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THINK TOMORROW

KFA WON'T PUNISH EGG-THROWERS

The Korea Football Association (KFA) has decided not to pursue charges against people who threw eggs at the national team after they arrived home from the World Cup, police said on Tuesday. "Throwing eggs is considered an assault, but it's also an offence which can't be prosecuted without the victim's objection."



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Star DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 4, 2018, ASHAR 20, 1425 BS
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SPORT



FIFA WORLD CUP
RUSSIA 2018



SWEDEN 1:0 SWITZERLAND

Sweden striker Emile Forsberg (R) landed a decisive yet cruel blow to Switzerland as his strike from outside the box took a wicked deflection and sailed into the net in a round of 16 match in Saint Petersburg yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Then there were eight

STAR SPORT DESK

The die is cast and the quarterfinals of the World Cup kick-off Friday with three of the remaining eight teams having never made it to the final of world football's biggest stage.

Pedigree will count for little if the results throughout this topsy-turvy tournament are any indication and, with not a single remaining player having ever played in a World Cup final, experience will also not amount to much come the biggest day in world football.

However, before teams can dream of making it any further, they must all deal with equally stifling challenges.

Brazil will take on Belgium in what is expected to be an enthralling affair. The Red Devils will be in high spirits after a whirlwind comeback against Japan saw them score three goals in the final 20 minutes to secure a sensational 3-2 win. Yet, Belgium's defence is suspect and Brazil's wingers such as Neymar and the reinvigorated Willian could cause problems.

The French, given the monumental task of breaking down the watertight Uruguayan backline, will have arguably the toughest time of all.

On the other side, hosts Russia will face Croatia in a match that has the potential to be the best or worst encounter, while Sweden will aim for another giant-killing with a win over England.

QUARTERFINAL LINE-UP

ALL TIMES BST

6 JULY

FRANCE
URUGUAY
Time: 8.00pm

BRAZIL
BELGIUM
Time: 12.00am (Saturday)

7 JULY

SWEDEN
ENGLAND
Time: 8.00pm

RUSSIA
CROATIA
Time: 12.00am (Sunday)

World of Endless Dreams...

Holcim
Strong Structure

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'We're not satisfied yet'

REUTERS, Saint Petersburg

Sweden are delighted to make it to the quarterfinals but they are not satisfied yet, coach Janne Andersson told reporters after his side edged Switzerland 1-0 to reach the World Cup quarterfinals for the first time since 1994.

In another gritty team performance, Emil Forsberg's deflected shot secured victory over a misfiring Switzerland who were smothered by Sweden's defence, and set up a clash with either England or Colombia on Saturday.

"This team personifies the approach we all share - we work for each other on and off the pitch, and I'm incredibly happy that it's paying off," Andersson told reporters.

"We're going to focus on one thing when we've digested this victory, and that's the game on Saturday. We don't even know what team we will face yet, but that is going to be the focus of our preparations," he said.

The Swedes have now seen off Netherlands from their qualifying group, Italy in a playoff, Germany at the group stage and Switzerland in the last 16, leading to questions about whether other nations have underestimated Andersson and his men.

"I think you'd have to ask everyone else that question. We know we are a good team, that we've earned our successes - we know how we got this far," the 55-year-old explained.

"We've worked this way throughout, we're continuing the same way, and what other teams and countries think about that is not interesting."

The delighted Sweden fans stayed behind to sing their modest coach's name long after the final whistle, and he came back out after the teams had left the field.

"It's a surreal feeling, to be standing in St Petersburg on the pitch afterwards and people are calling out my name. That feels strange - during the match I'm focused on the game," he said.

Sweden may have exceeded expectations in

TOO SLOW AND LACKING EMOTION, SAYS SWISS COACH

Switzerland were too slow and lacked emotion, coach Vladimir Petkovic said after watching his side meekly surrender to Sweden.

"We are sorely disappointed, we wanted to do more," Petkovic said. "Sweden did precisely what they were good at and that was enough to beat us. We should have done things better, but we were not good enough to win this match."

Switzerland had more possession but were too predictable to find a way past the massed Swedish defence.

"We wanted to play down the wings but we were too slow, our passes were not good," said Petkovic. "We played out of defence too slowly and we also tried to play diagonal passes, but we were not good enough."

The defeat was doubly disappointing as the tournament had been seen as a golden opportunity for a generation of players -- many sons of immigrants from the Balkans -- which is regarded as the finest the country has produced.

"We didn't find any fluidity and we got stuck in the middle," said Petkovic. "Our emotions were playing tricks on us."

"Sweden are a strong team but we didn't expect to be losing against them -- but there were tiny details..."

He added: "This game was only ever going to be decided with a own goal or a long-range shot."

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Teer
হোল হুইট আটা

Russia but they are not done yet, and Andersson and his squad will now assess the players and their coming opponents before going into battle again.

"Now it's about taking the next step. We're not satisfied with this, and nothing more," he said.

"We want to win the next match as well - if you start to lower the bar, the level of ambition, that's not going to make for satisfaction."

Honda, Hasebe call time

REUTERS, Rostov-on-Don

Keisuke Honda and captain Makoto Hasebe have announced their retirement from international football following Japan's elimination from the World Cup at the hands of Belgium on Monday night.

Honda, 32, came off the bench late in the last-16 clash with Roberto Martinez's side, but was unable to prevent his side from slipping to an agonising 3-2 loss.

"Today we showed how we can proceed as Japanese football," the former AC Milan midfielder told reporters after the match.

"I might have finished my career for the national team, but I'm happy because we have many young players following us, and I think that they will make new history for Japanese football."

"This is the last World Cup for me," Honda added. "That's the reality. To be perfectly honest, I wanted to take everyone to the next round but I couldn't get the job done. I did everything I could. I did the best I could."

Honda, who scored 37 times in 98 appearances for his country, was used as an impact player off the bench in his third World Cup.

Hasebe, once heralded by former Japan head coach Alberto Zaccheroni as one of only two "true captains" he had ever managed along with Paolo Maldini, has also decided to step down from international duties. The midfielder, who plays in Germany for Eintracht Frankfurt, made 114 caps for Japan.

"I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues who fought together for about 12 and a half years since 2006, and to all the Japanese people who supported me so much," the captain said in a post on Instagram.



KEISUKE HONDA

Cavani has swollen calf, not tear

REUTERS, Nizhny Novgorod

Uruguay striker Edinson Cavani has a painful calf swelling but not a muscle tear, the country's football federation (FCF) said on Monday, increasing his chances of being fit for Friday's World Cup quarterfinal with France.

Cavani scored two brilliant goals against Portugal in Uruguay's 2-1 last 16 victory on Saturday, before limping off with the assistance of Cristiano Ronaldo.

Now he is fighting for a full recovery so he can again lead the line with Luis Suarez against France in Nizhny Novgorod.

A scan showed swelling in Cavani's left calf muscle but no torn fibres, the FCF said in a statement.

"The player remains in pain. He will continue to do individual work and rehabilitation. His evolution is being monitored," it said. "The rest of the squad is fine."

বিশ্বকাপ ফুটবল উন্মাদতার সাথে

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