



Can captain Philipp Lahm (C) lead Germany to the ultimate glory?

#### Rojo cuts short training

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro Argentina defender Marcos Rojo cut short training on Friday with pains in his left shin and right ankle but should still be fine for the World Cup final, Argentine sports newspaper Ole

The squad were holding a final training session a their base in Belo Horizonte before flying to Rio de Janeiro on Saturday for the World Cup final against Germany the next day.

his knee against Nigeria,

left his team mates early,

Argentina's team spokes-

Ole said he was probabl

being protected by cautious

coaches and would hope-

fully not be at risk of miss

ing Sunday's game at the

Maracana stadium. "He

wouldn't miss the final for

nything ... it's not the case

of a 'red alert'," it said, in a

play on Rojo's name which

Cabralia on Friday.

men of a scare for Rojo.

the newspaper said.

was no word from

you have triumph and defeats, but what he has preserved is a clear-cut philosophy," said his captain Philipp Lahm, who Rojo, 24, who has been has been with Loew every step a key component of "He addresses issues and also grabbed a goal off

which need looking at early on and leaves nothing to

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Joachim Loew has again saved

Germany's best until the World Cup

finals with the 54-year-old poised to

finally claim his first major title in

Having been appointed Jurgen

Klinsmann's assistant in 2004 before

becoming head coach in 2006

Germany have reached at least the semi-

finals of all five major tournaments

during his decade involved.

years, you gain experiences,

"Everyone changes over ten

Third-place at the 2006 Friday's training session World Cup heralded was closed-door, and there Germany's return to the international stage after failing to reach the knock-out stages of Euro 2004.

> Loew took the Germans to the Euro 2008 final where they lost to a Spanish side at the start of a golden era. Despite fielding one of the voungest

squads at the 2010 World Cup, Loew's young guns hammered Australia, England and Argentina in South Africa.

Spain again ended the Germans run to the final, but this time a third-place finish failed to satisfy a title-hungry nation.

Germany coach Joachim Loew (L) gives a thumbs-up while heading for Rio de Janeiro from the town of Santa Cruz

Lahm from right-back to midfield this

Miroslav Klose, Must drop Mesut Ozil.

More grumblings followed when

Loew copied Bayern Munich coach Pep

মানসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশী পণ্যের ব্যবহার

শিল্প বিকাশে সহায়ক

Germany qualified for Brazil with nine wins from ten matches, only a stunning fight-back by Sweden, who drew 4-4 in Berlin, blotted another

The mutterings grew louder when Germany's final World Cup squad was

Despite steering Germany to a per- the only recognised striker.

The charges levied at him by the injuries.

Sami Khedira arrived from Real Madrid unfit after six months on the Too hard. Too soft. Too stubborn. Too loyal. Doesn't listen to the public. sidelines with a knee injury. Depends too much on aging striker 'Home before the semifinals' was the

general verdict from disgruntled fans. Argentina stands in the way of Loew Guardiola in switching captain Philipp winning the World Cup title at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana Stadium

lessly switched to right-back operate centrally regulated academies.

once the pair were fit. striker with a hat-trick in the Horizonte opening rout of Portugal, then But this Germany team is also epito-

and repeated faith paid off with Ozil Maracana. slowly finding his form.

is the outstanding result of Brazil 2014. per cent.

A fourth World Cup title victory will If Germany succeed in winning the tour- in the world. elevate Loew to 'football god' status nament, their success may well be traced to enjoyed in Germany by Franz Loew's decision before the quarterfinal Injury-prone 36-year-old Klose was Beckenbauer (1990), Helmut Schoen against France to revert Lahm back to his qualities in anticipating danger, reading the (1974) and Sepp Herberger (1954). most familiar right-back position.

### Loew saves best for finals Lahm symbolises fect set of 10 wins to qualify for Euro 2012, Loew started being criticised after losing to Italy in the semifinals. Captain Philipp Lahm, Bastian Schweinsteiger and Manuel Neuer all arrived at the training camp carrying Captain Philipp Lahm, Bastian Schweinsteiger and Manuel Neuer all arrived at the training camp carrying Lahm had played the first four matches of

When Germany reached the semifinals of the World Cup in 2006, the country celebrated the likes of Philipp Lahm and Bastian Schweinsteiger as success stories for the restructure of the youth system following a Khedira

Eight years after hosting the tournament, the World Cup final against Argentina on Sunday represents the finish line for the overhaul of Germany's academy system, oustanding in the defensive implemented from 2002, requiring all 36 midfield and Lahm effort- clubs in the two Bundesliga divisions to

The success of the rethink in philosophy Thomas Mueller was was highlighted by the 7-1 destruction of unveiled as Germany's new hosts Brazil in Tuesday's semifinal in Belo Pep Guardiola as one of the most intelligent

slotted back to the right wing mised by the performances of Lahm. The Bayern Munich man, now 30, is one

made up of centre-backs was will lift the trophy as captain if his team a success in the group stages triumph over Lionel Messi and Co. at the pitch, technically flawless.

dealt with in the quarterfinals, while more passes in the competition than any obvious weakness. the 7-1 semifinal thrashing of the hosts other player -- 529 at a completion rate of 87

the World Cup in central midfield -- and he performed a solid job, as ever -- but the team have struck a balance since he has been moved back, allowing a midfield trio of Schweinsteiger, Toni Kroos and Sami

SPORT

In the quarterfinal win over France and then the last four victory over Brazil, the Germans have looked cohesive, organised, difficult to break down and ruthless in the

In some respects, the change represented a concession from Loew, who had previously responded angrily to media pressure about his use of Lahm in a central midfield role.

Frequently described by his Bayern coach players he has ever worked with, Lahm has become used to playing in the position over

His versatility and flexibility have come A back four exclusively of the veterans of Joachim Loew's side and to embody the Germany team -- fluid, full of movement, comfortable in any area of the Lahm is a consistent eight out of 10 per-

Lahm has played every minute of former, the most reliable cog in a machine Old rivals France were comfortably Germany's march to Rio and has completed that, on the surface, appears to have no And he will play the final as a right-back,

the position in which he is probably the best

One brilliant challenge in the penalty box against Brazil summed up his defensive game and executing his skills.

### **BRAZILIAN BAURU**

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SCOLARI GETS STRONG BACKING The man set to lead the Brazilian Football Confederation

says the beleaguered Luiz Felipe Scolari should stay on as national team coach despite the semifinal thrashing by Germany at the World Cup. "We can all make mistakes," Marco Polo

Del Nero, set to replace Jose Maria Marin in January, told Friday's Estado de Sao Paulo

"For me, he stays." Scolari has insisted since Tuesday's 7-1 mauling to the Germans that the subject of his future in the hotseat should be left until the event has finished.

He told a news conference Wednesday he was not going to indulge in speculation about what happens next. **GERMANY BOOKIES' RED-HOT** 

**FAVOURITES** 

Germany are red-hot favourites to win the World Cup on Sunday, according to British bookmakers, with punters piling money on them to conquer Argentina in the final.

Major betting firms have the Germans as odds-on to win the tournament after their 7-1 semifinal demolition of Paddy Power, Coral and William Hill price Germany at

4/6 and Argentina 6/5 to lift the trophy; Ladbrokes make Germany 7/10 and Argentina 23/20. Alex Donohue of Ladbrokes said: "The semis couldn't have been more different but

we're betting Argentina will raise their game for the final. Germany are just favoured to edge it at this stage in a game that looks set to break betting records." In the match itself, Ladbrokes have Germany at 13/10 to win without going to penalties, a

draw after 90 minutes or extra time at 21/10 and

an Argentina win without penalties at 12/5. Coral also price Germany at 13/10 and Argentina at 12/5, but have the draw at 11/5. After Germany beat Brazil 7-1 on Tuesday, William Hill maintain the odds of 500/1 on

the same score in the final. "500/1 is the biggest correct score price we offer online and who knows, lightning might strike twice -- in which case it should probably be a little bit shorter," said Crilly.

#### Robben AFP, Brasilia

Netherlands winger Arjen Robben has been the standout performer of this year's World Cup in the eyes of Brazil coach Luiz Felipe

been the best player of the World Cup," said Scolari on Friday as he confirmed that Brazil have trained with the focus on stopping the Bayern Munich winger from causing havoc with his favoured move of cutting in from the right wing onto his left foot.

Earlier on Friday, 10-man shortlist by FIFA for the Golden Ball, the prize given to the player of the tournament.

### NOTABLE Closest to our dream: Lahm

Nine of the most

Afp, Rio De Janeiro

World Cup final in

Rio de Janeiro:

GERMANY

play to the best of

**WORLD CUP RECORD TO** 

SCORER MIROSLAV KLOSE

managed to keep Messi out,

but we too have a special

plan for him -- although I

won't give that away.'

ASSISTANT COACH

HANSI FLICK

"My tip is, it's feasible

**DEVOUT FOOTBALL FAN** 

AND CHANCELLOR

ANGELA MERKEL

"The best German perfor-

mance ever in a World Cup!!

Simply fantastic!!"

A TWEET AFTER THE 7-1

MAULING OF BRAZIL

FROM 1990 WORLD CUP

WINNING STRIKER

**JURGEN KLINSMANN** 

ARGENTINA

"It's crazy. Let's enjoy it. We

have one little step left.'

LIONEL MESSI ENJOYING

THE MOMENT AFTER THE

**SEMIFINAL WIN OVER** 

THE NETHERLANDS

'He's the water in the desert.

He finds solutions when we

think there aren't any."

**ALEJANDRO SABELLA ON** 

WHAT THE FOOTBALLING

**GENIUS MESSI BRINGS TO** 

**HIS TEAM** 

'Germany were always the

favourites, along with Brazil,

to win the World Cup. They

continue to be so now. We

need to play our own game

and it suits us that all the

pressure is on them."

MANCHESTER CITY

STRIKER SERGIO AGUER

"Penalties are all about luck,

that is the reality. I had

confidence and thanks to

God it turned out well."

**HERO OF THE SEMIFINAL** 

SHOOT-OUT SERGIO

results of a way, so to speak"

SABELLA ASSESSING THE

STATE OF HIS TROOPS

memorable Germany and Argentina quotes talk of a "golden generation" would mean nothing if they were defeated by Argentina in the World Cup final. ahead of Sunday's

Podolski were the first of a new generation of Germany players in 2004 -- the last time die Mannschaft failed to reach the last four of either the European Championship or the World Cup.

oped and matured over the years. We have many players who are pillars at great international clubs. We have shown

last, bring back the trophy to Germany.

and Thomas Muller -- have won the biggest club trophy. Lahm believes that experience could help Germany on Sunday, saving: "It's not only about die Mannschaft but also about club football. Lots of players have been able to gather

Also speaking at the news conference, Germany team manager Oliver Bierhoff praised the years of work carried out by the scouts and coaches who discover and nurture

"Philipp Lahm's youth coach, the discoverer of

# encounters

Germany skipper Philipp Lahm said the players were "a step away from making our dream come true" and warned that

Lahm, Bastian Schweinsteiger, Miroslav Klose and Lukas

"We all know what's at stake. Our generation has devel-

Neuer, Lahm, Schweinsteiger, Sami Khedira, Toni Kroos

during such a tournament.'

Thomas Muller, the Bundesliga youth academies... they are all part of this success. They all have a stake in it. Thi success has not come overnight, but has been in the ON PENALTIES) making for many years."

# 5 classic Arg-Ger

Rio de Janeiro on Sunday.

Ten years on, all four are still around, while a steady flow of new talent coming through to the international scene has led many in the media to describe this as a "golden genera-

But Lahm told reporters that Germany would have to lift Maradona's competition in one of the most the trophy for such talk to be justified, adding: "We are a

that we prepare perfectly for tournaments. "We are only one step away from making our dream

Nine of the 11 likely starters on Sunday have participated in at least one Champions League final, and seven -- Manuel

experience at the highest level, and that is an advantage

"Reaching the final is a huge success for football in

Germany will face Argentina for the third time in a World Cup final at the Maracana in

It will also be the third consecutive World Cup that the two sides have met with Germany emerging victorious on both Here, AFP sports takes a look at five clas-

sic clashes between the two: MEXICO CITY, JUNE 29, 1986 WOR **CUP FINAL: ARGENTINA 3 WEST GERMANY 2** 

Argentina claimed their second World Cup in what is remembered as Diego thrilling finals of all time.

Goals from Jose Luis Brown and Jorge Valdano either side of half-time seemed to have the Argentines well on course for victory, but two goals in seven minutes from Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and Rudi Voeller brought Germany level.

However, despite not scoring in the fi himself, Maradona made a vital contribution as his pass set Jorge Burruchaga clear to slot home the winner four minutes from

FINAL: WEST GERMANY 1 ARGENTINA 0 Four years later it was the same two sides in the final, but far less of a spectacle as the

ROME, JULY 8, 1990 WORLD CUI

penalty five minutes from time. In an ill-tempered game, Argentina ended with nine men after Pedro Monzon and Gustavo Dezotti received the first ever

thanks to Andreas Brehme's controversial

red cards in a World Cup final. BERLIN, JUNE 30, 2006 WORLD CUP QUARTERFINAL: GERMANY ARGENTINA 1 (GERMANY WIN 4-

In 2006 Germany surpassed measured expectations as hosts by reaching the semifi-nals after coming from behind to beat Jose Pekerman's well-fancied Argentinian side.

Roberto Ayala had headed the South Americans' into an early second-half lead,

record in World Cup penalty shootouts to four from four as Jens Lehmann saved from Ayala and Esteban Cambiasso.

CUP QUARTERFINAL: GERMANY 4 ARGENTINA 0

side under Maradona's tutelage with all of Lionel Messi, Gonzalo Higuain and Carlos The Germans scored three times in the

also got on the scoresheet. FRANKFURT, AUGUST 15, 2012

ARGENTINA 3 The last meeting between the two ended in victory for Argentina, though, after Germany were left to play an hour with 10 men after goalkeeper Ron-Robert Zieler was Germans got their revenge with a 1-0 win

> new Barcelona teammate Marc-Andre ter goal had put the visitors in front.

LAST MEETING: ARGENTINA 3-1 GERMANY (15 AUGUST 2012, INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY)

INFO ZONE



WC GOALS **TEAM FORMATION** 

**GOALS SCORE** 

4-3-3 Neuer 4: Howedes, Hummels 4: Zabaleta, Demichelis, Boateng, Lahm

3: Ozil, Mueller, Klose

Khedira, Schweinsteiger, Kroos



Romero

Garay, Basanta

3: Biglia, Mascherano, Perez

3: Lavezzi, Messi, Higuain

# 1

### Superstar Lionel Messi (2nd from L) is headstrong to bring home Argentina's third World Cup. Difficult path to promised land

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

From Bramall Lane in Sheffield to a World Cup final in Brazil, Argentina boss Alejandro Sabella's path to the most important game in world football wasn't always paved with gold.

ager, was a modest professional and after an than Maradona managed four years ago. early career breakthrough at River Plate found himself in the unusual surrounds for on Friday that Sunday's final against the first time at Estudiantes in 2009 with Sosa out of the 23-man squad altogether. an Argentinian in the late 1970s of the Germany will almost certainly be his last almost instant success. English lower leagues with Sheffield United. game in charge of Argentina no matter the In his first year the club from La Plata should be overcome the odds one last time

রাত জেগে

sign a teenage Diego Maradona but found Maradona failed in a 4-0 thrashing by the time in 39 years in a not too dissimilar cheaper option in Sabella instead.

However, whilst the 59-year-old might described him as the antithesis to Maradona. have been unable to emulate Maradona's An understated and humble coach with a genius on the field, he has done a much better meticulous eye for tactical details. job of leading his country to the brink of a After 15 years as assistant to Daniel Sabella the player, much like the man-third World Cup triumph from the bench Passarella in a variety of jobs including the for Lucas Biglia over Fernando Gago in the

his asking price too high and opted for the Germans in the quarterfinals in South Africa. manner to the way La Albiceleste have Buenos Aires sports daily Ole once battled their way to the World Cup final.

Legend has it that the Blades had tried to outcome. His final task to succeed where won the Copa Libertadores for the first at the Maracana on Sunday.

He has admitted to preferring smart, hard

working players to those with more techni-

That has been shown in his preference Argentine and Uruguayan national teams, last two games and his decision to leave the Sabella's agent Eugenio Lopez confirmed Sabella stepped out on his own two feet for creative talents of Ever Banega and Jose

cal ability but little game intelligence.

Yet, it is he who could have the last laugh

TOGETHERNESS

CHOCO VANILLA

would get the duty. MI AMORE

referees for the best matches, and the Italian will PREMIUM DAIRY ICE CREAM referee the final," Boyce

FIFA head of refereeing Massimo Busacca also said that match officials have improved the football at this year's World Cup.

Happiness is to see Argentina in the World Cup final after 24 years....

but the World Cup's all-time leading scorer Miroslav Klose equalised 10 minutes from Germany then extended their perfect

CAPE TOWN, JULY 3, 2010 WORLD

Germany's young guns counter-attacked to perfection after Thomas Mueller's early opener in the last eight in 2010 as they nullified the threat of an unbalanced Argentina

final quarter as Klose added two more to his tally, whilst veteran defender Arne Friedrich

FRIENDLY: GERMANY 1

sent-off for tripping Jose Sosa. Messi's resulting penalty was saved by Stegen, but the four-time World Player of the Year made amends to double Argentina's lead after Sami Khedira's own

Angel di Maria's wonder strike made it 3-0 before Benedikt Hoewedes restored some pride for the Germans nine minutes



Nicola Rizzoli of Italy will referee the World Cup final between Germany and With a European and South American team play-

> referee for Sunday's game. But Rizzoli got the call to work his third Argentina match at this year's World "It is unbelievable for me," Rizzoli said in a video interview released Friday by

ing, many had expected

FIFA to appoint an Asian

FIFA. "I represent Italy in this moment. I want to be one of the best for sure, and I He is the second Italian to referee the final in the past four World Cups.

when Germany lost to Brazil 2-0 in the 2002 final in Yokohama, Japan. Now head of UEFA refereeing, Collina has been a strong supporter of his

Pierluigi Collina refereed

compatriot's career. Rizzoli was the referee for he all -- German Champions League final in 2013, when Bayern Munich beat Borussia Dortmund 2-

FIFA refereeing committee chairman Jim Boyce said earlier Friday that Rizzoli "We choose the best

Rizzoli has already worked three matches at this year's World Cup, including Argentina's quarterfinal victory over Belgium and a group win over Nigeria. He also handled the high -- profile match between the Netherlands and Spain on the second day of the tour-

Busacca said their understanding of the game helped

increase the number of goals scored and playing MY LOVE time per match from four years ago in South Africa. time per match from four

### Scolari hails

বিশ্বকাপ ফুটবল



Robben was included on a









