

USA takes World Cup Group C as Donovan nets late winner

Ghana up next for Americans while England to meet Germany in round of 16

By RAHUL VAIDYANATH
Epoch Times Staff

Landon Donovan scored in injury time to send USA to the top of Group C at the World Cup and into the round of 16, with a 1-0 victory over Algeria in Pretoria on Wednesday.

In a game where USA had a plethora of incredible opportunities, it took some late heroics from goalkeeper Tim Howard to start the game-winning play.

Howard came up with an incredible save off a point-blank header and then fired up the United States counterattack. From the right flank, forward Jozy Altidore sent a low ball into the box that Algerian goalkeeper Rais M'Bolhi failed to smother as Clint Dempsey went in. Donovan followed up and slotted the ball into the corner of the net for the late win.

Donovan was full of emotion in his press conference. "I've been through a



USA TOPS: Landon Donovan celebrates the game-winning goal with Edson Buddle. KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

lot in the last four years," he said. "And I'm so glad it culminated this way. It makes me believe in good in the world." "These guys put a lot into it," said

United States head coach Bob Bradley. "They never quit. We knew we needed the win." Things were looking bleak for the

US through most of the game as England had taken a 1-0 lead over Slovenia in a game being played in Port Elizabeth. Had the US not won, they

would've been sent home with England and Slovenia progressing.

In the end, with the United States victory and England hanging on for the 1-0 win, both teams finish with five points and the same goal differential; however, USA finishes atop Group C since it scored more goals than England.

The United States team showed once again courage and determination and a fighting spirit that might be the best at the 2010 World Cup. Being down in each of their first two games, they came back to draw, and on Wednesday against Algeria, they faced a team who was not going to make it easy for them.

Algeria had the first great chance in the sixth minute when Rafik Djebbour took advantage of poor defending by Jay DeMerit off a long ball from Madjid Bougherra. Djebbour beat Howard but his high shot bounced off the cross bar.

From then on, the United States had the best chances and they could've been up 1-0 had Dempsey's goal not been ruled off for offside. It was a marginal call that might have been ruled a good goal by another referee's assistants.

Donovan and midfielder Michael Bradley combined well to create numerous chances through the middle of the park. But strikers Altidore and Herculez Gomez were wasteful with

their chances.

Dempsey, on the other hand, was just plain unlucky. In the 57th minute, after a fine counterattack, he hit the post and fired the rebound over the net. But Dempsey is a warrior and it is no surprise he's highly regarded by Fulham in the English Premier League. Despite taking a punch in the face, which was missed by the officials late in the game, he kept plugging away.

Meanwhile, Algeria's chances were mostly restricted to long shots and they didn't cause too much trouble for Howard. They did possess the ball nicely and were fairly rugged in defense. The North Africans exit the tournament in last place in Group C with one point and no goals scored.

The United States will take on Ghana, who finished second in Group D after a 1-0 loss to Germany on Wednesday. This match will be played on Saturday. England will tangle with Germany, Group D winner, on Sunday in a blockbuster round of 16 encounter.

But once again, the United States fighting spirit came through in a highly entertaining soccer match. They are a team to watch going forward. Their play is direct, enterprising, and skillful. They have a world class goalkeeper in Tim Howard and Landon Donovan is making his name, once again, as a world class attacking midfielder.

Memories of my first World Cup: Spain 1982

By RAHUL VAIDYANATH
Epoch Times Staff

By now, you might have seen many articles, news reports, expert commentaries, and player statements about the World Cup in South Africa. You may be in one or more World Cup pools, have wagers going with your buddies, and may even have rearranged your vacation plans or routine to not miss that all important game.

The plans are in place to generate some very special memories of the biggest sporting event in the world.

The first World Cup I experienced was Spain 1982. As a young kid who played soccer with my dad and godfather, Mr. Don McIsaac, as coaches, I basically followed them in all things soccer.

I noticed my dad was glued to our small black and white television set with great interest whereas he'd never pay so much attention when other soccer games were on.

But this was the World Cup. It turns casual soccer fans into hardcore soccer fans.

With the interest and excitement I saw in my dad, and even my mom to some extent, I knew the World Cup was something special.

I got into it cheering wildly for Brazil with their fantastic players like Zico, Socrates, Eder, and Falcao. This was a team of soccer geniuses.

But I was so disappointed when Brazil lost in the second round to Italy 3-2 as Paolo Rossi scored a hat trick. This was one of the finest soccer matches I saw (to this day) and I really felt the world lost something with Brazil eliminated. How could they lose to Italy when Italy had shown absolutely nothing in the opening stages?

I learned that soccer isn't always about playing beautifully. A team sometimes needs to be pragmatic in its approach and Italy was a prime example of this. They barely made it to the knockout stage after three draws in their opening round, but when it counted, they delivered the goods.



ASSAULT: West Germany's Harald Schumacher (right) launches himself at France's Patrick Battiston (left) during the 1982 World Cup semifinal. STAFF/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

But Rossi was just getting started. He scored two more in the semifinal win against Poland.

Talk about a guy turning his career around in a big way. Paolo Rossi had nothing but bad karma going into the World Cup but he emerged a hero.

The second semifinal between France and West Germany was, quite simply, unforgettable. It was the first time I witnessed the drama of a penalty shootout. This came after 30 minutes of extra time in which four goals were scored as West Germany dug themselves out of a crater.

France took a 3-1 lead in extra time, which should have sealed the deal. But I'll never forget the German resolve of never giving up. To this day, soccer pundits talk about never counting out the Germans.

I also witnessed the ugly side of soccer, as important decisions are left to human error. West German goalkeeper Harald Schumacher charged out of his net after a ball but

instead knocked out France's Patrick Battiston. Somehow Schumacher was allowed to continue playing when he should have been red-carded.

In the penalty shootout, I just had this feeling when Maxime Bossis, with his socks down around his ankles, meekly walked up to take the penalty, he'd miss.

And sure enough he did, and West Germany got into the final.

I believe Schumacher, looking like a caged lion on his goal line had sufficiently intimidated the France squad. It was disappointing to see France go out with the creativity they had in midfield (Michel Platini, Alain Giresse, Jean Tigana) especially when Schumacher shouldn't have even been on the field.

I somehow, as a young kid, saw the final between Italy and West Germany as a battle between the good guys (Italy) and the bad guys (West Germany).

As you know, the "good guys" triumphed and I was happy to a certain extent. I still



GOLDEN BOOT: Italy's Paolo Rossi evades Brazil's Junior in a memorable second round encounter at the 1982 World Cup in Spain. GETTY IMAGES

felt the way the Brazilians played was the most entertaining to watch. But I admired the fighting spirit of the Germans and the defensive strength of the Italians. The French brought their flair and talent.

I got an introduction to all the highs and lows of the month-long World Cup tournament. In terms of upsets, it's hard to forget that West Germany, despite reaching the final, actually lost their opener to Algeria.

It's interesting to think about the parallels with the 2010 version of the World Cup. Spain lost its opener to Switzerland in a major upset. Italy has struggled in the round robin stage. Ironically, referees have sent off players when they should not have (Kaka, Valon Behrami).

But the 2010 World Cup in South Africa is still waiting for that riveting thriller of a match. Stay tuned!

Follow Rahul on Twitter at www.twitter.com/RV_ETSports

Michael Bradley Autographed Soccer Jersey Raffle



Hey soccer fans, with the World Cup upon us, *The Epoch Times* wants to hear from you!

We want to know who you think is going to win the World Cup and who is going to win the golden boot as the tournament's top scorer.

Please e-mail us at response@epochtimes.com with the subject World Cup: your name, age, answers to both questions, and mailing address (United States & Canada only) so that if you are chosen, we can send you the autographed Borussia Mönchengladbach jersey of American midfielder Michael Bradley.

Deadline for your responses is July 7 when the matchup for the final on July 11 has been set.

The random draw for the jersey will be on July 11 during the World Cup final. The result will be posted on the Web at the conclusion of the game with the jersey to be mailed to the winner immediately thereafter.

Be sure to follow the World Cup along with us at *The Epoch Times* and RV_ETSports on Twitter.

2010 Suzuki Kizashi SE

By JO ANN HOLT

Last week I drove the 2010 Suzuki Kizashi SE and found it a remarkably comfortable and spacious sedan that was easy to drive and got great gas mileage, 10L/100km in town and 7.8L/100km or better on the highway.

With a 2.4-liter DOHC 16-valve inline-4 engine that produced 180 HP and 170 lbs-ft torque, and automatic transmission, the mid-sized sedan drove like a smaller, sportier car. It performed like a dream, show-

ing plenty of zip that helped me get on and off the highway with ease.

While I was disappointed not to get a 6-speed manual transmission model, the acceleration produced by the Kizashi (which translates to "something great is coming" in Japanese) soon made up for that. This may have been thanks to its continuously variable transmission (CVT) which doesn't switch gears like most automatics.

The Kizashi's exterior is not very daring when seen from the front, but the back trunk lid

rises into a curve that gives the vehicle a distinctly different and much sportier look.

In the U.S., the Kizashi comes with front-wheel or all-wheel drive, in S, SE, GTS, and SLS trim levels, with prices that start at US\$18,999 (about C\$19,322) and go as high as US\$26,899 (about C\$27,357). The SE model came with 17-inch alloy wheels, 10-way power driver's seat with 3 memory positions, a leather-wrapped steering wheel that boasted controls for audio and cruise control. Suzuki Canada offers only one standard trim

Profile view of the Kizashi COURTESY OF SUZUKI MEDIA

drive is C\$29,995 MSRP. This is equivalent to the SLS AWD model.

The interior is comfortable with a nicely styled instrument panel and easy-to-use controls. Other items such as keyless ignition, tilt or telescoping steering wheel, dual-zone automatic climate control, USB connectivity, power windows and locks, and a 7-speaker audio system made

drive.

Overall, the Platinum Silver Metallic test model Kizashi SE looks like (and definitely drives like) a more expensive car than its US\$21,754 (about C\$22,122) price tag.

Anti-lock brakes, traction control, electronic stability system, side-impact airbags for both rows of seats and side-curtain airbags for both rows, and vari-

help make the sedan a genuine pleasure to drive. The Kizashi has a three-year/36,000-mile (60,000 km) warranty with a seven-year/100,000-mile (160,000 km) powertrain warranty.

Jo Ann Holt is a Dallas-based journalist and car columnist and a proud member of the Texas Auto Writers Association.