



Last-Gasp Spain Knock Out Portugal

AFP | Arlington

Substitute Mikel Merino scored a late winner to put Spain into the quarter-finals with a 1-0 victory over Portugal, ending Cristiano Ronaldo's World Cup career on Monday.

The European champions will face the United States -- the only co-host remaining -- or Belgium on Friday in Los Angeles.

In front of an expectant crowd of 70,649 at the air-conditioned home of the Dallas Cowboys, a match that promised so much on paper failed



Lamine Yamal and midfielder #09 Gavi react after winning

to really deliver.

Extra time looked certain, before fellow substitute Ferran Torres slipped in Merino to settle the contest in the first minute of injury time.

It meant a sour final World Cup match for the 41-year-old Ronaldo, now playing in Saudi Arabia, who had confirmed on the eve of the encounter that this would be his last dance on football's biggest stage.

The neighbours entered the contest both unbeaten, but while Portugal had not been entirely convincing, Spain had not even conceded a goal in the tournament.

One of the pre-tournament favourites, they still haven't.

shortly before kickoff when a black-and-white image of the late Portugal forward Diogo Jota flashed up on the giant screen that looms over the field.

Spain should have been ahead with less than 10 minutes gone when Dani Olmo played in Mikel Oyarzabal but with only goalkeeper Diogo Costa to beat, he somehow pulled it well wide.

Portugal skipper Ronaldo had his first chance to add to his three goals in North America, stinging the palms of goalkeeper Unai Simon from a tight angle.

Luis de la Fuente's Spain cranked up the pressure, Yamal and Alex Baena tested Costa twice in quick succession, the second requiring a wonderful fingertip save.

Ronaldo -- jeered and cheered in equal measure -- was a marginal presence in the central attacking role he now occupies in the twilight of his career.

World Cup Schedule (Round of 16)

Today		
Time	Match	Venue
07:00 PM	Argentina vs Egypt	Atlanta Stadium
11:00 PM	Switzerland vs Colombia	Vancouver Stadium

(All games in Bahrain time)



Cristiano Ronaldo

Pogacar wins Tour de France 3rd stage, takes yellow



UAE Team Emirates - XRG's Slovenian rider Tadej Pogacar cycles to the finish line

AFP | Les Angles

Reigning champion Tadej Pogacar won the third stage of the Tour de France on Monday to snatch the leader's yellow jersey from rival Jonas Vingegaard.

The world champion and Vingegaard are dead level on time but Pogacar took over the race lead by virtue of his better finishing positions in the opening three stages.

The Slovenian finished two seconds ahead of the Dane and also earned four more bonus seconds than Vingegaard to wipe out his six-second deficit from the start of the day.

Former Giro d'Italia winner Richard Carapaz came past French teenage prodigy Paul Seixas to take third in the same time as Vingegaard at the end of a 196km stage which started in Granollers, Spain and

finished in Les Angles in the French Pyrenees.

Despite a plea from organisers for fans to stay away because of raging wildfires just 70 kilometres away from the finish, there were plenty of people by the side of the roads in France.

Olympic champion Remco Evenepoel was eighth at 4sec and remains third overall but fell to 23sec off the lead.

Sunday's stage two winner Isaac Del Toro is fourth overall at 24sec after finishing eighth, with Spaniard Juan Ayuso (27sec) and Seixas (48sec) rounding out the top six.

After Pogacar let his UAE Team Emirates team-mate Del Toro take the victory on Sunday's finish on the Montjuic hill in Barcelona, this time the Mexican who led out the Slovenian for a decisive sprint to the line.

Bellingham powers 10-man England past Mexico, into quarters

● Bellingham nets two quick goals early

● England defeat Mexico 3-2

● Kane scores from penalty spot

● Quansah sent off in second half

AFP | Mexico City

Jude Bellingham's double inflicted a rare defeat on Mexico at the Estadio Azteca as 10-man England won a nerve-racking World Cup classic 3-2 to reach the quarter-finals.

Harry Kane also scored from the penalty spot as the Three Lions overcame Jarell Quansah's red card, high altitude and a fervent home support to keep their quest for a first major tournament win in 60 years alive.

England have relied on Bellingham and Kane throughout the tournament and that duo have carried them into a last eight showdown with Erling Haaland's Norway.

"When the going gets tough, they never give up, they never lose belief. It was one step more," said England boss Thomas Tuchel.

"We need to take this in. This is Azteca, it's Mexico, a crazy



England's forward #09 Harry Kane celebrates scoring his team's third goal with England's midfielder #10 Jude Bellingham

game. We left everything out there, every single one of us. We need to take this in, now it's full steam ahead."

Bellingham struck twice in 98 seconds in the first half to condemn Mexico to just a third defeat in 90 matches at the Azteca.

Julian Quinones and Raul Jimenez reduced the Mexican arrears but they fell short of a place in the quarter-finals.

Victory also helped to erase some of England's nightmarish memories at the Azteca in the quarter-finals of the 1986

World Cup when Diego Maradona scored a double for Argentina, including the infamous "Hand of God" goal.

The match was delayed by an hour after a thunder storm and heavy rain lashed the Mexican capital for hours before the planned 6.00pm (0000 GMT) kick-off time.

Despite the sodden conditions, over 80,000 fans crammed into the stadium to create a deafening noise.

Tuchel was wary of a fast start from Mexico as his side adjust-

ed to the altitude 2,240 metres (7,350 feet) above sea level.

Mexico had flown out of the traps when they won a World Cup knockout game for the first time in 40 years against Ecuador 2-0 last Tuesday.

This time England managed to keep Javier Aguirre's side at bay, but did need a crucial intervention from Jordan Pickford to deny Jimenez opening the scoring with a diving header that was headed for the bottom corner.

Tuchel made three changes to the side that needed a heroic

YOU
KNOW WHAT

seconds separated Jude Bellingham's two first-half goals that transformed England's World Cup last-16 clash with Mexico

wiped out by half-time.

Quinones blasted in his fourth goal of the tournament to spark the Mexico rally after England failed to clear a free-kick.

Jimenez drilled wide and saw another header saved by Pickford before Bellingham made a last-ditch intervention to deny Cesar Montes a certain equaliser.

Nico O'Reilly nearly restored England's two-goal cushion at the start of the second half as his deflected shot cannoned off the post.

Quansah was shown a straight red card on 54 minutes after a VAR review for a mistimed lunge on Jesus Gallardo.

But just six minutes later the 10 men had added to their lead when Gordon was wiped out by Mexico goalkeeper Raul Rangel and Kane emphatically dispatched the penalty.

The England captain's sixth goal of the tournament puts him just one behind Haaland, Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe in the race for the Golden Boot.

The game took another huge momentum swing when this time Kane was penalised for a foul inside his own box and Jimenez slotted home the penalty to set up a frantic final 20 minutes.

England though stood tall, defending at times frantically to resist the Mexican wave during 11 minutes of additional time and reach a third consecutive World Cup quarter-final.