

Son Heung-min key to South Korea avoiding second candy attack

By Kim Tong-Hyung and Stephen Wade
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — Progress for South Korea's players will be avoiding being pelted with candy again on their return from the World Cup.

After enduring three poor performances by the team in Brazil four years ago, soccer fans were waiting at Incheon International Airport to make their anger felt.

If collecting a solitary point in a group containing Russia, Algeria, and Belgium was tough, the challenge looks even more daunting this time with World Cup champion Germany, Mexico, and Sweden in Group F.

The road to Russia offered few signs of progress.

In the third round of Asian qualifying, South Korea picked up only two points from five away games to leave a place at a ninth successive World Cup looking uncertain. Coach Uli Stielike was fired and Shin Tae-yong was drafted as a replacement to get the squad over the line with two tense goalless draws.

As the players celebrated in Uzbekistan, there was criticism at home that the party was undeserved given the unconvincing performances.

To add to the concerns for Shin, his team has also been thinned by injuries to important players like wingers Yeom Ki-hoon and Lee Keun-ho, and fullback Kim Jin-su. All three missed the trip to Russia, along with several others.

That puts pressure on young and unproven players such as midfielder Lee Seung-woo.

The most important players on the team are playmaker Ki Sung-yueng and Tottenham striker Son Heung-min.

Lee Jae-sung scored South Korea's only goal in a 1-3 loss to Bosnia-Herzegovina at Jeonju on June 1, a farewell to fans on home soil. It was a worrying result.

The country has become accustomed to World Cup qualification since the 1982 failure and there is a desire to see more appearances in the knockout stage. Only twice have the Taeguk Warriors advanced from their group, in 2002 when they made the semifinals on home soil and in 2010 when they reached the round of 16.

This is South Korea's ninth straight World Cup.

Enthusiasm at home seems to be lacking for this team, partly due to the results, and no doubt overshadowed by the recent summit between Donald Trump and North Korean counterpart Kim Jong Un.

Here's a closer look at the South Korea team:

Coach

Shin Tae-yong took the job in July 2017 and did just enough to qualify.

Shin likes to surprise tactically and he has experience in large tournaments — with the under-23 team at the 2016 Olympics and at the 2017 Under-20 World Cup. In both events, South Korea advanced through the group stage before being eliminated in the first game of the knockout round. Shin may back off on his attacking game and focus on defense in Russia.

Goalkeepers

South Korea still lacks a top-line goalkeeper. Vissel Kobe goalkeeper Kim Seung-gyu is the No. 1 but could get competition from Jo Hyeon-woo and Kim Jin-hyeon.

Defenders

Shin is not averse to a three-man defense but usually opts to use four.

South Korea is traditionally strong in the fullback position with Lee Yong strong on the right. Kim Min-woo should be on the left with the injury to the other

Rare tick inexplicably turns up in Arkansas

By Hannah Grabenstein
The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A hardy species of tick that survived a New Jersey winter has inexplicably arrived in Arkansas, and entomologists are trying to figure out how.

The Longhorned tick is native to eastern Asia, but was discovered in New Jersey last August and again this spring. Others were later found in Virginia and West Virginia, but no one can explain how one showed up on an Arkansas dog.

Oklahoma State University researchers confirmed the discovery and the Arkansas Agriculture Department are warning ranchers to monitor livestock.

Ticks can spread disease in animals and humans. Overseas, severe infestations have stunted growth in cattle and caused enough blood loss that some cattle died.

At press time, health departments in Arkansas and New Jersey said they had not found any disease-bearing Longhorned ticks so far.



TAEGUK WARRIORS. Son Heung-min, left, and Moon Seon-min, right, members of the South Korean national team, attend a practice in preparation for the 2018 World Cup, in Saint Petersburg, Russia. Korea Republic opens the tournament in Nizhny Novgorod against Sweden on June 18, followed by Mexico on June 23. South Korea will rely on getting points from those games before closing out Group F against Germany on June 27. (Photo by Mike Kireev/NurPhoto/Sipa USA)(Sipa via AP Images) competitor for the spot, Kim Jin-su. Both can get forward and attack.

Jang Hyun-soo is one likely starter in central defense with the other spot up for grabs.

Midfielders

Ki Sung-yueng is the captain and the center of the attack. The other central midfield spot could go to fullback Park Joo-ho, who has been effective there at times.

Another midfielder to watch is Barcelona youth academy player Lee Seung-woo.

Forwards

The challenge will be to get the best out of Son Heung-min. At times, the Tottenham forward has been featured on the left, as a second striker, and as a lone striker.

It looks as if Son will start as part of a two-pronged attack with the other forwards vying to partner him.

Group games

South Korea opens in Nizhny Novgorod against Sweden on June 18, followed by Mexico on June 23. South Korea will rely on getting points from those games before closing out Group F against Germany on June 27. None of South Korea's group games are in St. Petersburg, where the team is based.

Squad

Goalkeepers: Kim Seung-gyu (Vissel Kobe), Kim Jin-hyeon (Cerezo Osaka), Jo Hyeon-woo (Daegu FC)

Defenders: Kim Young-gwon (Guangzhou Evergrande), Jang Hyun-soo (FC Tokyo), Jung Seung-hyun (Sagan Tosu), Yun Young-sun (Seongnam FC), Oh Ban-suk (Jeju United), Kim Min-woo (Sangju Sangmu), Park Joo-ho (Ulsan Hyundai), Hong Chul (Sangju Sangmu), Go Yo-han (FC Seoul), Lee Yong (Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors)

Midfielders: Ki Sung-yueng (Swansea), Jung Woo-young (Vissel Kobe), Ju Se-jong (Asan Mugunghwa FC), Koo Ja-cheol (Augsburg), Lee Jae-sung (Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors), Lee Seung-woo (Hellas Verona), Moon Seon-min (Incheon United)

Forwards: Kim Shin-wook (Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors), Son Heung-min (Tottenham), Hwang Hee-chan (Red Bull Salzburg)

To learn more, visit <www.fifa.com/worldcup/teams>.

Costs of Snowden leak still mounting five years later

By Deb Riechmann
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Is Edward Snowden a whistleblower, traitor, leaker, or public hero?

The National Security Agency (NSA) contractor blew the lid off U.S. government surveillance methods five years ago, but intelligence chiefs complain revelations from the trove of classified documents he disclosed are still trickling out.

That includes recent reporting on a mass surveillance program run by close U.S. ally Japan and on how the NSA targeted bitcoin users to gather intelligence to combat narcotics and money laundering. The *Intercept*, an investigative publication with access to Snowden documents, published stories on both subjects.

The top U.S. counterintelligence official said journalists have released only about one percent taken by the 34-year-old American, now living in exile in Russia, "so we don't see this issue ending anytime soon."

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Specialties: Empanadas, Cuban sandwiches, Arroz con gandules (rice & beans)

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