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## Santos left speechless

GOAL.COM

Portugal coach Fernando Santos said he had no words to describe Cristiano Ronaldo after the Real Madrid star scored a late winner against Denmark.

The Selecao appeared to be heading for a draw in Copenhagen when the 29-year-old headed home in the final minute of added time to give his side a much-needed victory.

"Cristiano is Cristiano. He is a winner, and there are no adjectives to describe him," the former Greece boss told reporters.

"We knew that Denmark were very strong. I think they saw the match against France and changed from their normal tactics, from a 4-3-3 to 4-4-2 trying to control the match.

"Thank God, we managed to win and I hope it's the first of many victories. I believe we definitely deserved it - we were very good in the first half and hit the post.

"The team were always seeking victory, then Cristiano took a cross from [Ricardo] Quaresma. He had other chances, but the ball wouldn't go in."

Portugal currently sit third in Group I of the Euro 2016 qualifiers, behind the Danes and surprise leaders Albania.

## Honduras hold USA

AFP, Boc Raton

Maynor Figueroa headed home the equalizer in the 86th minute Tuesday to give Honduras a 1-1 draw with the United States in an international football friendly.

The 31-year-old Premier League standout for Hull City leaped between US defender Jermaine Jones and American goalkeeper Nick Rimando and noddled in the tying goal.

Jozy Altidore, a striker for English side Sunderland, had put the Americans ahead with a goal in the 10th minute.

It was second match in five days in which the US squad surrendered a late equalizer, with Enner Valencia scoring in the 88th minute for Ecuador in a 1-1 draw Friday at East Hartford, Connecticut.

## Serbia-Albania tie abandoned

AFP, Belgrade

A Euro 2016 qualifying match between Serbia and Albania was abandoned after a drone carrying a political message was flown over the stadium late Tuesday, sparking mayhem among Serbian supporters.

The match between the Balkan rivals was scoreless when it was stopped in the 41st minute after the drone flying a "Greater Albania" flag flew over the Partizan Stadium in Belgrade and was brought down by a Serbia player.

The incident triggered clashes between the two sets of footballers as some of the 20,000 home fans tried to assault Albanian players.

The brother of Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama was arrested over the mayhem, Serbia's interior ministry said.

Olsi Rama was accused of controlling the drone from his seat in an executive box in the stadium, the ministry said, according to Serbia's RTS state television station.

The prime minister's brother denied he had been arrested, or had any involvement in the drone incident, and later returned to Tirana.

Serbian fans hurled smoke bombs and other missiles onto the pitch in protest in a game from which Albanian fans had been barred by the Serbian Football Federation on Sunday.

The incident comes just days before Edi Rama is due to make the first visit by an Albanian premier to Serbia for 68 years.

Rama's visit, set for next Wednesday,

became possible after the normalisation of bilateral relations was sealed in April 2013 in an agreement brokered by the European Union.

Relations between Tirana and Belgrade have been strained over the issue of the mainly ethnic Albanian former Serbian province of Kosovo and the Albanian minority in southern Serbia, who frequently demand more autonomy.

In Belgrade, some see Tirana's interest as part of a plan aimed at creating a "Greater Albania" that would unite Albanian communities in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia and southern Serbia.

Kosovo's independence, proclaimed in 2008, has been recognised by more than 100 countries, including the United States and most European Union member states.

The premature and violent end to Tuesday's game was greeted with joy by nearly 5,000 Kosovar Albanians who gathered to watch on TV in the Kosovo capital Pristina, shouting "Greater Albania" and "victory".

The Serbian national team captain, Chelsea defender Branislav Ivanovic, voiced his dismay at the evening's events.

"In the name of my team I can say that we wanted to continue the match... but the Albanian players said they weren't in the physical or psychological state to continue," he said.

The formation of Kosovo was made possible by a bloody chain of events after the end of the Soviet era.

The demise of the Soviet Union in 1990-91 created the conditions for the bloody wars that broke Yugoslavia apart into six multi-ethnic states, including Serbia.

## James lifts Colombia

AFP, Harrison

James Rodriguez scored in the 74th minute to give Colombia a 1-0 victory over Canada on Tuesday in an international football friendly.

The Real Madrid striker, who was the top goal scorer in this year's World Cup, rescued the South American squad from a spirited display by the 120th-ranked team in the world.

It was Colombia's second victory in five days after a 3-0 triumph over El Salvador on Friday at the same suburban New York pitch, home of Major League Soccer's New York Red Bulls.

Radamel Falcao, a striker for Manchester United on loan from Monaco, was pulled in the 67th minute.

His best scoring chance came early in the second half when he split two defenders but lofted a shot over the crossbar from atop the penalty area.

The match was the closer of an international friendly twin bill that opened with Ecuador defeating El Salvador 5-1.

Two goals each from Enner Valencia and Joao Plata powered Ecuador.


## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited from experienced, innovative and resourceful private sector developers for development and management (short-term basis) of the proposed multi-storey building on build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis on 1 bigha (approx.) plot of land bearing "Plot no. 26, Corner of Road no. 3, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka 1205."

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**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS 15 NOVEMBER 2014**



Portugal star Cristiano Ronaldo (2nd from R) celebrates his all-important goal against Denmark during their Euro 2016 qualifier in Copenhagen on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Germany stumble again

### Ronaldo sinks Denmark

AFP, Paris



World champions Germany stumbled again in their Euro 2016 qualifying campaign on Tuesday, drawing 1-1 with the Republic of Ireland on a night where Cristiano Ronaldo and a flying drone made headlines elsewhere.

Ronaldo's late header gave Portugal a 1-0 win in Denmark to kickstart their qualifying campaign, but the meeting between Serbia and Albania in the same Group I was abandoned after crowd trouble in Belgrade.

Germany had suffered their first qualifying defeat since 2007 at the weekend, losing 2-0 in Poland in Group D, but the World Cup winners were greeted by a huge fan mosaic at one end of the stadium in Gelsenkirchen which read simply 'Thank You', proving that such a defeat could not overshadow their heroics of July.

Nevertheless, only five of the players who started in the win against Argentina in Rio de Janeiro three months ago lined up at kick-off against Martin O'Neill's men.

One of the newer faces, Borussia Dortmund's Erik Durm, smashed a shot off the bar in the first half before a precise Toni Kroos strike in the 71st minute gave Joachim Loew's men the lead.

### RESULTS

Gibraltar 0 **Greece 3** (Gelashvili 9, Okriashvili 19, Kankava 69)  
Germany 1 (Kroos 71) Ireland 1 (O'Shea 90+4)  
Poland 2 (Maczynski 12, Milik 76) Scotland 2 (Maloney 18, Naismith 57)  
San Marino 0 **Switzerland 4** (Seferovic 10, 24, Dzemaili 30, Shaqiri 79)  
Finland 0 **Romania 2** (Stancu 54, 83)  
Greece 0 **Northern Ireland 2** (Ward 9, Lafferty 51)  
Faroes 0 **Hungary 1** (Szalai 21)  
Serbia v Albania -- abandoned

But Ireland stunned their hosts by equalising in the fourth minute of added time with their first effort on target from veteran defender John O'Shea.

The result means Poland are top of Group D from Ireland on goal difference, with Scotland and Germany three points further back, while Georgia beat Gibraltar 3-0 to record their first points.

Poland took the lead against Gordon Strachan's side in Warsaw through Krzysztof Maczynski, but Shaun Maloney and Steven Naismith found the net for Scotland, leaving the hosts requiring a magnificent Arkadiusz Milik goal to earn a 2-2 draw in a thrilling match.

In Copenhagen, Cristiano Ronaldo headed in Ricardo Quaresma's cross in

the fifth minute of injury time to score his 51st international goal and give Portugal victory against their Danish hosts in their first competitive game under new coach Fernando Santos.

Meanwhile, Albania, who won away in Portugal in Group I last month, saw their match with Serbia in Belgrade abandoned after trouble started just before half-time with the score goalless.

A drone sporting the Albanian flag was flown over the stadium, sparking fury among Serbian fans and players and leading to clashes between the two teams on the pitch.

Serbian fans hurled smoke bombs and other missiles onto the pitch in protest in a game from which Albanian fans had been barred because of the sensitive relations between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Northern Ireland made it three wins from three in Group F with a remarkable 2-0 victory away to Greece in Piraeus, Jamie Ward and Kyle Lafferty finding the net either side of half-time for Michael O'Neill's side.

The result leaves Claudio Ranieri's Greece side, European champions in 2004, lagging behind with just one point so far, while a brace from Bogdan Stancu gave Romania a 2-0 win in Finland and Adam Szalai's solitary effort handed Hungary a 1-0 triumph in the Faroe Islands.

## Gignac fires France

AFP, Yerevan



Andre-Pierre Gignac marked his first start for France in more than four years with a goal and two assists as the Euro 2016 hosts eased to a 3-0 friendly win in Armenia on Wednesday.

Gignac set up goals for Loic Remy and substitute Antoine Griezmann either side of converting a second-half penalty in Yerevan as Didier Deschamps' side followed up their 2-1 friendly win over Portugal at the weekend with a comfortable victory.

Deschamps made eight changes to his starting line-up from that win on Saturday, with goalkeeper Steve Mandanda, Raphael Varane and Blaise Matuidi the only players to keep their places.

Karim Benzema, who had picked up a knock against Portugal, was dropped to the bench to allow Marseille striker Gignac, the leading scorer in Ligue 1, to start for Les Bleus for the first time since the 2-1 defeat to South Africa in the last match of their disastrous 2010 World Cup campaign.

And on the occasion of his 19th cap, Gignac did not disappoint, ensuring that he should remain part of Deschamps' future plans, although the player himself refused to get carried away.

"The competition for places in attack is ferocious. I don't think I scored any points tonight particularly," he said.

"But compared to my last call-up (for a World Cup qualifier in Georgia last year), where I was too timid, I showed greater

responsibility. I had told myself this was maybe my last chance."

Gignac needed just eight minutes to make his presence felt, controlling a long diagonal ball from Jeremy Mathieu and crossing from the right side of the box for Chelsea forward Remy to tap in at the back post.

The 28-year-old almost got his name on the scoresheet eight minutes before the interval when he was left with just the 'keeper to beat six yards from goal, but the veteran Roman Berezovski got down well to save.

Nevertheless, against an Armenia side deprived of Borussia Dortmund's Henrikh Mkhitaryan and several other leading players due to injury, the chances kept coming for the visitors in the second half.

When substitute Paul Pogba's weaving run into the area was ended unceremoniously by Varazdat Haroyan, Gignac stepped up to send Berezovski the wrong way from the spot and score his first international goal in exactly five years since netting in a 3-1 defeat of Austria.

Remy and Gignac both had opportunities to add to the lead before the latter's long through ball was picked up by Griezmann, who rounded replacement 'keeper Gevorg Kasparov to complete the win.

France are next in friendly action in November, when they entertain Albania and Sweden, while Armenia, who are yet to win in Euro 2016 qualifying Group I, go to Portugal next month.