Referees to get VAR help for red cards

REUTERS, Undated

Referees at the World Cup finals will be able to dish out red cards for off-the-ball incidents spotted by Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology, soccer's rulemaking body IFAB has said.

"If there is something away from the action that has been missed and it later comes to the attention of the VAR or the assistant VAR, then they can inform the referee and he can send the player off, even if it is later in the match," IFAB technical director David Elleray told The Times.

"We do not anticipate this happening very often... this would only be for serious red-card offences."

Sampaoli not happy about Israel trip

AFP, Buenos Aires

Argentina coach Jorge Sampaoli has complained that his side have to play their final World Cup warm-up match in Israel.

A hattrick from Lionel Messi gave Argentina an easy 4-0 win over Haiti on Tuesday in Buenos Aires and the squad will fly to Barcelona on Thursday to continue their preparations.

The match in Jerusalem against Israel will be their last before travelling to Russia.

"I'm not the one who decides when we play and who we play," Sampaoli said after the victory against Haiti at La

"From a sporting point of view, I would have preferred to play in Barcelona."



DEB

Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer makes a save during a practice match at the Rungghof training centre in Girlan yesterday. Nuer impressed for the Under-20 team in a 2-0 defeat against the seniors.

AFP

Neuer shines for juniors

AFP, Berlin



Manuel Neuer took another step towards the World Cup, after eight months sidelined with injury, by impressing in a training match for Germany's Under-20 against the senior team on Wednesday.

Germany's captain and goalkeeper, who suffered a fractured foot last September, impressed for the junior team in a 2-0 defeat by the senior Germany team.

He was only beaten by a Thomas Mueller penalty and a goal from Julian Draxler in the shortened training match, which was 35 minutes per half. "He faced some shots on goal and made a few very good

saves. It is another step in the right direction," said Germany's assistant coach Thomas Schneider. On Monday, Neuer played his first game back in a 7-1

win over the Under-20 team at Germany's World Cup training camp in north Italy, but his presence in the junior goal made for a much closer scoreline on Wednesday.

On Saturday, Neuer will play his first full match after injury in Germany's friendly away game against Austria in Klagenfurt.

Germany head coach Joachim Loew has said Neuer will travel to the World Cup as his first-choice providing he proves his fitness ahead of their opening game against Mexico in Moscow on June 17.

Loew has taken 27 players with him for their training camp, including four 'keepers, with four to be cut before the list of the official 23-man squad is delivered to FIFA on Monday.

France bans big screen zones Tree climber aims for summit

AFP, Paris



The threat of terrorist attacks in France has put paid to fans' hopes of watching the World Cup on big screens in public spaces, France's ministry for the interior announced Tuesday.

"I remind all publicly-elected officials of the fact that 'big screen' zones are completely forbidden in public spaces," said a statement from the ministry.

France has been subject to several terrorist attacks in recent years, leading to an increased security presence all round.

"In the current climate of terrorist threats, the security procedures used at the last European Championship must be deployed again, with the same degree of efficiency." At Euro 2016, held in France, fans wanting to watch

games on big screens in public had to do so by entering one of the 10 officially sanctioned "fan zones" in each host city, at which there was a heavy security presence. Tuesday's directive suggested that city officials hoping to



bend the rules and organise their own fan zones with big screens can do so.

But "these transmissions, organised under their responsibility, can only be held in closed or strictly controlled areas (stadiums, sports venues, conference centres halls etc.)"

These areas would also require a "heavy security presence" and be at the "cost of the organiser".

The 2018 World Cup in Russia will be held June 14-July 15. On May 12 Khamzat Azimov, a Frenchman of Chechen origin who was on a list of terrorist suspects, knifed a 29year-old bystander to death and injured five others in an unprovoked attack in central Paris.

AFP, Buenos Aires



Argentina coach Jorge Sampaoli's career got a leg up when he was spotted up a tree barking orders at his home town's amateur side.

The tree offered the best vantage point at a ground where there was no stand. That day, as was often the case, the referee had banished Sampaoli from the touchline for protesting.

The story goes that an executive at Newell's Old Boys saw a photograph of the budding coach up the tree in the local paper, liked Sampaoli's passion and offered him a job coaching Newells' second-division nursery club, Argentina de Rosario.

It gave Sampaoli, nicknamed "Lefty", his start in the professional game. Years later, after successfully managing club sides in Peru, Chile and Ecuador, his big breakthrough came when he coached Chile to

victory in the 2015 Copa America.

Success took him to Europe, where he coached Sevilla, before being tapped last year by a desperate Argentine football association on the brink of failing to qualify for Russia.

It took a backs-to-the-wall performance at high altitude in Quito and a Lionel Messi hattrick to beat Ecuador 3-1 and qualify. The key to a good showing in Russia is to

unsurprisingly. He believes Messi should play with the shackles off, as he does for Barcelona. It's

get the best out of Messi, Sampaoli says

what the world wants to see. His mission is to win the cup, to succeed where Jose Pekerman failed in Germany in 2006, where Diego Maradona failed in South Africa in 2010 and where Alejandro

Sabella failed in Brazil four years ago. "Football owes a World Cup to Messi," he

Usain Bolt trains at Norwegian club

REUTERS, Oslo

Bombonera.



Multiple Olympic sprint champion Usain Bolt is training with Norwegian

he pursues his dream of becoming a professional footballer, newspaper Verdens Gang reported on Wednesday. The 31-year-old Jamaican, who retired

from athletics after winning eight Olympic gold medals, is a soccer fanatic and trained with the club in Drammen, some 40km south-west of Oslo, earlier on Wednesday. He also hopes to play some part in a

friendly against the club's Under-19 side.

"I want to try to get better, to work as hard



as I can, play as much as I can. Maybe a club will see something and decide to give me a chance," said Bolt, who hung up his spikes after last year's world championships in London.

Stromsgodset sporting director Jostein Flo said Bolt was given shirt number 9.58 - his world record time for the 100 metres - to wear during his time at the club

and added that he may get a chance to play in a game to show what he can do. The Stromsgodset players were surprised

to find the world's fastest man in their dressing room on Wednesday, Flo said.

"We told them a player was coming to try out and that he was damn fast - the door opened, and Bolt came in. It was a shock for them, they couldn't believe it," Flo added.



