

Capello's Russia Must Score in World Cup or Go Home

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Russia's national soccer team players (L-R) Denis Cheryshev, Alan Dzagoyev and Andrey Semenov take part in the training session.

Fabio Capello's goal-shy Russia will have to do better than England did under his guidance four years ago when they face a confident Algeria for a place in the World Cup knockout stage on Thursday.

The authoritarian Italian's lackluster England side played out a 0-0 draw against the 'Desert Foxes' in Cape Town in 2010, a tournament in which Algeria failed to score a single goal in their three group games.

The North Africans have never before progressed through the group stage but look a much more dangerous side now after beating South Korea 4-2 and narrowly losing out 2-1 to fancied Belgium.

With Belgium on six points, Algeria on three and Russia level with South Korea on one in Group H, Capello's men must start scoring goals and win if they are to go through with

the Belgians.

Algeria will definitely go through if they win and would even top the group on goal difference if Belgium lose.

Winning will not be easy for Russia. They have just one goal to their credit and their fast-flowing opponents, who may need only a draw, showed rare flair against the Koreans to chalk up their first World Cup victory since 1982.

"There is only one chance against Algeria — a draw solves nothing," Capello told reporters after Russia's 1-0 defeat to Belgium in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday.

"I still believe [that we can qualify]. Absolutely I believe," added the former Real Madrid, AC Milan, Roma and Juventus coach whose World Cup record so far is patchy to say the least.

In six World Cup games to date with England and Russia, the conservative Capello has only one win to his credit — a 1-0 victory against Slovenia in 2010.

Goalkeeper Error

Russia will have to look a lot sharper than they did against Belgium, even if their defense at least looked tight after veteran goalkeeper Igor Akinfeyev's blunder in gifting South Korea the opening goal in their 1-1 draw.

"We're continuing to hope for the best and we reckon we can get out of the group," said midfielder Oleg Shatov, whose country failed to make it past the group stages in their last two World Cups in 1994 and 2002.

Russian commentators have sharply criticized the coach's decision to leave veteran striker Alexander Kerzhakov and midfielder Alan Dzagoyev on the bench for the first two games and there could be a change there.

Kerzhakov, 31, came on in the 71st minute against South Korea and equalized three minutes later but only featured in stoppage time against Belgium.

"Does Kerzhakov really not have enough strength? He can put the ball into the net. If we don't score we are going to lose," former international defender Viktor Papayev told Sovietsky Sport newspaper.

Kerzhakov is joint all-time top scorer for Russia with 26 goals and could replace youngster Alexander Kokorin, who missed an easy chance against Belgium.

Dzagoyev, joint top scorer at Euro 2012 with three goals, played for half an hour against South Korea but was only on the pitch for seven minutes against Belgium.

Meanwhile, Algeria's fourth goal against South Korea in Porto Alegre last Sunday made them the highest-scoring African side in a single World Cup match and they will be eager to add to that tally.

Almost 50 years have passed since the two countries' only previous meeting, a 2-2 friendly

draw played out in November 1964 when Russia was part of the Soviet Union.

See also:

[Russia Loses to Belgium in Second World Cup Match](#)

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