

FIFA WORLD CUP 2018

RECAP



AP Photo/Frank Augstein

Croatia’s Mario Mandzukic, center, celebrates after scoring his side’s second goal during the semi-final match between Croatia and England at the 2018 soccer World Cup in the Luzhniki Stadium on Wednesday in Moscow, Russia.

Croatia in World Cup final for 1st time, beats England 2-1

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

MOSCOW — Croatia’s legs seemed heavy, burdened by the accumulated toll of consecutive penalty-kicks wins needed to get this far. England had gone ahead with a free kick just five minutes in, dominated play and appeared headed to its first World Cup final since 1966.

Then the second half started and it was as if a different Croatian team had replaced the lethargic one.

Ivan Perisic tied the score in the 68th minute, Mario Mandzukic got the go-ahead goal in the 109th and Croatia shocked England with a 2-1 victory Wednesday that advanced a nation of just over 4 million to a World Cup final against France.

“Mentally strong team,” midfielder Ivan Rakitic said. “It’s just unbelievable to get back in the game in this way.”

When the final whistle blew and they knew they were going to their first World Cup final, the Croatians ran to their jumping and cheering fans in their iconic red-and-white checkered jerseys. Croatia joined an exclusive club of 13 nations that has advanced to a World Cup final in a tournament where powers Brazil, Germany, Argentina and Spain made early exits.

“They’ve had an incredible route to the final. They’ve shown remarkable character,” said England coach Gareth Southgate, who for now will be remembered more for a fashionable waistcoat than ending a half-century of hurt.

France, which won its only title at home in 1998, will have an extra day of rest after beating Belgium 1-0 on Tuesday.

Croatia, coming off 360 intense minutes of soccer’s highest level, faces its biggest sporting moment since becoming an independent nation in 1991.

Fans back home in Zagreb took to the streets to celebrate.

“We are a nation of people who never give in, who are proud and who have character,” said coach Zlatko Dalic, who wore a checkered jersey to his post-match news conference. “There’s no weakness in a team that is in the final.”

The front of the stands behind one goal was filled with more than two dozen white banners with a red Cross of St. George, pledging support from many of the island’s clubs, from Bradford City to Wolverhampton. Back home, a crowd of 30,000 was in London’s Hyde Park for a large-screen viewing, the British Beer and Pub Association predicted supporters would buy 10 million extra pints at pubs during the match and No.1 Court

at Wimbledon was less than one-third full for the men’s quarterfinal match between John Isner and Milos Raonic.

Promise seemed about to be fulfilled when Kieran Trippier curled in a free kick in the fifth minute for his first international goal, above leaping Dejan Lovren and Mandzukic and past the desperate dive of goalkeeper Danijel Subasic. Choruses of “God Save the Queen” began in England’s end.

“We had a couple chances after that to get the second, give ourselves a bit more breathing room,” England captain Harry Kane said.

And Croatia defender Sime Vrsaljko kept the score even nine minutes into extra time by clearing John Stones’ header off a corner just in front of the goal line. Croatia became the first team since Argentina beat Italy in 1990 to come from behind to win a World Cup semifinal match.

Football will not be coming home to England, and there will be no title to match the 1966 triumph at Wembley Stadium. Kane & Co. will deal with the same disappointment that felled Shearer and Platt, Gazza and Wazza, Beckham and Gerrard. And Southgate, whose penalty-kick failure led to England’s previous semifinal loss in a major tournament, in the 1996 European Championship semifinals.

“Impossible to say anything to them that is going to make them feel better at this point,” Southgate said after fourth straight loss in a major semifinal.

Croatia tied the score after Rakitic switched the ball from left flank to right, where Vrsaljko crossed. Kyle Walker attempted a diving header to clear. Perisic jumped and from behind raised his left boot over Walker’s head to poke the ball past goalkeeper Jordan Pickford from about 8 yards for his fourth goal in the tournament.

England had its moments to come back, but Lingard failed to connect with a Kane through ball in 78th, and Kane miss-hit a header off a free kick in stoppage time.

Mandzukic scored after Walker stuck out a leg to block Josip Pivacic’s cross. The ball popped up and Perisic outjumped Trippier to head the ball toward goal. Mandzukic alertly reacted to the unexpected ball in the penalty area, splitting defenders Stones and Harry Maguire, who had taken four short steps up. The ball bounced twice, Mandzukic ran onto it and one-timed a low, left-footed shot to Pickford’s left.

Mandzukic was mobbed by teammates, who jumped on him in the corner and trapped photographers under them in the crush.

SPORTS

Federer stunned in Wimbledon

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

LONDON — Roger Federer was a point away from a rather tidy, straight-set victory in the Wimbledon quarterfinals. One lousy point.

And then, slowly, over the next two-plus hours, all the way until the fifth set reached its 24th game, as the temperature dropped and the spectators’ cries of “Let’s go, Roger!” echoed through the shadows, everything came apart for the eight-time champion. Against an opponent who’d never beaten him nor made it this far at the All England Club.

In a stunning turnaround in an unfamiliar setting — No. 1 Court instead of Centre Court — the top-seeded Federer blew a third-set match point and, eventually, all of his big lead in a 2-6, 6-7 (5), 7-5, 6-4, 13-11 loss to No. 8 Kevin Anderson on Wednesday in a 4-hour, 14-minute tussle.

“It was just one of those days where you hope to get by somehow,” said Federer, who last played at No. 1 Court in 2015. “I almost could have. I should have.”

While his tournament is over, two of his long-time rivals at the top of tennis set up a semifinal showdown: Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic. Nadal, who’s won two of his 17 Grand Slam titles at Wimbledon, edged 2009 U.S. Open champion Juan Martin del Potro 7-5, 6-7 (7), 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 in a wildly entertaining match that featured diving shots by both and lasted 4 hours, 48 minutes.

Djokovic, whose 12 major championships include three from the All England Club, got to his first Grand Slam semifinal since 2016 by beating No. 24 seed Kei Nishikori 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2.

In Friday’s other men’s match, Anderson will face No. 9 John Isner, the 33-year-old American who reached his first major semifinal in his 41st try by eliminating 2016 runner-up Milos Raonic 6-7 (5), 7-6 (7), 6-4, 6-3. Isner hit 25 aces, saved the only break point he faced, and has won all 95



AP Photo/Ben Curtis

Switzerland’s Roger Federer grimaces after losing a point during the fifth set of his men’s quarterfinals match against Kevin Anderson of South Africa on Wednesday at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London.

of his service games in the tournament.

Federer hadn’t been broken until facing Anderson. Still, the 20-time major champion was leading by two sets and 5-4 in the third when, with Anderson serving, he got to Ad-Out. He could have ended things right then and there. Federer managed to return a 134 mph serve, but on his next stroke, he shanked a backhand.

Back to deuce. From there, it all began to change. Anderson held for 5-all, broke to 6-5 with a violent return winner off a 97 mph second serve, then staved off three break points and closed the set with a 133 mph ace.

The comeback was just beginning.

“I had my chances,” Federer said, “so it’s disappointing.”

This was only the third time in Federer’s 20 years of contesting Grand Slam matches that he lost after taking the opening two sets; both of the other defeats came in 2011. And, according to the ATP, it’s the fifth time Federer lost a match at a major after holding a match point, something else that last happened seven years ago.

He came into the match having won 32 consecutive sets at Wimbledon, a

run he stretched to 34 before faltering.

“I just kept on telling myself, ‘I have to keep believing.’ I kept saying that today was going to be my day,” Anderson said.

Anderson was the runner-up to Nadal at last year’s U.S. Open, but he never made it beyond the fourth round at Wimbledon until this week. He hit 28 aces against Federer, saved nine of 12 break points and managed to hold his own in the rare lengthy baseline rallies.

“It’s like that with the big servers,” Federer said. “You’re never really safe.”

As the fifth set became as much a test of mental strength as anything, from 4-all to 6-all to 8-all to 10-all, Anderson stayed steady. It was Federer who blinked, double-faulting to face a break point at 11-all, then slapping a forehand into the net.

Anderson, a 32-year-old South African who played college tennis at Illinois, served it out, ending things with a 128 mph service winner before raising both arms.

Djokovic got his wish to play in the main stadium, and he showed that he might completely be back from right elbow troubles that lasted more than a year until he finally had surgery in

February.

He’s been flashing some anger this fortnight and did so again in the second set, bouncing his racket off the turf after failing to capitalize on three break points at 1-all. That earned a code violation from chair umpire Carlos Ramos. When Nishikori let his own racket fly in the fourth set, he wasn’t chastised, which prompted Djokovic to yell “double standards” toward Ramos — drawing boos from fans.

“He claims that he didn’t see what Nishikori has done, but apparently he always sees what I do,” Djokovic said afterward, “something that I don’t think is fair.”

Later, Ramos warned Djokovic for a time violation, but that didn’t seem to faze the Serb.

Soon enough, Djokovic was on his way to the semifinals, where he will meet Nadal.

“I like the level of tennis that I’m playing on right now. I really do. I think with the performances I’ve had, I deserve to be in the semifinals,” said Djokovic, whose last major title came at the 2016 French Open. “I don’t want to stop here. I hope I can get a chance to fight for a trophy.”

He’ll have to get past Nadal first.

SCOREBOARD

Baseball				
MLB				
AMERICAN LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	65	29	.691	—
New York	60	31	.659	3½
Tampa Bay	48	44	.522	16
Toronto	42	49	.462	21½
Baltimore	26	67	.280	38½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	50	41	.549	—
Minnesota	41	49	.456	8½
Detroit	40	55	.421	12
Chicago	31	61	.337	19½
Kansas City	26	66	.283	24½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	62	33	.653	—
Seattle	58	35	.623	3
Oakland	52	41	.559	9
Los Angeles	47	46	.505	14
Texas	40	54	.426	21½
Wednesday's Games				
Tampa Bay 4, Detroit 2				
Minnesota 8, Kansas City 5				
N.Y. Yankees 9, Baltimore 0				
Boston 4, Texas 2				
Cleveland 19, Cincinnati 4				
Atlanta 9, Toronto 5				
Chicago White Sox 4, St. Louis 0				
Oakland 8, Houston 3				
Seattle 3, L.A. Angels 0				
Thursday's Games				
Oakland (Cahill 1-2) at Houston (Morton 11-2), 11:10 a.m.				
Philadelphia (Pivetta 5-7) at Baltimore (Gausman 4-6), 3:05 p.m.				
N.Y. Yankees (Severino 14-2) at Cleveland (Kluber 12-4), 4:10 p.m.				
Toronto (Estrada 4-7) at Boston (Price 9-6), 4:10 p.m.				
Tampa Bay (Snell 12-4) at Minnesota (Gibson 3-6), 5:10 p.m.				
Seattle (Paxton 8-3) at L.A. Angels (Skaggs 6-5), 7:07 p.m.				
NATIONAL LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	51	40	.560	—
Philadelphia	51	40	.560	—
Washington	46	46	.500	5½
New York	37	53	.411	13½
Miami	39	56	.411	14
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee	55	38	.591	—
Chicago	52	38	.578	1½
St. Louis	47	44	.516	7
Pittsburgh	43	49	.467	11½
Cincinnati	41	52	.441	14
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Arizona	51	42	.548	—
Los Angeles	50	42	.543	¼
San Francisco	49	46	.516	3
Colorado	47	45	.511	3½
San Diego	40	55	.421	12
Wednesday's Games				
Pittsburgh 2, Washington 0				
San Francisco 5, Chicago Cubs 4, 13 innings				
Cleveland 19, Cincinnati 4				
Miami 5, Milwaukee 4, 12 innings				
N.Y. Mets 3, Philadelphia 0, 10 innings				
Chicago White Sox 4, St. Louis 0				
Colorado 19, Arizona 2				
L.A. Dodgers 4, San Diego 2				
Thursday's Games				
Arizona (Ray 3-1) at Colorado (Freeland 8-6), 12:10 p.m.				
Philadelphia (Pivetta 5-7) at Baltimore (Gausman 4-6), 3:05 p.m.				
Milwaukee (Miley 1-0) at Pittsburgh (Taillon 5-7), 4:05 p.m.				
Washington (Scherzer 11-5) at N.Y. Mets (Mets 4-6), 4:10 p.m.				
L.A. Dodgers (Stripling 7-2) at San Diego (Ross 5-7), 7:10 p.m.				
MLB NORTHWEST LEAGUE				
North Division				

Tri-City (Padres)	13	W	L	Pct	GB
Vancouver (Blue Jays)	13	13	500	—	
Everett (Mariners)	13	13	500	—	
Spokane (Rangers)	9	17	.346	4	
South Division					
Hillsboro (D-Backs)	18	W	L	Pct	GB
Boise (Rockies)	15	11	692	—	
Salem-Keizer (Giants)	14	12	538	4	
Eugene (Cubs)	9	17	.346	9	
Wednesday's Games					
Boise 6, Vancouver 5					
Spokane 8, Eugene 7					
Everett 7, Salem-Keizer 4					
Hillsboro 11, Tri-City 0					
Thursday's Games					
Vancouver at Boise, 6:15 p.m.					
Eugene at Spokane, 6:30 p.m.					
Salem-Keizer at Everett, 7:05 p.m.					
Tri-City at Hillsboro, 7:05 p.m.					

Soccer

FIFA WORLD CUP

SEMIFINALS

Wednesday, July 11

At Moscow

Croatia 2, England 1, ET

FINALS

Sunday, July 15

At Moscow

France vs. Croatia, 11 a.m.

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Atlanta United FC	12	4	4	40	42	23
New York City FC	11	4	4	37	38	24
New York	10	5	2	32	34	17
Columbus	8	6	30	24	23	
New England	7	4	7	28	30	25
Montreal	8	12	0	24	24	35
Philadelphia	7	9	3	24	25	30
Chicago	6	9	5	23	32	38
Orlando City	6	11	1	19	25	41
Toronto FC	4	10	4	16	29	36
D.C. United	2	7	5	11	23	29

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
FC Dallas	10	3	5	35	28	21
Los Angeles FC	10	4	4	34	41	28
Sporting K.C.	9	4	6	33	35	24
Real Salt Lake	9	8	2	29	27	34
Portland	8	5	29	26	22	
Vancouver	7	7	5	26	29	37
Houston	7	6	4	25	36	26
LA Galaxy	7	7	4	25	31	28
Minnesota United	6	11	1	19	23	36
Seattle	4	9	4	16	15	22
Colorado	4	11	3	15	22	32
San Jose	2	10	6	12	29	37

NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Wednesday's Games

New York City FC 3, Montreal 0

Philadelphia 4, Chicago 3

Saturday's Games

Columbus at New York City FC, 7 p.m.

Sporting Kansas City at New York, 7 p.m.

LA Galaxy at New England, 7:30 p.m.

San Jose at Montreal, 7:30 p.m.

Chicago at FC Dallas, 8 p.m.

Real Salt Lake at Minnesota United, 8 p.m.

Toronto FC at Orlando City, 8 p.m.

Vancouver at D.C. United, 8 p.m.

Houston at Colorado, 9 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Seattle at Atlanta United FC, 2 p.m.

Portland at Los Angeles FC, 6 p.m.

Tennis

WIMBLEDON

Wednesday

Men's Singles Quarterfinal

Kevin Anderson (8), South Africa, def. Roger Federer (1), Switzerland, 2-6, 6-7 (5), 7-5, 6-4, 13-11

John Isner (9), United States, def. Milos Raonic (13), Canada, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (7), 6-4, 6-3

Novak Djokovic (12), Serbia, def. Kei Nishikori (24), Japan, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2

Rafael Nadal (2), Spain, def. Juan Martin del Potro (5), Argentina, 7-5, 6-7 (7), 4-6, 6-4, 6-4

Monday