Match highlights

France – Belgium

- France qualified for their third World Cup Final after 1998 and 2006.
- In their previous two World Cup semi-finals, a France defender scored: Marius Tresor against Germany FR in 1982 and Lilian Thuram, twice, against Croatia in 1998.
- Didier Deschamps became the fourth World Cup-winning player to reach the Final as a coach. He emulated Mario Zagallo (winner in 1970 and runner-up in 1998), Franz Beckenbauer (runner-up in 1986 and winner in 1990) and Rudi Voller (runner-up in 2002).
- Roberto Martinez’s team’s defeat ensured the tradition of no foreign coach winning the World Cup continued.
- Belgium’s five-game winners run in the World Cup was ended. France made it six matches without defeat in the competition.
- France have won all four of their meetings with Belgium in major international tournaments, three of them in the World Cup.
- Didier Deschamps took charge of his 11th match as France coach in the World Cup, surpassing the national record he had shared with Michel Hidalgo and Raymond Domenech.

Stats wrap-up (status after 61 of 64 matches)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matches</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Yellow / Red Cards</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61 of 64</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>210 / 4</td>
<td>3.44 / 0.07</td>
<td>46,088</td>
<td>2,811,340</td>
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Next match – 11 July

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMI-FINALS 11.07.2018 MOSCOW</th>
<th>Match # 62 Kick-off 21:00 LT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRO</td>
<td>Referee Cüneyt ÇAKIR (TUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG</td>
<td>FIFA WORLD CUP 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 / 4 Goals for / against</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 / 0 Yellow cards / red cards</td>
<td>5 / 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Number of players used</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Number of goal scorers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 / 2 / 0 Wins / draws / losses</td>
<td>3 / 1 / 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 previous head-to-heads (click [here](#) for full matchlist)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MP</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>GF</th>
<th>GA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facts & figures

- This is the eighth showdown between the pair and England lead the overall head-to-head series with four wins to Croatia’s two, plus a 0-0 draw from their first meeting in April 1996. They last crossed paths on 9 September 2009, in qualifying for South Africa 2010: England ran out 5-1 winners at Wembley following braces from Steven Gerrard and Frank Lampard and a Wayne Rooney goal, with Eduardo replying for Croatia.

- England and Croatia have locked horns once before in the finals of an international competition, at the UEFA European Championship 2004, where the Three Lions emerged 4-2 victors in the group phase. The English scorers were Paul Scholes, Wayne Rooney (two) and Frank Lampard, whereas Croatia netted through Niko Kovac and Igor Tudor.

- Croatia are in the semi-finals of a FIFA World Cup for the second time, after qualifying for the last four on their competition debut in 1998 in France.

- England have qualified for the World Cup semi-finals for the third time, doing so on European soil just as in 1966 and 1990.

- Croatia are breaking national records with two unprecedented runs in the World Cup, having gone five matches unbeaten, with three wins and two draws (games that they subsequently won on penalties), and scored in nine successive matches. The Balkan team last failed to find the net in a 0-0 stalemate with Japan in 2006.

- In their quarter-final victory over Sweden, England kept a clean sheet for the first time in this campaign.

- Danijel Subasic became the third goalkeeper to save four penalties in World Cup shoot-outs after Harald Schumacher (1982-1986) and Sergio Goycoocha (1990). Coincidentally, all three have saved at least one penalty against the host team and advanced from that tie (Mexico-Germany FR in 1986, Italy-Argentina in 1990, Russia-Croatia in 2018).
In beating first Denmark and then Russia, Croatia became the second team to win two penalty shoot-outs in the same edition, after Argentina did it in 1990.

England boast three wins, one draw (in 1954, before the introduction of penalty shoot-outs) and one defeat in games decided in extra time. Against Colombia the Three Lions finally won a World Cup penalty shoot-out at the fourth time of asking, after losing their first three.

Both Croatia and England have already contested a World Cup fixture on 11 July. Croatia edged the Netherlands 2-1 in 1998 in the Play-Off for Third Place, whereas England drew the Opening Match of the 1966 tournament 0-0 with Uruguay at Wembley.

If Luka Modric plays, this will be his 11th World Cup appearance, taking him level with Dario Simic as the joint-highest-placed Croat in the competition’s all-time appearance ranking.
On this day in the past

1966
England and Uruguay draw 0-0 in the opening match of the 1966 FIFA World Cup. The hosts would go on to win the title by defeating Germany FR 4-2 on 30 July.

1982
Forty-four years after last clinching the title, Italy win their third World Cup by overcoming Germany FR 3-1 in Madrid. Italy’s Antonio Cabrini misses a penalty in the first half and all three Azzurri goals came in the second period from Paolo Rossi, Marco Tardelli and Alessandro Altobelli. Paul Breitner strikes Germany FR’s sole consolation and his second goal in a World Cup final following his penalty against the Netherlands in 1974.

2010
Spain become the eighth FIFA World Cup champion after beating the Netherlands in Johannesburg 1-0 after extra time. Spain also become the second reigning European champions to win the World Cup after Germany FR in 1972/74, and the third team to win the FIFA World Cup despite losing a match (Germany FR 1954/74, Argentina 1978).

Photo by Jeff Mitchell - FIFA/FIFA via Getty Images
Metro to Moscow

A 33-stop journey through Russian and Soviet football history as we countdown towards the FIFA World Cup Final at the Luzhniki on July 15th.

4 days to the FINAL

4 goals scored by Andrei Arshavin against Liverpool at Anfield, the first player in over 60 years to achieve this feat. Arshavin is one of the best players to come out of Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union and is arguably the most famous internationally. His spectacular performances for Zenit Saint-Petersburg in the 2007/08 UEFA Cup and Russia at UEFA EURO 2008 thrilled fans all over the world and convinced Arsenal to sign the forward in 2009. He quickly made his name for the London club in the English Premier League, where he achieved the afore-mentioned feat against Liverpool.

Russian Football Dictionary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to say...</th>
<th>in Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance</td>
<td>Вход / vhod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit</td>
<td>Выход / vyhod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field of play</td>
<td>Игровое поле / eegrayove pole</td>
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From Russia with Love

Remembering previous participants missing out in this year’s FIFA World Cup

GHANA

FIFA World Cup™ facts & figures

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best achievement</td>
<td>Quarter-finals 2010</td>
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Ghana are the third of three African teams to have reached the FIFA World Cup quarter-finals, advancing to the last eight in 2010 to emulate the achievements of Cameroon in 1990 and Senegal in 2002.

Asamoah Gyan holds a series of African records in the World Cup, including for the most appearances (11 along with Cameroon’s Francois Omam-Biyik) and the most goals (six, one more than Roger Milla), as well as being the only African to have scored in three editions. Overall, Gyan is the only player in the event’s history to have missed a penalty in two editions (2006 and 2010).

The Black Stars faced USA in all three of their participations and every meeting ended with the same scoreline of 2-1, with Ghana coming out on top twice and the Americans once.

Photo by Bob Thomas/Getty Images & Adam Pretty/Getty Images & Clive Brunskill/Getty Images
Switching Roles

Nine of the coaches competing in Russia 2018 have playing experience in the FIFA World Cup. They will feature in our Stats of the Day together with other players/managers who have shaped the competition’s history.

**MARCO VAN BASTEN**

A striker for Ajax and Milan who combined elegance with goalscoring ability, Marco Van Basten played four games without scoring in the 1990 FIFA World Cup, where his Netherlands team were dumped out of the running by eventual champions Germany in the Round of 16. In his only participation as coach with the Oranje in 2006, Van Basten suffered another Round of 16 elimination, this time against Portugal.

Photo by Bob Thomas/Getty Images & Robert Cianflone/Getty Images
Football Fashion
Belgium in 1934

... and now
Striking snaps from tournaments past

What doesn’t seem right in this picture from the 1990 World Cup?

Photo by Chris Smith/Popperfoto/Getty Images

Tantalizing World Cup Trivia

Today’s question

Which country has produced the most referees in the history of the FIFA World Cup?

⇒ Solution will be revealed in tomorrow’s edition

Yesterday’s solution

Who is the only coach to have won both the FIFA World Cup and the FIFA U-20 World Cup?

⇒ Cesar Luis Menotti (1978 and 1979)
Memorabilia marvel

Designed to showcase the extraordinary history of the FIFA World Cup, the FIFA World Football Museum in Zurich covers all aspects of international football’s rich heritage and shows how the beautiful game connects and inspires the world. With an interactive, multimedia display of exhibits, the museum explores the emotions that football awakens around the world on a daily basis. Exhibition space of more than 3,000 square meters offers a fascinating journey through time. During the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ we are happy to present a few of the many objects.

1998

Shirt worn by Zinedine Zidane in the France v Croatia semi-final at the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France

Zinedine Zidane was the star of the 1998 FIFA World Cup which France hosted and won. It was his face that was projected onto the Arc de Triomphe in the hours after the Final as a million fans celebrated on the streets of Paris, but, whisper it quietly, he didn’t have a great tournament. He was sent off against Saudi Arabia and missed the final group game as well as the Round of 16 match against Paraguay. This was a French team with one of the best defences of any World Cup, and they scored goals too. Vital ones, in fact, with Laurent Blanc and Lilian Thuram ensuring the host nation made it to the Final for the first time. And it was in the Final that Zidane came good, and spectacularly so. His two goals in 18 first half minutes - both headers from corners - were more than had been scored in both of the previous two Finals combined, and they won France the Cup.