



PREMIUM DAIRY ICE CREAM

Diego the jinx?

Diego Maradona has hit out at claims he was acting as a 'jinx' on the team. Julio Grondona, the president of the Argentina FA, claimed "the jinx left and we won" after Maradona had left the stadium during the closing minutes. Maradona's reply was instant; "So, someone said that the goal was scored because I left," he began, before referring to Grondona as a 'moron' and raising his middle finger to the camera. He added, bitterly: "My message to Grondona is that I paid for the clothes on my back through hard work."

--INTERNET


CHOCO VANILLA



TASTE OF TOGETHERNESS
MI AMORE



DHAKA MONDAY JUNE 23, 2014
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TODAY'S MATCHES




AUSTRALIA SPAIN

Time: 10:00pm
Venue: Arena da Baixada




NETHERLANDS CHILE

Time: 10:00pm
Venue: Arena de Sao Paulo




CROATIA MEXICO

Time: 2:00am (Tuesday)
Venue: Arena Pernambuco




CAMEROON BRAZIL

Time: 2:00am (Tuesday)
Venue: Estadio Nacional



Though Brazil's place in the round of 16 is not confirmed as yet, their stars Neymar (R) and Dani Alves appeared relaxed in their training session in Fortaleza.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

মানসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশী পণ্যের ব্যবহার
শিল্প বিকাশে সহায়ক



CROWN CEMENT
FOR SOLID FOUNDATION

CAMEROON V BRAZIL Selecao odds-on favourites

REUTERS, Brasilia

Brazil's perfect record against African teams at the World Cup suggests that Monday's Group A match against a demoralised, discredited Cameroon should be little more than a stroll in the park.

Goalless Cameroon have already been knocked out of the competition and would seem to be the perfect opponents for the stuttering hosts to find their rhythm and sort out their disjointed midfield.

Brazil have four points from their opening two games and need a draw to make the last 16, which should be a formality against the Indomitable Lions whose seventh World Cup campaign has fallen into disarray in sadly familiar style.

Cameroon's troubles began before they even left home when the players, having snubbed Prime Minister Philemon Yang, then refused to get on their expensively-chartered aircraft for Brazil in a protest over money.

After losing 1-0 to Mexico, they were eliminated in a shambolic 4-0 defeat to Croatia where Alex Song was sent off in the first half for striking an opponent and full back Benoit Assou-Ekotto appeared to headbutt team mate Benjamin Moukandjo near the end of the match.

Coach Volke Finke described their conduct as disgusting and the Cameroon federation are investigating. "The behaviour of some of them was not at all satisfying. It's unacceptable to see that kind of thing," said Finke.

Brazil have played six matches against African sides at the World Cup and won each time.

The first game was against the former Zaire at the 1974 edition, a game which became famous after a player from the African side broke from the defensive wall at a Brazil free kick, hoofed the ball away and was booked for his pains.

The was followed by a hard-fought 1-0 win over Algeria in 1986 and fairly unremarkable 3-0 wins over Cameroon in 1994, on the way to Brazil's fourth world title, and Morocco four years later.

Brazil also won 3-0 when they met Ghana in the round-of-16 in 2006 and comfortably saw off Ivory Coast 3-1 at the last World Cup.

Cameroon did, however, win their last meeting with Brazil when Samuel Eto'o scored the only goal in a match at the 2003 Confederations Cup.

Brazil have yet to find the free-flowing form they displayed on the way to winning last year's Confederations Cup and their 0-0 draw with Mexico on Tuesday ended a 10-match winning run.

Their midfield has been short on inspiration and failed to provide forward Neymar with the space and supply of passes he needs to torment defenders.

"When you compare the Confederations Cup with the World Cup it's not the same, all the teams are very prepared for the World Cup," said defender David Luiz. "The level today is very high.

"Many teams have studied us so it's harder now," added left back Marcelo. "We know we have to do what Felipeao (coach Luiz Felipe Scolari) tells us but that's the World Cup, each game is harder than the one before."

Spain's early exit a lesson for all: Alves

AFP, Teresopolis

Brazil defender Dani Alves said Saturday Spain's premature World Cup exit was a lesson for teams as to how difficult it is to achieve success at the highest level.

Crushing losses to Holland and Chile left Spain suffering one of the earliest ever exit by defending champions and Alves told reporters that as a Barcelona player he felt for Vicente del Bosque's men.

"It's a shame and I feel for my friends over there. But it is a lesson as to how very difficult the competition is. It may seem easy but a detail can knock you out," Alves told reporters at Brazil's Granja Comary base outside Rio.

Alves said the Brazilians were conscious of the home fans' high expectations as the Selecao chase a sixth crown.

But he insisted that despite the Mexico stalemate "we are evolving compared with the opening match," a 3-1 come-from-behind success over Croatia.

"Sometimes results can confuse people," added Alves, with Brazil having produced several good chances against the Mexicans, whose goal-keeper Guillermo Ochoa denied them spectacularly throughout.

THIRD EYE Cometh the hour

OSAMA RAHMAN

It took just the right mix of magic and manoeuvre to produce one of this World Cup's most memorable goals. Arguably the greatest player ever seen, Lionel Messi toiled with his illustrious teammates against an impenetrable Iran defence. With four forwards leading the line, the men in the famous blue and white of the Albiceleste attacked with a vengeance from the get-go but Carlos Queiroz's men were not backing down from a fight. The Iranians defended in numbers, brutally at times, making Argentina's four-pronged attack a forgotten threat. Then, in the 91st minute, Messi struck. The one-man show sidestepped two defenders, opened up some space for himself and curled in a left-footer from 25 yards out. The match was sealed.

But more than Messi, there must have been something in the air on Saturday night. The magic refused to cease and a new set of new-age warlocks took to the pitch. As the Germans were pitted against the Ghanaians, many had already decided the result. Germany's rout of Portugal was fresh in everyone's memory but so was Ghana's unfair elimination in the last World Cup. Germany started brightly as expected but Kwesi Appiah's men had a game plan, one that they honed throughout the 90 minutes. When the Germans began their pressing game, the Ghanaians decided to nip the problem in the bud. Kevin-Prince Boateng and Sulley Muntari targeted Sami Khedira and Philip Lahm, eliminating any play from the middle. This helped push dangerman Thomas Mueller to the wings, whilst Mario Goetze moved in the central attacking role. Mesut Ozil, usually found on the left, found himself bruised and battered, despite making four chances for his team. It seemed that Ghana

would bully Germany into submission.

However, Mueller, with three goals in one match already to his name, sent in a fine cross, from which Goetze equalised. Ghana's reaction was immediate, with substitute Andre Ayew getting in on the score sheet. Without warning, Ghana went on to take the lead, Muntari's vision and Asamoah Gyan's redemption fuelling them towards their second goal. With precious minutes left on the clock, all eyes turned towards Germany manager Joachim Loew. In a move that would have made Roy Hodgson proud, Loew, brushed aside the talents of youth like Andre Schurrle and opted instead to deploy mid-field legend Bastian Schweinsteiger and the evergreen Miroslav Klose. While many may have gone a different route, Loew knew what he was doing.

Klose, the best striker Germany has produced in recent years, grabbed the opportunity with both hands, scoring the ultimate equaliser, bringing Germany on equal terms with Ghana at 2-2 and equalling Brazilian great Ronaldo's record of 15 goals, a feat Klose achieved in 20 World Cup games. A somersault followed and the man many felt was already replaced proved his worth to the team, his manager and his detractors. The 36-year old, in what is surely his last World Cup, played the role he was born for. The Polish born forward, with a simple tap-in at the far post, had answered all his critics, sealed his legacy and proved his quality. It was time for ustoeathumble-pie.

Ghana's clash with Germany had been one of the World Cup's best and it means that no one has made it out through the group and the battle here will be fought till the death. Many magical memories were made this magical night but none compared to the coming of age of one striker on the World Cup stage and the last bright burst from a fading star.

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• for details, see inner



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