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PREMIUM DAIRY ICE CREAM

Algeria donate money to Gaza

Algeria's World Cup squad will donate their bonus money to the people of Gaza, striker Islam Slimani has revealed. After reaching the second round of the tournament, Algeria were eliminated by Germany after an excellent display, taking Joachim Low's men into extra time before succumbing to a 2-1 defeat. The team returned to Algeria as heroes and the players have opted to donate their prize money from the summer tournament to those less fortunate. "They need it more than us," Slimani said when

PRALINE & CREAM



TASTE OF TOGETHERNESS
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SPORT

2014
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TODAY'S MATCHES

 FRANCE vs GERMANY
Time: 10:00pm
Venue: Estadio do Maracana

 BRAZIL vs COLOMBIA
Time: 2:00am (Saturday)
Venue: Estadio Castella



It's now or never ... Fred (R) has so far scored one goal in the World Cup and the onus is now the Brazil forward to raise his tally when the hosts take on Colombia in the second quarterfinal in Fortaleza today.

KEY STATS

History is in Brazil's favour, with a 60 percent win rate against Colombia during the 25 matches between the teams. Brazil have scored 55 goals to Colombia's 11.

Brazil have, however, had a less efficient attack than Colombia during the World Cup, scoring once in every six shots at goal. Colombia have scored a goal for every three attempts on target.

Colombia are the second highest scoring team in the World Cup behind the Netherlands with 11 goals.

Colombia's attacking midfielder James Rodriguez is the tournament's leading scorer with five goals.

Photo of the Day

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Benefits of psychology classes

AFP, Teresopolis

The Brazil team's use of a psychologist is helping them cope mentally with the huge burden of expectation that comes with trying to win the World Cup on home soil, according to Neymar.

Coach Luiz Felipe Scolari brought sports psychologist Regina Brandao in to work with the squad on Tuesday.

Neymar insisted on Wednesday that working with Brandao has been beneficial.

"I had never done anything like it before and I am quite enjoying it," said the forward, who stepped up to score Brazil's crucial last penalty against Chile in Belo Horizonte.

"It is not only us, in football, who are surrounded by emotion every day and need psychologists. I think it could do every person good, to make one more relaxed.

"We have a very good relationship with Regina Brandao. She is a great person. I am learning a lot and I hope to continuing doing it."

Neymar has scored four goals so far at this World Cup and has too often appeared to be the Selecao's only genuine source of inspiration.

BRAZIL V COLOMBIA

Winning ugly no issue for Brazil

AFP, Fortaleza

Brazil striker Neymar has admitted he is happy to win ugly as he looks to take another step towards delivering his country's sixth World Cup on home soil against Colombia in Fortaleza on Friday.

La Selecao have been criticised for some of their less convincing performances on route to the quarterfinals, most notably in squeezing past Chile on penalties in the last 16.

"You can't always enjoy yourself and win 4-0 or 5-0. Football nowadays is so difficult, so even, that the team who is most committed on the pitch ends up winning," said the Barcelona man on Wednesday.

"I don't want a show. That's the last thing we are trying to do. We are not necessarily here to produce a spectacle. We are here to run to the end, until we are tired, and come out as winners."

Neymar fell to the ground in tears as Chile's Gonzalo Jara missed the decisive spot-kick in the shootout in Belo Horizonte with teammates Julio Cesar and captain Thiago Silva also seen to cry in relief as much as joy.

Worried that carrying the expectations of 200 million Brazilians is becoming too much for his squad, coach Luiz Felipe Scolari called the team's sports psychologist Regina Brandao in for an extra session with

the players on Tuesday.

And Neymar said the sessions were having the desired effect.

"I had never done anything like it before and I am quite enjoying it," added the 22-year-old.

"It is not only us, in football, who are surrounded by emotion every day and need psychologists. I think it could do every person good, to make one more relaxed."

Neymar also insisted he will be fully-fit to face the Colombians despite suffering thigh and knee injuries against Chile.

One of the major concerns for Scolari has been the lack of support for Neymar in attacking areas as he has scored half of his side's eight goals after four games, whilst other forwards Fred, Jo and Hulk have struggled to make an impact.

Neymar, though, claimed the team isn't overdependent on him.

"I don't feel overburdened either on the pitch or off it. I have teammates who help me by winning the ball back, scoring goals, setting them up," he said.

"The Brazil team doesn't have just one person who has to do everything." Scolari will be forced into at least one change from the side that faced Chile as Luis Gustavo is suspended so Tottenham Hotspur's Paulinho is expected to come back into the side.

Gustavo's absence is even more

critical for the hosts given the sensational form of the tournament's top goalscorer, Colombia's James Rodriguez.

The Monaco playmaker has taken on the mantle of his side's focal point with ease in the absence of the injured Radamel Falcao with five goals in four games, including a sensational dipping volley to open the scoring in his side's 2-0 win over Uruguay in the last 16.

A fourth consecutive win for Jose Pekerman's men took them into the last eight for the first time and ahead of the biggest game in Colombian football's history, midfielder Carlos Sanchez insisted they won't be overawed by their opponents.

"Afraid? No, respectful, yes, because it's Brazil, the organising country, because of its players, its coaches, and for everything Brazil represents," he said.

And Rodriguez believes Brazil should be just as worried about him as his countrymen should be about Neymar.

"We're facing a very tough rival, which has great players, but they also have to think that we have great players."

History, though, is against the Colombians as they have only beaten Brazil twice in 25 previous meetings and only once in a competitive fixture at the 1991 Copa America.

Argentine plots Brazil downfall

AFP, Fortaleza

In the closest set of last 16 matches ever at a World Cup, only Jose Pekerman's Colombia were comfortable victors, sweeping aside a despondent Uruguay 2-0 to cruise into the quarter-finals.

Now, though, comes the real test for 'Los Cafeteros' and their Argentine manager as he aims to bring down a 200 million people strong expectant nation in Brazil riding a wave of emotion that saw them squeeze past Chile into the last eight.

Another James Rodriguez-inspired victory over Uruguay means Colombia are one of only two sides in Brazil to have won all four of their games without the need for extra time.

James has been the star, scoring five of his side's 11 goals, but that they have also only conceded twice speaks wonders of Pekerman's ability to strike a balance despite possessing an array of talented young forward players and an ageing defence.

Pekerman is now also level with double World Cup winner Vittorio Pozzo as the only coach to go nine games unbeaten in open play.

However, the 64-year-old's bitter exit with Argentina in 2006 on penalties to hosts Germany has left him with unfinished business at the World Cup.

Having shone in the group stages and beaten Mexico in the last 16 thanks to Maxi Rodriguez's wonder strike, Argentina looked well set for their first World Cup semi-final in 16 years thanks to Roberto Ayala's headed opener.

With his side leading with 20 minutes to go, Pekerman controversially removed playmaker Juan Roman Riquelme and left a 19-year-old Lionel Messi on the bench to try

and see the game out.

The decision backfired as Miroslav Klose equalised, the Germans prevailed on penalties, and Pekerman swiftly offered his resignation.

Eight years on Pekerman has the chance to banish those ghosts and repay his own country as well as his adopted Colombia by knocking out Argentina's eternal rivals from their own World Cup.

Brazil and Colombia have arrived at the same point by very different means. The pressure and tension which surrounds every game the hosts play is palpable not only within the stadium, but around the entire country.

By contrast, Colombia, having lost star striker Radamel Falcao to a serious knee injury, have played in a more care-free manner which has allowed their flair players, particularly James, to shine.

Colombia are expected to do more than merely disturb Brazil come Friday in the heat of Fortaleza.

In stark contrast to his opposite number on the Brazilian bench Luiz Felipe Scolari's reliance on feeding the emotions of his players, Pekerman's strength lies in his tactical prowess.

He has already shown his flexibility in this competition by switching from a one striker system that worked so well in the group stages to playing two up front when he knew his side would have to take the game to a dogged Uruguay.

A switch back to a five man midfield is expected as Pekerman looks to frustrate Brazil and feed on their anxiety.

But don't expect Colombia's adopted mastermind to get overly conservative should his side go in front against the hosts. That is a lesson from which he should have learned.

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