

HULK BANNED FOR SUPPORTIVE SHIRT

Shanghai SIPG attacker Hulk and coach Andre Villas-Boas have been banned for two games after showing support for Oscar in his eight-match suspension. Former Chelsea star Oscar was hit with the lengthy ban after sparking a mass brawl in his side's 1-1 draw with Guangzhou R&F by appearing to deliberately blast the ball at opponents twice in quick succession. Hulk and his team-mate Wu Lei were pictured wearing t-shirts in support of Oscar after SIPG beat Henan Jianye 4-1 in the Chinese Super League on Sunday. The t-shirt worn by Hulk featured the slogan "nothing to do, nothing to say", echoing clothing worn by Oscar last week, while Wu's shirt read "nothing to do". The pair were subsequently handed two-match bans and each handed fines of RMB50000 (€6,500) by the CFA, with Villas-Boas docked RMB16000 (€2,000) as well as a stadium ban for two games for "inappropriate comments on social media".

—AGENCIES



Absent stars toast German success

AFP, Sochi



Absent World Cup-winning stars have toasted Germany's Confederations Cup success in Russia with a 4-1 semifinal win over Mexico sealing Sunday's final against Chile.

With a year to go before they defend their World Cup title, Germany's head coach Joachim Loew opted to rest most of his Brazil 2014 winners and blood the next generation.

Eyebrows were raised when Loew picked an inexperienced squad with captain Julian Draxler, 23, the most capped German in Russia with only 34 appearances.

The gamble paid off as Germany won their group and Leon Goretzka, 22, scored twice to blitz the Mexicans in the opening eight minutes of Wednesday's semifinal in only his eighth international.

"Now we want to win the title and reward ourselves for our performances so far," said man-of-the-match Goretzka.

While Germany's young guns were overpowering Mexico, their stars watching at home hailed the Sochi victory and urged their stand-ins to win Sunday's final.

"Fiiiiiiinnaaaall! 4:1. Very well done @DFB_Team #letsdoit," tweeted Thomas Mueller as Timo Werner filled his spot up front and scored Germany's third goal.

Werner, 21, who also netted twice in Sunday's 3-1 win over Cameroon in the group stages, joined Goretzka as the Confederations Cup's top-scorers with three goals each.

Germany's World Cup-winning centre-backs Jerome Boateng and Mats Hummels were equally enthusiastic.

"YES! #ConfedCup final! Proud of you boys," wrote Boateng on Twitter while Hummels posted a picture of hands clapping alongside the German flag on his account.

With Draxler leading Germany's attack, Arsenal's Mesut Ozil, Loew's first-choice attacking midfielder, was also quick to offer his congratulations.

"Yees! Final! Really happy for you guys! Enjoy your win today," wrote Ozil.

Yet the truth is only three of the current German team -- defenders Joshua Kimmich and Jonas Hector, plus Draxler, would be sure of places in Loew's first-choice team if the World Cup were to start now.

Nevertheless, Germany's young guns proved in Sochi that they can defend as well as attack.

For 89 minutes, they shut out Mexico's attack, which rallied using nearly 60 percent possession to create 25 shots on goal, compared to Germany's 12, after Goretzka's early goals.

Marco Fabian's thunderbolt free-kick gave the Mexicans a consolation goal just before the final whistle.



PHOTO:
AFP

Germany forward Timo Werner (L) celebrates after scoring the third goal with teammates Lars Stindl (C) and Leon Goretzka (R) during their Confederations Cup semifinal against Mexico at the Fisht Stadium in Sochi on Thursday.

QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:

Steph to play second-tier golf event

NBA All-Star guard Stephen Curry, who helped the Golden State Warriors capture their second title in three seasons this month, will play in a second-tier professional golf tournament in August.

F1 legend Dennis ends McLaren affair

Formula One legend Ron Dennis' 37 year relationship with McLaren ended with

the announcement he is stepping down as chairman and has sold his 25% stake in the McLaren Technology Group.

Venus Williams faces lawsuit over deadly crash

The family of a man who died in a car crash involving Venus Williams

plan to sue the tennis superstar, a lawyer said Friday.

Bolt seeks quick fix

Reuters, London

Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt believes his German doctor Hans-Wilhelm Mueller-Wohlfahrt will fix the retiring world record holder's back problems in time for the August world championships in London.

Bolt will see his long-time physician after suffering a stiff back in the build-up to his 100 metres run at the Ostrava Golden Spike meeting on Wednesday, a race he won in a modest 10.06 seconds.

"I am going to see my doctor now so I know he will fix every problem," Bolt told reporters. "Then all I need to do is train hard and get myself into some shape."

Bolt also went to Mueller-Wohlfahrt with a hamstring injury before winning three gold medals at the Rio Olympics last year.

Pogba denounces terror attacks

AFP, London

The world's most expensive footballer Paul Pogba says the four terror attacks that have killed dozens and left scores injured in England this year have nothing to do with religion.

The 24-year-old Manchester United star -- who is Muslim and went on a pilgrimage to Islam's holiest site in Mecca after the end of the season -- told the latest issue of Esquire magazine people must not give in to terror.

The French international -- who also lost his father Fassou in May -- was inspirational in the Europa League final that took place two days after a suicide bomber blew himself up at the end of a pop concert at the Manchester Arena.

United beat Ajax 2-0 with Pogba, who scored the second, dedicating the victory to the 22 victims and the scores who were injured.

"It's a very difficult moment but you cannot give up. We can't let them get in our heads -- we have to fight for it," he said.

"Sad things happen in life but you cannot stop living. You cannot kill a human being. To kill a human being -- it's something crazy, so I don't want to put religion on it."

"This is not Islam and everybody knows that. I won't be the only one saying that."

Pogba, who also won the League Cup in his first season back at United, said he drew his sense of fun from his father, who died aged 79.

"When you lose someone you love, you don't think the same way," he said.

"That's why I say I enjoy life, because it goes very fast."

"I remember when I was talking to my dad and now he's not here."

"He was a very strong man, very stubborn as well. He fought, but at his age it's not easy."

3 national booters join U-23s

SPORTS REPORTER

Three national footballers yesterday joined the ongoing training camp of the national U-23 football team that is preparing for this month's AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers at BKSP.

They are wingers Rubel Mia, Jewel Rana -- who have recovered from minor injuries -- and midfielder Hemanta Vincent Biswas, who was suffering from a fever, informed team manager Satyajit Das Rupu.

The training camp will resume today with 32 players after a five-day Eid-ul-Fitr break as Australian coach Andrew Ord trimmed his squad after releasing three players -- Rocky, Rakin and Mokshed.

The U-23 team will play three practice matches against Federation Cup champions Abahani in Dhaka on July 7, Nepal U-23 team in Kathmandu on July 11 and Sri Lanka Air Force team in Dhaka on July 14.

'Germany can win it'

AFP, Sochi



Joachim Loew hailed Germany's "brilliant" 4-1 win over Mexico in the Confederations Cup semifinal and said his youthful squad are ambitious enough to beat Chile in the final.

Loew opted not to bring his World Cup winning stars to the Confederations Cup, but Germany's young guns booked their place in Sunday's final in St Petersburg after a devastating opening spell in Sochi.

Attacking midfielder Leon Goretzka, 22, hit two goals in the first eight minutes to stun Mexico.

Timo Werner, 21, made it 3-0 midway through the second half, then Marco Fabian scored Mexico's late stunning consolation with a thunderbolt free-kick before Germany's substitute Amin Younes, 23, netted Germany's fourth.

"From the beginning, we did exactly what we set out to do -- we were very dominant and brilliant in the opening stages," said Germany's head coach Loew.

"They pushed us back a bit in the second phase of the first half, which was to be expected, and we gave up a lot of ball. All in all, 4-1 is a great result."

"We wanted to go far, but this is nothing that we could have expected at the start of the tournament."

After Germany drew 1-1 with Chile in the group stages last Thursday, Loew says his team is hungry enough to beat the Copa America champions in the final.

"Chile is the most powerful opponent in this tournament, we know them pretty well and we expect them to go for it in the final," said Loew.

"They will be trying flat out to pull it off, as they are coming to the end of their season, and we will have to try and counter that."

"A lot of work has gone into our wins. We couldn't pre-empt this (reaching the final) as some players had little experience and you couldn't calculate how they'd react."

"We've become a team over the last few weeks. There's fun in the dressing room, but they aren't over the top."

"They know there is work ahead and they are ambitious enough to beat Chile."

Goretzka and Werner are now the tournament's joint top-scorers with three goals each.

After scoring twice in Sochi, Goretzka says the Germans have a score to settle against Chile.

Lars Stindl equalised in the second half of the group stage draw in Kazan last Thursday after Alexis Sanchez rattled the Germans by poaching an early goal for the South Americans.

"I was really happy to help the team with the two goals, our single-minded goal was to reach the final so we're

delighted," said Goretzka.

"There is only one match to go."

"We're looking forward to playing Chile again, because in the second half (of the group stage match) we had the feeling the draw was not enough."

"Now we have another chance against this top flight team."

"In the first few minutes, we didn't do so well against Chile, so (against Mexico) we really wanted to get down to brass tacks and the two quick goals really calmed the team."

"We now need to reward ourselves for our hard work and we want to get the title."

After rallying from 2-0 down, Mexico are justified in being unhappy with the unflattering scoreline after having twice as many shots on goal as the Germans.

The Mexicans play Portugal in Sunday's third-place play-off in Moscow.

With 15 minutes left against Germany, Raul Jimenez headed against the crossbar as Germany's goalkeeper Marc-Andre Ter Stegen made a string of saves.

"Our way of playing is very aggressive. We try to get forward all the time and we paid for that," said Mexico's head coach Juan Carlos Osorio.

"They are fair winners, but the scoreline would seem to suggest they were way better and I don't think that was the case."

Andy, Rafa set to meet in semis

AFP, London

Defending champion Andy Murray was drawn to potentially face fellow two-time winner Rafael Nadal in the Wimbledon semifinals on Friday while Roger Federer, chasing a record eighth crown, was lined up to face three-time titlist Novak Djokovic.

Top seed Murray will start his campaign on Monday against a qualifier while second seed Djokovic tackles Slovakia's Martin Klizan before a tricky possible third round clash with old rival Juan Martin del Potro.

Federer, seeded third, starts against Alexander Dolgopolov of Ukraine while fourth-seeded Nadal, fresh from a 10th French Open triumph, has Australia's John Millman in the first round.

Murray will enter the tournament desperately trying to shake off a hip injury which played a part in his Queen's Club title defence coming to an abrupt end in the first round last week.

If the 30-year-old negotiates the first round, he would then possibly face Portugal's Joao Sousa with Dustin Brown a potential third round rival.

German showman Brown famously defeated Nadal at Wimbledon in 2015 when he was ranked at 102.

Murray could face France's Lucas Pouille in the last 16 while Djokovic, seeded two despite his world ranking having slipped to four after a slump which has seen him lose possession of all four majors, has a fourth round meeting lined-up with Gael Monfils.

Djokovic's meeting with del Potro could prove the highlight of the first week. The Serb defeated the giant Argentine in a memorable five-setter in the semifinals in 2013 while Del Potro triumphed over the Serb at the Olympics last year.

Federer has a possible last-16 duel with Grigor Dimitrov and quarterfinal against either 2016 runner-up Milos Raonic or Alexander Zverev who was swept aside by the Swiss star in the Halle final last week where the veteran claimed a ninth title.

Nadal, meanwhile, has big-serving Gilles Muller as a possible last-16 foe and Japan's Kei Nishikori or former US Open winner Marin Cilic in the last eight.

It is possible that Nadal and Federer could meet in the final for the fourth time after 2006, 2007 and 2008.

The Spaniard won their clash nine years ago in five sets and over almost five hours in a final widely regarded as one of the finest ever at the Slams.

With defending champion Serena Williams and former champion Maria Sharapova both missing from the women's tournament, this year's tournament is considered the most wide open in years.

Top seed Angelique Kerber, the runner-up to Williams last year, was drawn to face former French and US Open winner Svetlana Kuznetsova in the last-eight Friday.

Second seed Simona Halep, the French Open finalist, would face Johanna Konta who is bidding to become Britain's first women's Grand Slam winner since Virginia Wade at Wimbledon in 1977.

Konta's participation, however, was



(L-R) Legends John McEnroe, Roger Federer and Rod Laver pose with the Laver Cup in Wimbledon on Thursday. The Laver Cup is a new competition in men's tennis that pits European players against the rest of the World.

thrown into doubt as she withdrew from her semi-final at Eastbourne on Friday with a thoracic spine injury.

The world number seven banged her head in a heavy fall in her quarterfinal win over top seed Kerber on Thursday.

Konta was drawn to face Hsieh Su-Wei in the first round in Wimbledon just weeks after the Taiwanese player defeated her in the first round at Roland Garros.

The other quarters would see Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic meet Caroline Wozniacki and Elina Svitolina, who is battling a heel injury, playing Dominika Cibulkova.

Five-time champion Venus Williams opens against Belgium's Elise Mertens while new mother Victoria Azarenka, a former number one and playing her first major for more than a year, tackles young American Cici Bellis.

Emotional favourite Petra Kvitova, the two-time champion and slowly recovering from a terrifying knife attack at her home in the Czech Republic last December, begins against Sweden's Johanna Larsson.

'Fans must get behind Wenger'

AFP, London

Arsenal chief executive Ivan Gazidis on Friday urged fans to cease their heckling of Arsene Wenger and unite behind the long-serving manager.

Despite speculation about his future the 67-year-old French coach finally signed a new two-year contract after the end of last season in which Arsenal finished fifth.

"I want the atmosphere to be united," Gazidis said at a fans event on Friday. "It has been a struggle because we haven't had that."

"There has been disagreement. There has been a lack of unity and dissatisfaction. The board knows that."