

## ANTHEM CAUSES MAYHEM

El Salvador received a double whammy before kick off in their friendly against Argentina on Saturday night in Washington. First off, Lionel Messi wasn't in the Argentina starting line-up, which may have given them some hope. Then, when it came to play the El Salvador national anthem, the band at the FedEx Field played the wrong one. The El Salvador players shuffled about and looked very awkward as the national anthem of Kazakhstan was played instead of theirs! Meanwhile, the El Salvador fans in the crowd reacted with boos and hisses.



--INTERNET

## Argentina cruise without Messi

AFP, Washington

Argentina rested superstar Lionel Messi but were still too powerful for El Salvador in a 2-0 friendly win over the Central American minnows at FedEx Field here Saturday.

A deflected Ever Banega strike on 54 minutes and a curling free-kick from debutant Federico Mancuello three minutes from time secured a straightforward win for the World Cup finalists as they build towards June's Copa America in Chile.

### RESULTS

**Argentina 2** (Banega 54, Mancuello 87) El Salvador 0  
**Mexico 1** (Hernandez 14) Ecuador 0  
**Senegal 2** (Konate 66, 76) Ghana 1 (Boakye 84)

## Oz saved their best until last

FROM PAGE S1

head, adding: "That's why I love them."

Australia were on their way when player-of-the-tournament Mitchell Starc bowled Kiwis captain Brendon McCullum for a duck. The left-arm quick said it was a planned move.

"There were plenty of nerves but it was a little plan Craig McDermott and I have been working on. It was just nice to see it come off, in front of a packed MCG was amazing," he said.

Wicketkeeper Brad Haddin was in the mood to celebrate too.

"We delivered on the biggest stage," he said. "It's a great feeling at the moment, so I'm going to try and have a beer with every Australian in the stadium, it's going to be a fun night."

## Italy, Holland grounded

AFP, Paris



The Netherlands and Italy needed late equalisers to earn draws in Euro 2016 qualifying on Saturday, while Gareth Bale inspired Wales to a fine win in Israel that left them top of their group.

The Dutch were heading to a first competitive defeat on home soil since October 2000 after Burak Yilmaz put Turkey ahead in Amsterdam, but a 92nd-minute shot by captain Wesley Sneijder deflected into the net off Klaas-Jan Huntelaar to spare Oranje blushes and secure a 1-1 draw.

The draw leaves last year's World Cup semi-finalists in third place in qualifying Group A, five points behind second-placed Iceland and two points ahead of Turkey.

Only the top two in each group qualify automatically for next year's finals in France, along with the best third-place finisher.

Antonio Conte's Italy are in a rather more comfortable position than the Netherlands and remain unbeaten in Group H after coming

back to draw 2-2 with Bulgaria in Sofia.

Yordan Mineev's early own goal gave the Azzurri the lead, but Ivelin Popov and Ilian Micanski both scored for Bulgaria.

The hosts looked to be heading for a win but Brazilian-born debutant Eder, of Sampdoria, came off the bench to save a point for Italy with a fine strike with six minutes left.

### RESULTS

Kazakhstan 0 **Iceland 3** (Gudjohnsen 20, B Bjarnason 32, 90+1)  
 Czech Republic 1 (Pilar 90) Latvia 1 (A Visnakovs 30)  
 Netherlands 1 (Huntelaar 90+2) Turkey 1 (Burak Yilmaz 37)  
 Israel 0 **Wales 3** (Ramsey 45+1, Bale 50, 77)  
 Andorra 0 **Bosnia and Herzegovina 3** (Dzeko 13, 49, 62)  
**Belgium 5** (Fellaini 21, 66, Bentekes 35, Hazard 67, Batshuayi 80) Cyprus 0  
**Azerbaijan 2** (C Huseynov 4, Nazarov 90+2) Malta 0  
**Croatia 5** (Brozovic 30, Perisic 54, Olic 66, Schildenfeld 87, Pranjic 90+4) Norway 1 (Tettey 81)  
 Bulgaria 2 (Popov 11, Micanski 17) Italy 2 (Y Mineev 4-og,

## Clarke leaves with Cup in hand

FROM PAGE S1

my injury, my old injury, I should say," said Clarke, who turns 34 next week.

While Clarke was on the sidelines, Steve Smith successfully filled in as captain to lead Australia to a 2-0 Test series victory in the three remaining Tests against India and is expected to take over the ODI role full-time.

Reports at the time suggested the team had taken to Smith's style, while speculation that Clarke wanted to have a strong say in when he was ready to return to the team from injury had caused friction with Cricket Australia.

"It seems like some people in particular are going to write what they want to write," he scowled.

"I'm really happy and comfortable with my relationship with Cricket Australia firstly, certainly with my teammates.

"It's water off a duck's back for me, I've copped it my whole career. It's another day, another newspaper sold. I don't really care."

There was even talk of a fall-out with

coach Darren Lehmann and chief selector Rod Marsh over a deadline imposed on him to confirm his place in the World Cup squad.

"You won't get headlines out of me," Clarke told reporters.

Sunday's World Cup final triumph was a career pinnacle for Clarke, who won 50 of his 74 ODIs as Australia's skipper.

"It's been an honour and a privilege to represent my country, the time is right for to walk away from one-day cricket," Clarke.

But he isn't finished.

He will continue to play Test cricket looking to add to his 108 matches so far which have yielded 8,432 runs and a highest score of an undefeated 329.

And he will keep honouring former teammate Phillip Hughes who died last year by wearing a black armband in every match he plays.

"The band has got PH on it. I will wear it every game I play for Australia....this victory is dedicated to our little brother Phillip Hughes."

The Daily Star

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