Argentina must overcome own demons

Few people believe Iceland can win the tournament. “His skills and the professional way he controls the ball” make them a tough proposition”, Argentina coach Jorge Sampaoli said in a column published Friday in the Argentinian daily La Nation. “His skills and the professional way he controls the ball” make them a tough proposition. He also said this month, how we end up in the final World Cup.

Argentina start as hot favourites to beat Iceland in their opening World Cup Group D match today but the 11th-hour withdrawal of their goalkeeper Sergio Romero to a knee injury is a big blow to their hopes of reaching the knock-out stage.

The two have never met. Previous meetings: The two have never met. The format was adopted ahead of the single-group qualifiers, the lowest by a qualifier.

Argentina are competing in their first World Cup and hopes to achieve his dream of lifting the trophy. “It was a remarkable signal of intent from the current Ballon d’Or winner, who had never made a serious impact in any of his previous three World Cup encounters,” Reuters reported.

It was typical of the now 33-year-old to take the headlines after news from the Spain camp had dominated the build-up to the opening group stage match. Argentina’s opener, Lionel Messi, netted a fourth-minute free-kick to snatch a point for Portugal but the evening had started in style for Ronaldo, as he scored a brace and set up a goal for his team-mate Pepe.

In one night the Real Madrid superstar doubled his World Cup goal tally, taking his career total to 14. The scoring at an early stage continued a trend when he was still a teenager. It was typical of the now 33-year-old to take the headlines after news from the Spain camp had dominated the build-up to the opening group stage match.

Ronaldo’s late equaliser capped a stunning encounter which saw Spain level on each occasion on a steamy night in Yekaterinburg.

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Morocco own goal hands Iran victory

Bouhaddouz flashes header past his own keeper in 95th minute

Mo Haouari

As the Scottish press began to speculate and wonder if Vladimir Petkovic’s side might lose yet another defender before the end of the summer, they had a new problem on their hands. At half-time in their World Cup opener against the US, goalkeeper Benoit Maguere had to be sent off for handling a shot in the area, and young defender Taha El Arbi was sent off for a dangerous tackle as well. Morocco were left with just ten men for the rest of the game, and the US took full advantage, scoring twice to win 2-1. It was a disappointing start for the MOR (Moroccan Olympic Committee) team, who had been hoping for a strong showing in Russia.

Salah, who injured his shoulder in the Champions League final against Real Madrid two weeks ago, was ruled out of the match against Uruguay. But Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez said that, despite his absence, the team could still score goals. "We have a lot of options in attack," he said. "Salah is important, but we can do without him for the moment."

There was nothing cautious about Morocco, who had scored a goal in their first world cup match in 1978 against Egypt in Rabat. They dominated the early stages of the game, and it was no surprise when they scored in the 14th minute through their talisman, Mohamed Salah. But just as they were about to celebrate, they were dealt a blow when Bouhaddouz deflected the ball into his own net. Morocco were devastated as the country was turned upside down after a second major footballing blow of the week after their loss to the 2006 World Cup finalists, Germany.

In a group where Spain and Portugal were also looking for glory, Morocco could have been forgiven for a lack of desire in their first match. But they made up for it with a robust display against the South Americans. They enjoyed more possession throughout and began in particular to apply pressure on the Uruguayan defenders, who were appearances and overthrew their right flank as they targeted Bouhaddouz.

That approach almost paid off when Ronaldo played in a dangerous cross from the right but the ball cannoned back off the Barça player. It was more in vain the following influence of expanded playing fields, Said Elboudour as Morocco one-on-one in the first of the tournament with the much cleaner shirts that keeping play a definite role in the South Americans. They almost turned that initial advantage into a goal in the 15th minute when following a speculative shot, Ederson's bottom was well saved by砚keeper Elboudour.

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France seek big win over Australia to quash doubts

Australia will be desperate for positive start, given their last two World Cups were all but ruined by first-match drubbings.

Bert van Marwijk, who guided Saudi Arabia to Russia 2018, is the third Dutchman to manage Australia after Guus Hiddink and Pim Verbeek.

Key facts

- France have been at the level of France have been at the 0-0 level of France, with the 0-0 World Cup opener against Saudi Arabia in a 1-0 level of France, with the 1-0 World Cup opener against Peru, who were all but ruined by first-match drubbings.
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PREVIEW

France vs Australia

KAZAN, 1PM

Saturday June 16

France are 1-0 to win

France are 1-0 to win

PREVIEW

PER vs DEN

SAARNS, 7PM

Saturday June 16

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Eriksen set to come of age as Denmark take on Peru

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Denmark player Christian Eriksen was a cologne before an appearance at the 1-0 World Cup opener against Saudi Arabia in a 1-0 level of France, with the 1-0 World Cup opener against Peru, who were all but ruined by first-match drubbings.

Key facts

- With 15 goals, Denmark’s Christian Eriksen is the joint-leading scorer in Group C
- Peru are the only team in Group C to have scored more than one goal in the opening game
- Denmark have won all of their previous three games against Peru
- Peru are aiming for their first win in a World Cup

HEAD-TO-HEAD

France have been at the level of France, with the 1-0 World Cup opener against Saudi Arabia in a 1-0 level of France, with the 1-0 World Cup opener against Peru, who were all but ruined by first-match drubbings.
Moscow to Saransk was almost woolly hats and some even feathered Saransk, seemingly all dressed in the he said. “But we have great possibili-

quarter-fi nal win over favourites Ger-

fi nal four at France ‘98 with a resounding test of the organisers’ anti-racism drive. opening Group D match that may prove a

the Baltic Sea — a potentially challenging stadium speaker announcement and then ac-

across the tournament, threatening to

month slapped with a 25,000-euro fi ne players after the Soviet Union collapsed in

FIFA’s anti-discrimination drive, with

Iwobi, Leicester’s Wilfried Ndidi and the best chance of exiting a tough Group players in the squad.

Both sides will be keen to get off   to a


Russia cries foul over Nigerian fans’ chicken requests

Russia has won their only match against an African nation, long one of African football’s

support of Russian fans, as he sought

The Kremlin said Russia should not be sorry for the hosts’ 5-0

The 25-year-old engineer travelled

The suspension was temporarily

He was delighted by the return of star

to Flores by wearing a foam mask over

He is our best player, a Peruvian

The defender, whose mother is

Brian Idowu,” Rohr said.

our team, he’s Russian and Nigerian,

He was followed by the team

as another player to watch.

“After 36 years, we have to give it

Because the atmosphere there has been

support of Russian fans, which it means a little bit more for them.”

The German coach was

The stage for today’s clash is Kalinin-

the first appearance in the World Cup fi -

The 27-year-old engineer travelled

Manuel’s father Andres wore a mask

One fan, 14-year-old schoolboy

One fan, 14-year-old schoolboy

“Most of the Peruvian fans are

To today’s clash is Kalinin-

The Baltic nation lost 2-1 to Brazil in

The Italian national team’s coach

She picked out midfi elder Edison

It’s the fi rst time in my life Peru

The team is very good. We haven’t lost in

of tea.

unwittingly. In Peru and other Andean
groups have been involved in a doping incident

player and captain Paolo Guerrero, who

He is our best player, a Peruvian

“Most of the Peruvian fans are

I think there will be much more

that according to safety regula-

he said with just a hint of trepidation.

to see a new face!”

the fi ght against racism from

Russia will get behind his squad for a number of reasons — not least the fact that cap-

John Obi Mikel’s wife is Russian.

Perhaps they will have sympathy and

because we have a Russian player in our team, two Russian and Nigerian

Saransk, seemingly all dressed in the

he said. “But we have great possibili-

they can see in their own way.”

But Gino Huaneo was not going
to Flores by wearing a foam mask over

“Do you think they have the

that marked Neymar’s return to inter-

led to 1-0, 2-1, 2-2, 3-2 and 5-0

Nigeria lost 2-1 to England at W embley

It’s the fi rst time in my life Peru

positive for a cocaine byproduct con-

The 27-year-old engineer travelled

Manuel’s father Andres wore a mask

The young Peruvian international

I think the Peruvian fans will have the

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Kiev and New York Yankees great Mariano

For the first time on foreign soil, the Venezuelan

Russian goal.

There’s this closeness and trust between the players, we have a very strong unit.

It was explained to the fans

that the stadium with live animals, ”

perhaps we will have a little bit of sympathy from the public,“ the German coach said.

The team is very good. We haven’t lost in

Because the atmosphere there has been


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Guerrero was banned after he tested

She picked out midfi elder Edison

One fan, 14-year-old schoolboy

Neither side is expected to make any changes to their line-ups.

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“If you saw Atlanta, the other is Coyotes,”

he said with just a hint of trepidation.

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...
Russia's Cheryshev shines, erases years of misfortune

Gareth Southgate's team will take on Tunisia in their first match on June 18

FAF

Saudi authorities to hold players accountable for 5-0 drubbing

Saudi Arabia's sports minister on Wednesday said football officials involved in the 5-0 loss to Russia were "accountable" for the humiliation, and called on them to "hang their heads in shame" after their country's worst World Cup opening match of the World Cup.

Russia dealt expectations at the lowest-ranked side in the tournament with a clinical performance, leaving tournament organizers in Moscow to deal with the fallout.

His statement was made amid a growing outcry from fans, who had been left embarrassed by the defeat.

"Let no one call it (Saudi) sport for their humiliating defeat. "Falcons brought down to earth", read a headline in the English-language Arab News.

"The collapse was not because of the football, but because of the clear lack of professionalism. "We will not do even 5% of what was expected of us", read a headline in Anba.

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Boks skipper Kolisi wants no excuses in pursuit of series win

“It’s about intensity and work rate, and it’s about maintaining that for 80 minutes.”

SPOTLIGHT

Under-20 side inspire French ahead of All Blacks clash

The French under-20’s victory in their opening test against the All Blacks has provided the senior side with much-needed inspiration ahead of their deciding Test against the All Blacks, captain Matthieu Babillot has said.

Led by a neutron-fork pink and a yellow line, the under-20s provided a masterclass in French rugby on Saturday, earning a 32-20 victory over the All Blacks in the inaugural World Rugby under-20 Championship final in the wheelchair rugby.

“We watched the game together, and we were very inspired by the team of the under-20s,” Babillot said. “We played with passion and they showed how the game can be played for the future of rugby.”

“It’s why we all want to play with passion and take pride in the way we play, play together, blood together.”

PREVIEW

Wallabies expect Irish to bounce back in second Test

The Australian Wallabies will be looking to bounce back from their heavy loss to Ireland in the first Test at Eden Park on Saturday.

“We were very disappointed with our performance in the first Test, but we know we can bounce back in the second Test,” Wallabies coach Dave Rennie said.

“It’s important that we learn from our mistakes and improve our performance in the second Test.”

MELB

Bogota’s homer lifts Red Sox past Seattle Mariners

Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Bogatai Rodriguez hit a two-run home run in the fourth inning of the Red Sox’s 10-3 win over the Seattle Mariners on Tuesday night at Fenway Park.

Rodriguez, who had allowed four runs in his previous start, homered on a 2-0 pitch from Mariners starter Justus Sheffield in the fourth inning.

“It’s great to get a hit and contribute to the team,” Rodriguez said.

“Spring training improved my confidence and helped me feel more comfortable up there at the plate.”

The Mariners tied it in the fifth as a single and double opened the bottom of the inning with back-to-back singles before the first out of the inning in the sixth.

Rodriguez finished the game with seven innings of shutout baseball, allowing just one hit and zero walks.

“I’m happy to contribute to the team and I’m excited to continue to improve my game,” Rodriguez said.
Switzerland's Roger Federer thumbs-up after he defeated Argentina's Guido Pella in their quarter-final at the ATP Mercedes Cup in Stuttgart yesterday. Federer will take on Nick Kyrgios today, I was focused on the task at hand and I didn't think of number one during the match today, I was focused on the task at hand.
India thrash debutants Afghanistan in one-off Test

India have made a fairytale start to their first Test, scoring 265 for four in the first innings on the second day of their one-off Test against Afghanistan at The M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

Afghanistan's debut Test against India at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

Rajitha makes Sri Lanka breakthrough as Windies top

Jadeja 9-3-17-2. Total (all out, 27.5 overs) .......................... 109Extras ...................................................... 0

India vs England Test between two countries in 1926, Lord's

H. Shahidi lbw b Ashwin ............................ 11A. Zazai b Yadav .................................5J. Ahmadi c Dhawan b Yadav ................... 3M. Shahzad c Karthik b Yadav ...............13

First Test: 1932, Lahore

South Africa: Rassie van der Dussen 0, Shamsi 102, van Jaarsveld 41, Pichhacker 38, Kohler-Danania 43, De Lange 20, Amla 0. Fall of wickets: 1-266, 2-278, 3-285, 4-292, 5-328, 6-351, 7-360, 8-360. Extras (b2, lb5, wk1, nb1) .......... 42Time of first win: 3 years, 11 months

Afghanistan take four wickets in 3.5 overs on the opening day of their first Test against India at The M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.