

PREMIUM DAIRY ICE CREAM

Adidas celebrates Messi's birthday

Lionel Messi has just turned 27 on Tuesday. So, to celebrate, Adidas have made a special edition pair of football boots for the superstar to don on his special day. His new footwear are a technicolor version of the adizeroTM f50 Messi boots, which the Argentinian wizard is currently wearing at the World Cup in Brazil. There are to be 27 total pairs made in total -- one for each year of his life -- with two exclusive signed

CHOCOLATE FUDGE BROWNIE

TASTE OF TOGETHERNESS MI AMORE

DHAKA WEDNESDAY JUNE 25, 2014
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TODAY'S MATCHES

NIGERIA ARGENTINA

Time: 10:00pm

Venue: Estadio Beira-Rio

BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA IRAN

Time: 10:00pm

Venue: Arena Fonte Nova

HONDURAS SWITZERLAND

Time: 2:00am (Thursday)

Venue: Arena Amazonia

ECUADOR FRANCE

Time: 2:00am (Thursday)

Venue: Estadio do Maracana



A Brazilian fan cheers for her team against Cameroon at the Mane Garrincha National Stadium in Brasilia on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Photo of the Day

Paint Your Imagination

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'Didn't want Chile' THIRD EYE Not as good as it seems for Brazil

AFP, Brasilia

Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari on Monday insisted that his side are getting better all the time but acknowledged that a last-16 tie against Chile was not what he wanted.

The World Cup hosts clinched first place in Group A after a Neymar-inspired 4-1 win against already-eliminated Cameroon at the National Stadium in Brasilia.

And the result ensured that they would face Group B runners-up Chile, beaten 2-0 by the Netherlands earlier in the day, in Belo Horizonte on Saturday.

"I feel good now that we have qualified and I am thinking about my team. I know that they are going to keep improving," said Scolari after seeing Neymar score twice and Fred and Fernandinho also find the target.I have played against Chile two times before and I know how difficult a side they are. Some people think we will beat Chile easily but they are a quality side, well organised.

"If I could have chosen our opponents I would not have chosen them."

Brazil and Chile are familiar foes, having met each other twice in friendly matches since the return of Scolari for a second spell as coach.

In April last year the sides drew 2-2 at the Mineriao in Belo Horizonte, the same stadium where they will meet on Saturday, with Neymar scoring one of Brazil's goals that day.

Then, last November, Brazil emerged 2-1 winners in a friendly played in Canada, with Hulk and Robinho scoring either side of an Eduardo Vargas goal for the Chileans.

Those results indicate that this encounter will be a tough one to call, especially with Chile having impressed in qualifying from their group ahead of 2010 world champions Spain.

And Chile will be eager to get revenge for defeats suffered at the hands of Brazil in the last 16 in each of their last two appearances at the World Cup.

In 1998, Brazil won 4-1 in Paris, while in 2010 they triumphed 3-0 in Johannesburg.

Current form suggests this should be a much closer affair, but Scolari is pleased with the way his side have improved since the start of the tournament as they progress from their group with seven points taken from a possible nine.

"We are almost at the ideal level and it is important to be at that level going into the knockout rounds," said the 65-year-old Scolari, who coached Brazil to glory at the 2002 World Cup.

"Now we need to commit fewer mistakes. In the group stage you can get away with slipping up once as long as you win your other two matches. Now you can't afford to because one goal can decide a match.

"Today (Monday) we scored goals and improved yet again. In the next match we will need to improve a little bit more again to beat a very good Chile team.

"Sometimes we wanted to do too well. We need to calm down. I thought we played well. We had to correct some things at half-time but after that we did better in the second half."

Brazil will return briefly to their training base in Teresopolis, outside Rio de Janeiro, to prepare for the clash with Chile and Scolari will consider possible changes to his starting line-up.

He is likely to remain loyal to Fred, the under-fire striker who broke his World Cup scoring duck with Brazil's third goal against Cameroon, but Fernandinho made a compelling case for inclusion in the starting line-

AL-AMIN

After Brazil's 4-1 win against Cameroon Monday night a lot of people will feel that the Selecao have finally come to the party in the irrepressible fashion that is expected of them. In scoring terms they have definitely entertained the world audience on a night where as many as 14 goals were scored in four games. But for a loyal Brazil follower the performance marked just a slight improvement from their first two games and definitely not one for others to follow. Fred did score a goal which could have been easily ruled off side. Oscar was again below par and midfielder Paulinho was miserable before being withdrawn at the end of the first 45 minutes during which an otherwise lifeless Cameroon side, with two previous forgettable encounters, looked like a team to take the game away.

The only difference between the two sides was Neymar. The bundle of talent not only enjoyed (the rest at times seemed to be suffering from stage fright) his third game on the trot but also produced two clinical finishes. His first goal was a perfect placement

of a magnificent pass from Luis Gustavo. His second was a master-stroke. But here is the crux of the problem with Brazil. The team is too reliant on a particular player as is the case with Argentina.

Historically, Argentina have banked heavily on individual brilliance. But this has never been the case with Brazil, which over the years have presented the world a magnificent group of players. Pele might be the greatest Brazilian ever to grace a football field or a toothy Rolando better known as El Phenomenon. But even in the eras when the aforementioned rule they produced equally magnificent players like a Garrincha, a Socrates, a Romario et al. However, if we are to accept the cliché that change is the most unchangeable aspect of life we may have to live with the fact that Brazil's title ambitions will depend solely on Neymar's performance as Argentina's will on Messi's.

In the group stages every team has a chance to make amends for mistakes. But with the knockout stage knocking at the door, Brazil can ill afford those mistakes committed in the first three games. On Monday the defence looked vulnerable and it is time for Danny

Alves to look into his comical errors instead of spitting venom at his critics like Alan Shearer. The good news for Brazil is that Fernandinho, coming in as a second-half replacement for Paulinho, lent the solidity and flair that Brazil desperately need. And it would be a crime if he dose not start in Brazil's round of 16 clash with Chile on Saturday.

The Dutch continue to impress with Arjen Robben perhaps seemingly running as fast as a Usain Bolt.

Amidst the euphoria of this high-octane World Cup one team bowed out quietly in Curitiba, marking the end of a successful era of tiki-taka. It is not only a sad day for Spain but a day the football world will reflect with a heavy heart about a brand of football that Andre Iniesta and Co preached with great authority. It is a kind of football that captivated the world for the best part of this decade. Sadly though, people are questioning the sustainability of tiki-taka instead of asking if there is any team in the world that has the ability to master this great art that made football richer. We will have to wait for an answer come the 2018 World Cup in Russia. Long live La Roja.

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