Five-star Belgium

Two each for Hazard and Lukaku as Belgium thump Tunisia 5-2

Lukaku's two see him level with Cristiano in **Golden Boot race**

Tunisia need Panama to beat England to stay alive

Reuters | Moscow

wo goals each for Romelu Lukaku and Eden Hazard helped Belgium to a 5-2 thrashing of Tunisia yesterday that showcased their attacking verve and star quality and put them firmly on course for the World Cup knockout phase

Michy Batshuayi came off the bench to the top of the goalscoring charts add a late fifth but it was by no means all plain sailing for Roberto Martinez's side they are to finally make a push to a major and they will be aware that they will need to tighten up at the back considerably if dawns.



We had to suffer in spells but when we were in full flow going forward, we look really sharp. On top you have the talent and the quality but since we came together it's been a joy to see a group of players working so hard

BELGIUM COACH ROBERTO MARTINEZ



Romelu Lukaku clips his second goal past Farouk Ben Mustapha of Tunisia to join Cristiano Ronaldo at

tournament summit after so many false

Despite topping Group G with six points and a goal difference of plus-six there is still the slimmest of chances Belgium might yet not qualify, though even a heavy defeat in their final game against England would be extremely unlikely to derail them.

An English victory over Panama today would send England and Belgium through while a draw would be enough to confirm Belgium's progress.

England have three points, with Panama and Tunisia on nought. Tunisia, also without a point after two matches having extended their 40-year World Cup winless run to 13 games, are also still in we were in full flow going forward, we with a theoretical chance of making it on look really sharp. On top you have the through three points - for a day at least.

"It's not easy to score that amount of goals in two games," said Martinez, as players working so hard." his team impressively followed up their 3-0 opening win over Panama and helped Russia 2018 set a World Cup record for and midfielder Dries Mertens, had slight 27 tournament games without a goalless injuries and could be among a series of draw.



This is the first time **Belgium have registered** five goals in a World Cup match

"We had to suffer in spells but when talent and the quality but since we came together it's been a joy to see a group of

Martinez said Lukaku and Hazard, who were withdrawn in the second half, changes for the England game.

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Ragged Defending

In yesterday's clash, Belgium were much the better team from the off but they were seriously aided and abetted by some ragged defending and non-existing marking from their opponents, epitomised after six minutes when Syam Ben Youssef needlessly crashed into Hazard to concede a penalty, which the captain calmly converted.

Mertens seized on another error to set up Lukaku to plant the second goal into the corner 10 minutes later.

Tunisia hit back quickly with a Dylan Bronn header as Belgium's own sometimes shaky defending was exposed but another misplaced Tunisian pass enabled Thomas Meunier to feed Lukaku to make it 3-1 in stoppage time.

Following his double against Panama it took the him to four goals for the tournament, level with Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, and made him Belgium's highest scorer at a single World Cup - after one-and-a-half games.

An inch-perfect Kevin de Bruyne pass sent Hazard clear for a his brilliantly-finished second six minutes after restart.

Batshuayi then had a remarkable last 20 minutes as he managed to blow three great chances in a row before finally finding target in the 90th with a good finish. There was still time for Tunisia to earn a reward for their positive approach is as Wahbi Khazri scored in stoppage time.

Today's match

DAILY **tribune**

Group G **England vs Panama** (3:00 PM)

Group H Japan vs Senegal (6:00 PM) **Poland vs Colombia** (9:00 PM)

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after team suffers 24 fouls against South Korea

Marvellous Mexico close in on last 16

Vela and Hernandez goals lead Mexico to consecutive wins, Hernandez first Mexican to score 50 goals

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AFP | Rostov-on-Don, Russia

exico laid one foot in the World MCup's last 16 and left South Korea on the brink of elimination after goals from Javier Hernandez and Carlos Vela clinched a 2-1 victory in Rostov vesterday.

Hernandez became the first Mexican player to score 50 goals for his country, after 104 appearances, with Vela earlier opening the scoring through yet another penalty kick.

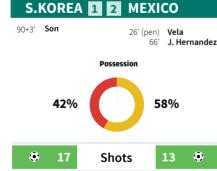
Son Heung-min's stunning long-range effort in stoppage time gave South Korea a glimmer of hope but it was too little too late.

Mexico lead Group F on six points after two games, having backed up their shock victory against Germany with another display to suggest they can go deep Celsius, Mexico were rewarded for in this tournament.

South Korea, beaten by a Sweden penalty in their first match, had their chanc- pace and penetration in attack. Hirving es but again lacked cutting edge up front. Lozano, the match-winner against Ger-

sia, they are left needing a miracle to progress.

After 28 games at the World Cup, there chances. have now been 14 spot-kicks, 11 of them converted, and there could be little complaint about this one, coming after a back post before Son saw three quickblatant handball by Jang Hyun-soo, Vela fire shots come to nothing, the first two stepping up to convert.



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In temperatures around 35 degrees another controlled performance that combined possession in midfield with Yet to register a single point in Rus- many, was excellent again in particular. Before their opening goal, however, it was South Korea that created the better

On target

Fouls

Only a brilliant saving tackle from Lozano denied Lee Yong tapping in at the blocked, the last skewed wide.

Carlos Vela of Mexico battles for possession with Heungmin Son of Korea Republic during the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia group F match between Korea Republic and Mexico at Rostov Arena

But Mexico's penalty in the 27th min- second half as South Korea perhaps ute was clear. Jang tried to block Andres Guardado's cross but inexplicably slid with his arm outstretched above him and the ball struck the defender's hand.

Jo Hyeon-woo, who played for time by swigging his water and chatting to his team-mates, but there was no mistake. Vela slid home.

The game became more open in the fore a scuffed finish rolled past Jo.

pushed too hard too soon, and it was little surprise when Mexico doubled their lead.

They were fortunate not to concede Vela was made to wait by goalkeeper a foul for a clear trip by Hector Herrera in the build-up but Lozano found Hernandez and the striker did the rest. The former Manchester United striker's dummy-shot fooled the lunging Jang beRussia

Mexico coach Juan Car-los Osorio urged action against repetitive fouling after his team was on the receiving end of 24 fouls in their win over South Korea at the World Cup vesterday.

"Usually, I don't like to talk about referees but there was something I didn't like and that was that there were 24 fouls against us," said Osorio. whose own team committed seven fouls in the Group F match.

"It's very easy to analyse who committed them. For the good of football, I hope they take the necessary precautions and measures.'

South Korea received four yellow cards.

Mexico, who have six points from two games and are on the brink of a last-16 place, began their campaign with a stunning 1-0 win over Germany but Osorio said it was important for his side not to get carried away by the euphoria.