojo (Sporting Lisbon), Hugo Campagnaro (Inter Milan), Martin Demichelis (Manchester City), Jose Basanta (Monterrey), Nicolas Otamendi (Atletico Mineiro), Lisandro Lopez (Getafe), Gabriel Mercado (River Plate)
Midfielders: Javier Mascherano (Barcelona), Fernando Gago (Boca Juniors), Lucas Biglia (Lazio), Ever Banega (Newell's Old Boys), Ricardo Alvarez (Inter Milan), Augusto Fernandez (Celta Vigo), Jose Sosa (Atletico Madrid), Angel Di Maria (Real Madrid), Maxi Rodriguez (Newell's Old Boys), Fabian Rinaudo (Catania), Enzo Perez (Benfica)
Forwards: Lionel Messi (Barcelona), Gonzalo Higuain (Napoli), Sergio Aguero (Manchester City), Rodrigo Palacio (Inter Milan), Ezequiel

Easy sailing for KKR, Punjab

AGENCIES

Table-toppers Kings XI Punjab chased down another 200-plus run target to comfortably beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by six wickets in an IPL match yesterday.

Chasing 206 for victory, the Punjab top-order pulled off another run feast to canter to their target in 18.4 overs.

Elsewhere in Cuttack, Kolkata Knight Riders eased to a six-wicket victory against hapless Mumbai Indians to bolster their chances for semifinal. Kolkata Spinners Sunil Narine and Shakib Al Hasan shared two wickets for 39 runs to restrict Mumbai Indians to a below-par score of 140. Then opener Robin Uthappa hit 80 runs off 52 balls as Kolkata cruised to the target with eight balls to spare and six wickets in hand.

SCORES IN BRIEF
SUNRISERS HYDERABAD: 205 for 5 (S Dhawan 45, Ojha 79 not out; R Dhawan 2-42)
KINGS XI PUNJAB: 211 for 4 in 18.4 overs (Vohra 47, Saha 54; Mishra 1-32)
Result: Kings XI Punjab won by 6 wickets.
MUMBAI INDIANS: 141 for 5 (Sharma 51, Rayudu 33; Morkel 2-35, Shakib 1-21)
KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 142 for 4 in 18.4 overs (Uthappa 80, Pathan 20 not out, Shakib 9; Harbhajan 2-22)
Result: Kolkata Knight Riders won by 6 wickets.

Scolari in tax fraud charge

AFP, Lisbon

Portugese authorities have charged Brazil's national football team coach Luiz Felipe Scolari with tax fraud, less than a month before the World Cup starts, a prosecution spokesman told AFP.

Ribery doubtful for final

AFP, Berlin



Bayern Munich star Franck Ribery admits he faces a race against time to be fit for Saturday's Germany Cup final showdown against Borussia Dortmund in Berlin due to a back injury.

"I feel good, but 90 minutes could be difficult," admitted the 31-year-old France star after training on Wednesday.

Ribery has been able to train with the team since Tuesday but admits it has been frustrating to miss training recently because of the pain.

"There hasn't been much I've been able to do and it makes it difficult to get into a rhythm," he said.

Bayern are also waiting on midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger who suffered a strained knee ligament in Saturday's final Bundesliga match against Stuttgart.

Director of sport Matthias Sammer said

they are looking at the injury "on a day-to-day" basis and coach Pep Guardiola will make a decision with Schweinsteiger, who has been unable to train all week.

With the Bundesliga secured, Bayern are eager to finish the season with the double to compensate for being knocked out of the Champions League's semi-finals after a 4-0 drubbing at the hands of Real Madrid.

The cup final is a repeat of the 2013 Champions League final and Berlin's imposing Olympic Stadium will host the fourth and final time Bayern and Dortmund meet this season.

Borussia lead this season's 'Der Klassiker' series with two wins to Bayern's one after Dortmund's 3-0 league rout in Munich last month.

"The German Cup final is on a par with the Champions League final for us," said Guardiola who is hoping to win his fourth title of the season having also lifted the UEFA Super Cup and Club World Cup.



AFP, Paris



France coach Didier Deschamps on Tuesday left Manchester City midfielder Samir Nasri out of a young 23-man squad for this year's World Cup in Brazil.

Neither 26-year-old Nasri, who has won 41 caps, nor Monaco captain Eric Abidal, capped 67 times, feature in the squad or on the seven-man standby list.

"He is a player of great quality, but Samir's performances for France have not been of the standard of those with his club Manchester City," Deschamps said after revealing his squad live on French television channel TF1's

evening news programme.

"He is an important player and a first-pick for Manchester City and that is not the case for France.

"And when he is a substitute he is not happy, and that is felt by the squad as a whole. That is why he is not on the list."

Nasri, who was also left out of Raymond Domenech's squad for the 2010 World Cup, last played for France in the 2-0 defeat to Ukraine in the first leg of last November's World Cup qualifying play-off.

Abidal also played in that game before losing his place, and Deschamps admitted that he preferred to take a younger player than the former Barcelona man, who is now 34.

There are eight players aged under 25 in the squad, including the Real

Italy recall Cassano

AFP, Turin



Italy coach Cesare Prandelli on Tuesday lifted the World Cup hopes of Giuseppe Rossi, Antonio Cassano, Ciro Immobile and Mattia Destro by naming them in his 30-man squad for Brazil.

Prandelli is to trim his squad to 23 by June 2.

Rossi only recently returned from a four-month injury lay-off but the Fiorentina star must reach full fitness for Brazil at a 10-day training camp beginning next week.

Cassano has not played since the 2012 European Championships, but has been solid for Parma in Serie A this season and regularly been tipped as a

support striker for AC Milan marksman Mario Balotelli.

Torino's Immobile leads the Serie A scoring charts on 22 goals and is believed to have the edge over Roma forward Mattia Destro.

Prandelli, who against all expectations led Italy to the Euro 2012 final where they lost 4-0 to Spain, definitively excluded Alberto Gilardino, Luca Toni and teenage goalkeeper Simone Scuffet.

Among the surprises are Milan's Ignazio Abate, Napoli's Christian Maggio -- who only returned to action last week after three months recovering from a collapsed lung -- and Verona's Brazilian-born midfielder Romulo.

Prandelli said recently he had already decided most of the 23 players he would take to Brazil, and that there would be three goalkeepers, seven defenders, eight midfielders and five strikers.

PROVISIONAL SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Gianluigi Buffon (Juventus), Mattia Perin (Genoa), Salvatore Sirigu (Paris Saint Germain), Antonio Mirante (Parma)
Defenders: Ignazio Abate (Milan), Andrea Barzagli (Juventus), Leonardo Bonucci (Juventus), Giorgio Chiellini (Juventus), Matteo Darmian (Torino), Mattia De Sciglio (Milan), Christian Maggio (Napoli), Gabriel Paletta (Parma), Manuel Pasqual (Fiorentina), Andrea Ranocchia (Inter)
Midfielders: Alberto Aquilani (Fiorentina), Antonio Candreva (Lazio), Daniele De Rossi (Roma), Claudio Marchisio (Juventus), Riccardo Montolivo (Milan), Thiago Motta (Paris Saint Germain), Marco Parolo (Parma), Andrea Pirlo (Juventus), Romulo (Verona), Marco Verratti (Paris Saint Germain)
Strikers: Mario Balotelli (Milan), Antonio Cassano (Parma), Alessandro Cerci (Torino), Mattia Destro (Roma), Ciro Immobile (Torino), Lorenzo Insigne (Napoli), Giuseppe Rossi

Travel Insurance with JBC

JBC Overseas Mediclaim Policy (B&H), (CFT) & (E&S) (Accident and Sudden Sickness Policy)

- Policy Issuance through One Stop Service
- Comprehensive coverage
- Maximum Coverage with Minimum Paper work
- Travelling World-Wide Schengen & Non Schengen Countries
- Inclusive U.S.A & Canada or Exclusive U.S.A & Canada

Download: • Brochures • Proposal Form

Log in: www.jbc.gov.bd
email: tad@jbc.gov.bd

Call: 02-9560918 01711857910 01716518500

জীবন বীমা কর্পোরেশন

একমাত্র রাষ্ট্রীয় জীবন বীমা প্রতিষ্ঠান

Jiban Bima Corporation

Only State-Owned Life Insurance Corporation

প্রধান কার্যালয়ঃ ২৪ মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১০০০।
email : info@jbc.gov.bd, Web : www.jbc.gov.bd

Celebrating 41 Years of Service

GD-2091