

# Spain ease past Austria with 3-0 World Cup win

Spain coasted past Austria and into the World Cup last-16 on Thursday, thoroughly outclassing their opponents in a 3-0 knockout win with a brace from Mikel Oyarzabal and a Pedro Porro header.

The European champions controlled possession and sliced through the Austrian defense in a typically dominant performance in Los Angeles, as Hollywood stars Penelope Cruz, Javier Bardem and singer Rosalia cheered on.

The win -- which could have been by a greater margin, with a disallowed goal and a free kick off the woodwork -- sets up a tantalizing round-of-16 clash with either Portugal or Croatia.

The SoFi Stadium was a sea of red and excitement was sky-high over the first visit by a bona fide World Cup favorite to America's second city.

Spain ratcheted up the pressure gradually through the first half, creating a string of chances after the first hydration break.

Marc Cucurella thought he had scored from a Lamine Yamal corner, but Pau Cubarsi was judged to have encroached on Austria's goalkeeper.

Alexander Schlager then made a superb diving save, pushing Oyarzabal's low shot around the post.

Austria's defense finally buckled in the 36th minute. Pedri pinged a ball wide left to Cucu-



Spain's defender #24 Marc Cucurella and Austria's forward #14 Sasa Kalajdzic fight for the ball during the match

ella, whose cross to Oyarzabal was calmly side-footed past the 'keeper.

Spain's dominance grew further, with Yamal tormenting the Austrians, mainly from the right flank.

An Alex Baena free kick hit the crossbar, and Yamal's close-range follow-up shot was well saved.

Austria spurned a rare chance at the other end. Romano Schmid played in a late-arriving and unmarked Stefan Posch, but a terrible first touch meant he lost the ball before even attempting a shot.

After the break Spain continued knocking on the door

without quite putting the game to rest.

Austria sent on two giant

strikers -- Sasa Kalajdzic and Marko Arnautovic -- and immediately went long, with Kalajdzic putting a header over the bar.

But in the 66th minute, Spain struck again. Baena lifted a cross onto the head of Pedro Porro, who nodded in his first goal for Spain.

Some dogged defending kept the scoreline respectable, including a goalline clearance by David Alaba from Yamal, who was substituted off to rest moments later.

Spain sprayed passes around the pitch as the final minutes ticked down, eliciting "Oles" from the crowd, as attention turned to a sterner test on Monday in Dallas.

In the 89th minute, a pinpoint Cucurella cross found a completely unmarked Oyarzabal in the penalty area, who slotted the ball home.

## World Cup Schedule

### Today (Round of 32)

Time	Match	Venue
09:00 PM	Australia vs Egypt	Dallas Stadium

### Tomorrow (Round of 32)

01:00 AM	Argentina vs Cape Verde	Miami Stadium
04:30 AM	Colombia vs Ghana	Kansas City Stadium

### Tomorrow (Round of 16)

08:00 PM	Canada vs Morocco	Houston Stadium
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(All games in Bahrain time)



## Klopp poised to replace Nagelsmann as Germany coach: reports



Jurgen Klopp

AFP | Berlin

Julian Nagelsmann is reportedly set to be sacked as Germany coach, tabloid Bild reported yesterday, with former Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp the favourite to take over in the dugout.

Nagelsmann, 38, has been under fire since Germany's last 32 exit from the World Cup after a shock loss to Paraguay.

Showing pictures of Nagelsmann at German FA (DFB) headquarters in Frankfurt, Bild reported yesterday the coach had been offered a severance package of seven million euros (\$8 million) to leave the position in a three-hour meeting.

Last renewed in January 2025, Nagelsmann's contract is set to run until 2028.

Figures on his annual salary have not been made public, al-

though German media reports he earns roughly seven million euros per year.

Germany's loss on penalties to Paraguay marked the third straight early World Cup exit for the four-time champions, after group stage eliminations in Russia and Qatar.

Monday's defeat was Germany's first knockout match since winning the World Cup in Brazil in 2014.

On Tuesday, DFB president Bernd Neundorff announced an immediate investigation into the World Cup failure.

A decision on Nagelsmann is expected "by the beginning of next week at the latest", AFP sports subsidiary SID reported yesterday.

Several German media outlets, including Sky and Munich daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung, have said Klopp is the overwhelming favourite to succeed Nagelsmann.

# Superb Swiatek, Zverev cruise into Wimbledon last 32

AFP | London

Iga Swiatek put a stuttering start to her Wimbledon title defence firmly behind her by powering to a statement second-round victory over Karolina Pliskova, while Alexander Zverev also eased through yesterday.

Reigning champion Swiatek, who struggled to hold back tears after battling past Taylor Townsend in the first round, was back to her ruthless best in a 6-1, 6-3 dismantling of former world number one Pliskova in 70 minutes.

"For sure the first round was really emotional but today I felt like it's another day at the office, I need to be ready, be sharp," said Swiatek.

The Pole, who has been inconsistent since winning her sixth Grand Slam title at the All England Club 12 months ago, will next face the Philippines' Alexandra Eala, who beat Serena Williams' first-round conqueror Maya Joint.

Pliskova, who returned to the tour this year after a long-term injury absence, was no match for the third seed.

The 25-year-old Swiatek has reached at least the third round on each of her past 26 Grand Slam appearances since losing in round two at the 2019 US Open.



Germany's Alexander Zverev returns to France's Valentin Royer

Eala, the 29th seed, became the first woman from the Philippines to reach the third round of a Grand Slam, defeating Joint 3-6, 6-2, 6-0 on a raucous Court Three.

"I think the atmosphere today was amazing, it was electric, respectful and all that I could have hoped for," said the 21-year-old.

Last year's runner-up Amanda Anisimova came back from a break down in the third set to beat Sofia Kenin in a deciding tie-break.

Former Australian Open champion Madison Keys ended home interest in the women's singles, beating Britain's Katie Swan in straight sets.

Last on Centre Court, 2022 Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina, bidding to take the world-number-one ranking from Aryna Sabalenka next week, meets American Caty McNally.

Britain's future queen Princess Catherine attended the tournament yesterday, greeting fans before watching some of the



Poland's Iga Swiatek returns against Czech Republic's Karolina Pliskova

action on Court 18.

### Zverev powers on

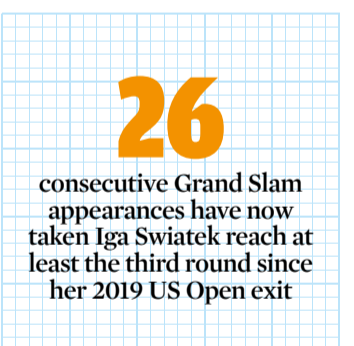
Zverev was on top form in a 6-1, 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) victory over Valentin Royer, raising hopes the German can finally master the grass courts.

He ended his long wait for a maiden Grand Slam title at the French Open last month but has never performed well at Wimbledon, failing to get past the last 16 in nine previous appearances at the All England Club.

The second seed has a golden opportunity to go further this time around, with Jannik Sinner and Novak Djokovic in the other half of the draw, and fourth seed Ben Shelton already out of the tournament.

"If I keep playing like this I definitely think it can happen this year," said Zverev. "In tennis you need to have a short-term memory, whether it's good or bad."

Zverev made short work of Royer, banishing some of the



memories of last year when he was dumped out in the first round by another unseeded Frenchman, Arthur Rinderknech.

American sixth seed Taylor Fritz continued his strong recent record at the All England Club, seeing off compatriot Patrick Kypson 6-2, 6-2, 7-5 to reach the third round.

Fritz has made at least the quarter-finals at Wimbledon in three of the past four years and lost to Carlos Alcaraz in the semis 12 months ago.

Fifth-seeded Australian Alex de Minaur also breezed through with a dominant straight-sets victory over French veteran Adrian Mannarino.

Rising Spanish star Rafael Nadal returned to court in a match delayed by darkness on Wednesday, winning the last two sets to complete a comeback victory over Pablo Carreno Busta.