Match highlights

- Russia’s 5-0 success was the second-biggest in the Opening Match of a World Cup, surpassed only by eventual champions Italy’s 7-1 thumping of USA in 1934.

- The host nation have never lost a World Cup Opening Match (7 wins and 3 draws from 10 matches).

- Denis Cheryshev and Artem Dzyuba were the first substitutes to score in the Opening Match of a World Cup.

- Russia ended their longest-ever winless run in the World Cup at five matches.

- For the first time ever, two players – Yury Gazinsky and Denis Cheryshev – scored their maiden international goal in the Opening Match of a World Cup.

- Russia recorded their second-biggest margin of victory in the World Cup, equaling their 6-1 thrashing of Cameroon in 1994. Soviet Union smashed Hungary 6-0 in 1986.

- Russia won a World Cup match on 14 June for the first time, having lost their previous three attempts on the date.

- Denis Cheryshev’s 24th-minute introduction was Russia’s fastest-ever substitution in the World Cup. Dmitri Sychev had come on against Belgium in 2002 in the 34th minute.

- Saudi Arabia were the first Asian side to participate in the Opening Match of a World Cup.

- Saudi Arabia gave the AFC its 100th World Cup appearance.

- Saudi Arabia have now gone 11 World Cup matches without victory (nine defeats and two draws), conceding in each of them.

- AFC teams are, since Japan’s 3-1 victory over Denmark in 2010, winless in 16 World Cup matches (12 defeats and four draws).

- Nestor Pitana was the third Argentinian to referee the Opening Match of a World Cup after Angel Coerezza in 1978 and Horacio Elizondo in 2006.
On this day in the past

1982

The city of Elche witnesses one of the most emphatic wins in FIFA World Cup history when Hungary trounce El Salvador 10-1. The match also features the highest number of goals scored by one team in a single match, as well as the fastest FIFA World Cup hat-trick, scored by Hungary’s László Kiss in the space of seven minutes.

2014

The own goal scored by Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Sead Kolašinac after just two minutes and nine seconds against Argentina is the fastest in World Cup history, beating Paraguayan Carlos Gamarra’s against England in 2006, which was scored after two minutes and 46 seconds.
Next matches – 15 June

Egypt – Uruguay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Match #</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

1 previous head-to-head [click to view full match list]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Wins</th>
<th>Draws</th>
<th>Losses</th>
<th>Goals For</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Facts & figures

- Uruguay came out on top in the only prior meeting between the pair, a friendly contested in Alexandria in 2006. The game ended 2-0 in favour of the South Americans, courtesy of a strike by Diego Godín and an own goal.

- Egypt return to the World Cup finals after 28 years, their most recent campaign having ended with a 1-0 defeat by England on 21 June 1990.

- The Pharaohs are still looking for their first victory in the global showcase, after two draws and two losses from four games played.

- Uruguay are Egypt’s first non-European opponents in the World Cup. The North Africans previously faced Hungary (1934), the Netherlands, Republic of Ireland and England (all in 1990).

- Uruguay have not kicked off a World Cup with a victory since beating Israel 2-0 in 1970. Following that success, La Celeste have racked up three draws and three defeats in their opening fixtures.

- Los Charrúas are unbeaten against African opposition in the World Cup, having obtained one victory (3-0 over South Africa in 2010) and two draws (3-3 with Senegal in 2002 and 1-1 with Ghana in the 2010 quarter-finals, before progressing on penalties).

- This is the 16th World Cup fixture to be overseen by Oscar Tabarez, who moves up to ninth place in the tournament’s all-time appearance ranking for coaches, alongside Henri Michel and Guy Thys. The next target is reaching Guus Hiddink, Sepp Herberger and Enzo Bearzot, who have all made 18 appearances.

- Uruguay return to Europe for a World Cup 28 years after Italy 1990. In the intervening period they participated in Japan/Korea 2002, South Africa 2010 and Brazil 2014.

- Tabarez and Hector Cuper last occupied opposing dugouts 20 years ago in the 1997/98 La Liga season, when they were respectively in charge of Real Oviedo and Mallorca. Their head-to-head series favours the Pharaohs’ coach, with one victory and one draw.
Portugal – Spain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Referee designation</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Time (LT) UTC +3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15-06-2018</td>
<td>Gianluca ROCCHI (ITA)</td>
<td>SOCHI</td>
<td>21:00</td>
</tr>
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35 previous head-to-heads (click to view full match list)

<table>
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<th>GF</th>
<th>GA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facts & figures

- This is the 36th meeting between the pair and Spain have the better track record with 16 victories to six, plus 13 draws. In their first showdown almost a century ago in December 1921, Spain emerged 3-1 victors. They last squared up in the semi-finals of UEFA EURO 2012, when the Spaniards won on penalties following 120 goalless minutes.

- This is the teams’ second confrontation in the World Cup, after their Round of 16 engagement in 2010 ended 1-0 to Spain following David Villa’s 63rd-minute strike.

- Between them, the pair have claimed the last three continental titles: Spain in 2008 and 2012, Portugal in 2016.

- This is Spain’s 60th World Cup game. The first took place on 27 May 1934 in Genoa, when La Roja downed Brazil 3-1. Their past record stands at 29 victories, 12 draws and 18 defeats, with 92 goals scored and 66 conceded.

- Spain made a losing start to the last two World Cups, succumbing 1-0 to Switzerland in 2010 and 5-1 to the Netherlands in 2014.

- Portugal are kicking off a World Cup campaign on 15 June for the second time. The first was in 2010, when the Lusitanians drew 0-0 with Côte d’Ivoire.

- Portugal have lost their last four European derbies in the World Cup: to France (1-0) and Germany (3-1) in 2006, Spain (1-0) in 2010 and again to Germany (4-0) in 2014.
Morocco - IR Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match #</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
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<td>15-06-2018</td>
<td>Cuneyt CAKIR (TUR)</td>
<td>ST. PETERSBURG</td>
<td>18:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No previous head-to-heads

Facts & figures

- This is the first meeting on grass between the two senior sides. In the past they have faced off twice in the FIFA Futsal World Cup (2012 and 2016) and once in an international Beach Soccer tournament in 2014, with IR Iran emerging victorious on all three occasions.

- Morocco return to the World Cup finals after a hiatus of 20 years. Their last appearance was on 23 June 1998, when they saw off Scotland 3-0.

- IR Iran are participating in back-to-back editions for the first time.

- The Iranians are on a winless streak of seven games in the competition (five defeats and two draws). Their last - and, to date, only - victory in the event dates back to 21 June 1998, when they overcame USA 2-1.

- Carlos Queiroz is overseeing his third opening match in the World Cup and also faced African opponents in the previous two, having led Portugal against Côte d'Ivoire in 2010 and IR Iran against Nigeria four years ago. In both cases, the final result was 0-0. Team Melli’s current coach is the only Portuguese to have managed in three World Cups (guiding his native country in 2010 and the Iranians in the last two tournaments). Fernando Santos, who currently calls the shots for Portugal, is attending his second global showcase.
16 June

France - Australia

Group C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16-06-2018</td>
<td>Andres CUNHA (URU)</td>
<td>KAZAN</td>
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4 previous head-to-heads (click to view full match list)

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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facts & figures

This is the fifth showdown between the two sides. France have the edge in the overall series with two victories to one, plus one draw. The last meeting was a friendly in 2013 in Paris, which France won 6-0 (Olivier Giroud netted twice, the other scorers were Karim Benzema, Yohan Cabaye, Mathieu Debuchy and Franck Ribery).

This is France’s 60th World Cup fixture. Their first took place on 13 July 1930 on the opening matchday of the inaugural World Cup and produced a 4-1 French victory over Mexico, as well as the first goal in the competition’s history, scored by Lucien Laurent.

Les Bleus opened their last three World Cup campaigns with a clean sheet, drawing 0-0 with Switzerland in 2006 and Uruguay in 2010, before beating Honduras 3-0 in 2014.

France are yet to win a World Cup fixture on 16 June, having lost 1-0 to Yugoslavia in 1954 and 3-1 to England in 1982.

Australia approach this game on the back of three straight World Cup defeats, having exited pointless from the group stage in 2014. The Socceroos’ most recent positive result dates back to 2010, when they overcame Serbia 2-1. Furthermore, the Australians have failed to keep a clean sheet in their last ten outings, since tying 0-0 with Chile in 1974.
Peru – Denmark

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<tr>
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<td>16-06-2018</td>
<td>Bakary GASSAMA (GAM)</td>
<td>SARANSK</td>
<td>19:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No previous head-to-heads

Facts & figures

- The two teams go head-to-head for the first time.
- Peru return to the competition 36 years after their last participation, at Spain 1982, which concluded with a 5-1 defeat by Poland. Los Incas are winless in their last six World Cup matches (two draws and four defeats), since prevailing 4-1 against Iran in 1978.
- The three previous World Cup meetings between Denmark and South American teams yielded an average of five goals per game. The Danes overpowered Uruguay 6-1 in 1986, lost 3-2 to Brazil in 1998 and beat Uruguay again in 2002, by the scoreline of 2-1.
- Although Age Hareide is the third Norwegian coach in the World Cup after Asbjorn Halvorsen (1938) and Egil Olsen (1994 and 1998), he is the first to guide a foreign team.
Argentina – Iceland

Group D

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Match #</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>16-06-2018</td>
<td>Szymon MARCINIUK (POL)</td>
<td>MOSCOW</td>
<td>16:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No previous head-to-heads

Facts & figures

- The pair have never faced each other before.

- Argentina have twice played World Cup games on 16 June, winning both of them: 1-0 against Uruguay in the Round of 16 in 1986 and 6-0 against Serbia and Montenegro in 2006.

- It was on 16 June 2006 that Lionel Messi made his World Cup bow, in the 6-0 win over Serbia and Montenegro. The diminutive forward replaced Maxi Rodriguez in the 75th minute and struck the game’s final goal 13 minutes later, which was also the first of five he has bagged in the competition.

- The last European side to win their maiden match in the World Cup were Croatia, who downed Jamaica 3-1 in 1998. UEFA newcomers following in their footsteps have posted three defeats and a draw: Slovenia lost 3-1 to Spain in 2002, Ukraine crashed 4-0 to Spain, Slovakia drew 1-1 with New Zealand and Bosnia and Herzegovina succumbed 2-1 to Argentina.

- Argentina have not kicked off a World Cup with defeat against a debutant side since 1934, when they lost 3-2 to Sweden. Subsequent showdowns produced five wins for La Albiceleste: 1-0 over Bulgaria in 1962, 4-0 against Greece in 1994, 1-0 against Japan in 1998, 2-1 over Côte d’Ivoire in 2006 and another 2-1 scoreline four years ago, against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- Argentina have failed to score for 322 consecutive minutes of play (since Gonzalo Higuain’s strike eight minutes into the quarter-final with Belgium in 2014), their longest World Cup goal drought in history.
Croatia – Nigeria

Group D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match #</th>
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<th>Referee designation</th>
<th>City</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>16-06-2018</td>
<td>Sandro RICCI (BRA)</td>
<td>KALININGRAD</td>
<td>21:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No previous head-to-heads

Facts & figures

- The two sides lock horns for the first time at senior level, although they have faced off twice in youth tournaments: Nigeria ran out 5-2 winners in the FIFA U-20 World Cup 2011, whereas Croatia prevailed 2-1 in the FIFA U-17 World Cup 2015.

- All five of the victories obtained by Nigeria in their 18 World Cup appearances to date came against European teams. The Super Eagles beat Bulgaria 3-0 and Greece 2-0 in 1994, Spain 3-2 and Bulgaria 1-0 in 1998, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina 1-0 in 2014.

- Croatia are facing African opposition for the second time in the World Cup. The first meeting culminated in a 4-0 victory over Cameroon four years ago in Brazil, which is the Croats’ most emphatic win in the event.

- Exactly four years ago on 16 June, Nigeria recorded their only 0-0 draw in World Cup history, against IR Iran in Curitiba.

- Croatia were defeated in three of their first four World Cup opening matches. After dispatching Jamaica 3-1 in their maiden game in 1998, they lost once to Mexico (1-0 in 2002) and twice to Brazil (1-0 in 2006 and 3-1 in 2014).

- Gernot Rohr is the fourth German coach to take charge of an African team in the World Cup. He follows in the footsteps of Winni Schaefer with Cameroon in 2002, Otto Pfister with Togo in 2006 and Volker Finke four years ago, also with Cameroon. Schaefer was the only one to score any points (with victory over Saudi Arabia and a draw with Republic of Ireland).
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.

30 days to the FINAL

30 goals scored by striker Aleksandr Kerzhakov, the all-time record goalscorer for the Russian national team. Kerzhakov spent most of his career at Zenit Saint Petersburg, setting a new club record for goals there as well (162). He is also the top scorer in the history of domestic Russian football with 223. The forward appeared at two FIFA World Cups, coming on as a substitute late on against Belgium in a 3-2 loss at Korea/Japan 2002 and then playing in all three group-stage matches at Brazil 2014, scoring in the 1-1 draw with Korea Republic.

Russian Football Dictionary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to say...</th>
<th>in Russian</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referee</td>
<td>Главный арбитр / glavny arbitr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant referee</td>
<td>Помощник главного арбитра / pamoshnick glavnava arbitra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth official</td>
<td>Резервный арбитр / reservny arbitr</td>
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Happy Birthday to...

Players, coaches and referees celebrating their Birthday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 JUNE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saliou CISS (SEN)</td>
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<td>Albert GUDMUNDSSON (ISL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erick GUTIERREZ (MEX)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yussuf Yurary POULSEN (DEN)</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOHAMED SALAH (EGY)</td>
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</table>
From Russia with Love

*Remembering the teams missing out in this year’s FIFA World Cup*

**TURKEY**

**FIFA World Cup™ facts & figures**
- Participations: 2 (1954, 2002)
- Best achievement: 3rd place in 2002

Turkish forward Hakan Sukur bagged the earliest goal in FIFA World Cup history, finding the net just 11 seconds into the Play-Off for Third Place against Korea Republic in 2002.

In both of their participations, the Turks played the eventual world champions twice in the same campaign and lost every time. The teams in question were Germany FR in 1954 (4-1, 7-2) and Brazil in 2002 (2-1, 1-0).

Turkey’s most emphatic victory in the competition was a 7-0 win in the 1954 finals, also against Korea Republic.

Photos by DPA & 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.

OSCAR RAMIREZ

Costa Rica coach Oscar Ramirez played a central role in Los Ticos’ historic first foray in the FIFA World Cup. In the 1990 edition, the former Alajuelense and Deportivo Saprissa midfielder wore the No 10 shirt in all four of his team’s fixtures. In that campaign La Sele, guided from the bench by Bora Milutinovic, were knocked out in the Round of 16 by Czechoslovakia, having beaten and eliminated Scotland and Sweden in the group stage.

Photos by Mike Lawrie/Getty Images & Bob Thomas/Getty Images
Football Fashion
Peru in 1930

...and now

Photo by Bob Thomas / Popperfoto / Getty Images & Michael Regan - FIFA/FIFA via Getty Images
Striking snaps from tournaments past

A fan at the FIFA World Cup 1970 – all teams sorted by groups – he would definitely need a larger shirt these days

Photo FIFA Archive

Tantalizing Trivia

Today’s question
Which team has recorded the most 0-0 draws?

⇒ Solution will be revealed in tomorrow’s edition

Yesterday’s solution
Which team has scored the most goals through substitutes?

⇒ Italy, with 16 goals
In 1954, Ferenc Puskas had come within a whisker of winning the World Cup with Hungary. And yet in 1962 he travelled to Chile as part of the Spain squad as “Francisco” Puskas! It would be unthinkable now to play at two World Cups with different teams but in the early years of the finals it wasn’t that unusual. Indeed, Luis Monti had played in the 1930 Final for Argentina and then in the 1934 Final he won a winners medal for Italy. Puskas had left Hungary after the 1956 uprising and had carved out a successful career with Real Madrid. Alongside Puskas was another dual-nationality player - his Real Madrid team mate Alfredo Di Stefano. Unfortunately, the Argentina-born Di Stefano was injured and missed all three Spanish group matches. It was the closest one of the greatest ever players came to appearing at the World Cup.

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