

Folarin Balogun Available For Round Of 16 Match Vs Belgium After FIFA’s Ban U-Turn



United States striker Folarin Balogun will be available for the USMNT’s FIFA World Cup Round of 16 clash against Belgium after FIFA suspended the one-match ban, a consequence of his red card against Bosnia and Herzegovina. Balogun was shown a straight red card during the group-stage victory after a VAR review deemed his challenge on defender Tarik Muharemović to be serious foul play. Under FIFA tournament regulations, the dismissal carried an automatic one-match suspension. However, according to The Athletic, FIFA’s judicial body has opted to suspend the implementation of the sanction, allowing the 25-year-old forward to feature in Monday’s knockout fixture in Seattle.

The decision is permitted under Article 27 of FIFA’s disciplinary code, which allows disciplinary measures to be fully or partially suspended during a probationary period. “The judicial body may decide to fully or partially suspend the implementation of a disciplinary measure. By suspending the implementation of the sanction, the judicial body subjects the person sanctioned to a probationary period of one to four years,” the law says. Referee Raphael Claus initially allowed play to continue before being sent to the pitchside monitor by VAR. After reviewing the incident, he upgraded the punishment to a straight red card for serious foul play. The red card drew strong criticism from the U.S. camp, with head coach Mauricio Pochettino insisting there was no intent to harm the opponent, while captain Christian Pulisic described the sending-off as ‘so harsh.’ Balogun’s availability provides a major boost for the United States ahead of their last-16 encounter. He has been one of the United States’ stand-out performers at the tournament, recording at least one goal contribution in every World Cup appearance so far. The former Arsenal youngster has started all but one of the team’s matches, scoring twice against Paraguay before adding another goal against Bosnia.

IPL 2026 PLAYOFFS: RCB To FACE GT IN QUALIFIER 1, ELIMINATOR BETWEEN SRH & RR

The IPL 2026 playoff line-up was confirmed after Rajasthan Royals registered a commanding 30-run win over Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday, sealing the final available spot in the top four. The fourth playoff berth had been a closely contested race involving the Rajasthan Royals, the Kolkata Knight Riders and the Punjab Kings. While defeats for RR and KKR would have handed Punjab Kings the qualification advantage, Rajasthan ensured a decisive finish with a dominant performance that not only secured their own progression but also eliminated both PBKS and KKR from the race. With the victory, RR completed the playoff quartet and joined the already-qualified sides in the IPL 2026 knockout stage, bringing an end to a tense mid-table battle for the final spot. The playoffs begin on May 26

in Dharmasala with Qualifier 1, featuring table toppers Royal Challengers Bengaluru and second-ranked Gujarat Titans. The winner of this game will cruise into the final, while the losing side will have another shot at the championship. The Eliminator is scheduled to be played on May 27 in Mullanpur, between the third-ranked Sunrisers Hyderabad and Rajasthan Royals, who finished fourth on the points table. The losing side will be knocked out, while the winners will face the losing team of Qualifier 1 in the next face-off. The winner of the Eliminator and the team losing the Qualifier 1 will lock horns in the Qualifier 2, scheduled to be played in Mullanpur on May 29. The winner of this fixture will march into the final, which will be held in Ahmedabad on May 31.

RONALDO TO RETIRE AFTER FIFA WORLD CUP 2026? PORTUGAL’S NEW BOSS GIVES BIG UPDATE ON CRISTIANO’S FUTURE

Portugal appointed Jorge Jesus as their new national team coach on Friday and in his first press conference Jesus said he would continue to call on veteran superstar Cristiano Ronaldo if he is available, insisting the forward will “never” be a problem. The 41-year-old striker was criticised for his performances in the FIFA World Cup 2026 under predecessor Roberto Martinez as Portugal were eliminated in the Round of 16 by Spain. Ronaldo, who said he has appeared at his last World Cup, has not decided whether he will continue to play for the national team. “As long as he’s playing and is in a condition to be selected, I will pick him, within certain limits and under the conditions that I consider best for the national team,” Jesus told reporters Friday at his presentation. The 71-year-old journeyman coach said he has not spoken to Ronaldo yet but that they would discuss the former Manchester United and Real Madrid star’s future in the game. “I haven’t spoken with Cris yet... Cris is never going to be a problem for the national team. Not for the national team, nor for me,” Jesus explained. “Cris is a symbol of Portuguese football. Cris is a symbol of the national team... that will forever be in the history books. “I had great pleasure working with him this past year...



(it’s) easy to work with him... “We’re going to have a conversation between the two of us about what he wants to do with the future of his career.” Jesus coached five-time Ballon d’Or winner Ronaldo at Al-Nassr before leaving in May after guiding the club to the Saudi Pro League title. “I know (Ronaldo) wants to keep playing at Al-Nassr, because, as you know, I spent a year with him,” added Jesus. “He always told me, ‘I’m going to end my career at Al-Nassr’.” Jesus will lead Portugal until after the 2030 World Cup, which the country is hosting along with Spain and Moroc-

co. Portugal appointed Jorge Jesus as their new national team coach on Friday and in his first press conference Jesus said he would continue to call on veteran superstar Cristiano Ronaldo if he is available, insisting the forward will “never” be a problem. The 41-year-old striker was criticised for his performances in the FIFA World Cup 2026 under predecessor Roberto Martinez as Portugal were eliminated in the Round of 16 by Spain. Ronaldo, who said he has appeared at his last World Cup, has not decided whether he will continue to play for the national team.

Cristiano Ronaldo Confirms 2026 FIFA World Cup Will Be His Last With Portugal

Ronaldo is the first and only player in the world to score in six different FIFA World Cup editions. In FIFA World Cup 2026, he has scored 3 goals in four matches.

Cristiano Ronaldo has officially confirmed that the 2026 FIFA World Cup will be the final World Cup of his illustrious career with Portugal. Speaking ahead of Portugal’s Round of 16 clash against Spain, the 41-year-old said he wants to cherish every moment of what will be his sixth and last appearance at football’s biggest tournament. Ronaldo expressed hope that Portugal’s upcoming match would not be his last, emphasizing his desire to help the team go as far as possible. He also stated that winning or not winning the World Cup would not define his legacy and insisted he will decide the timing of his

retirement on his own terms. The Portuguese captain is the first men’s player to feature in six FIFA World Cups and remains one of the tournament’s standout performers, having scored three goals so far in the 2026 edition. Ronaldo, who is the first and only player to score in six different FIFA World Cup editions, has fond memories of playing for Portugal against Spain in football’s biggest tournament. In the group-stage match of the 2018 FIFA World Cup, Ronaldo had scored a hat-trick for his team against the Spanish side. During the presser, Ronaldo admitted that he is not the player he once was but came



out fighting against critics “trying to kill me for the past 23 years”. Ronaldo refused to say when he will end his international career. But to numerous questions about what lies ahead and the flak that has come his way in recent

years, Ronaldo conceded that “I am not the player I used to be”. But the attacker and Portugal skipper said “I am not doing too bad”, pointing out that he has scored three goals in North America — two against Uzbekistan in a 5-0 thrashing

in the group phase and a penalty in the 2-1 win over Croatia in the last 32. Relishing taking on journalists eager to ask about his future and the harsh spotlight on him, he told reporters: “It’s been like this since I was 18, it is not going to change.

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi Targets Chris Gayle Record, Says ‘I Want To Score 200 In T20’

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi aims to be the first to score a T20 double hundred, with an eye on Chris Gayle’s 175 record after explosive innings in youth and domestic cricket.

Teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has set himself an extraordinary goal after dominating bowling attacks in junior cricket and the IPL — becoming the first batter in history to score a double hundred in T20 cricket. At just 15 years old, Sooryavanshi has openly declared his ambition to surpass Chris Gayle’s legendary unbeaten 175, which remains the highest individual score ever recorded in T20 cricket. Gayle produced that iconic innings for Royal Challengers Bengaluru against Pune Warriors India during the 2013 IPL season, a record that has stood for more than a decade. Speaking to Kevin Pietersen on the latest episode of The Switch, the youngster made it clear that he is targeting history. After Pietersen reminded him that “Chris Gayle’s got 175,” the teenager doubled down on his ambition.

“Yeah, I want to break his record and score 200. “If I play 20 overs in any game, I definitely will break that record.” Can He Do It? Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has already produced several explosive innings that suggest the milestone may not be beyond him. He previously smashed 190 for Bihar in the Vijay Hazare Trophy and also struck 175 in the Under-19 World Cup final. His current highest T20 score stands at 144, while his aggressive approach has earned him comparisons with some of India’s most destructive young batters. Last year, he blasted 143 against England U19, bringing up his hundred in just 52 deliveries — the fastest century in Youth ODI cricket history. Earlier, during the ACC Men’s U19 Asia Cup against UAE, he registered the joint third-fastest T20 century by an In-



dian, placing him alongside players such as Rishabh Pant and Abhishek Sharma. Sooryavanshi’s fearless mindset has also drawn parallels with Sachin Tendulkar, who became the first batter to score a double century in ODI cricket in 2010. “I will try to score 200 in the next match. I will try to play the full 50

overs. The more I score, the more the team will benefit,” he had said after his record-breaking innings against England U19. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has already produced several explosive innings that suggest the milestone may not be beyond him. He previously smashed 190 for Bihar in the Vijay Hazare Trophy and also struck 175 in the Under-19 World Cup final. His current highest T20 score stands at 144, while his aggressive approach has earned him comparisons with some of India’s most destructive young batters. After Pietersen reminded him that “Chris Gayle’s got 175,” the teenager doubled down on his ambition. “Yeah, I want to break his record and score 200. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi aims to be the first to score a T20 double hundred, with an eye on Chris Gayle’s 175 record after explosive innings in youth and

LeBron James’ Historic 21-Year All-NBA Streak Comes To An End

LeBron James’ record streak of 21 straight All-NBA selections ended Sunday after the Lakers star missed the league’s 65-game eligibility cutoff.

LeBron James has spent more than two decades rewriting NBA history. On Sunday, though, one of his most remarkable streaks finally came to an end. For the first time since his rookie season in 2003-04, the Los Angeles Lakers superstar was not named to an All-NBA team. James entered the season holding the NBA record for most All-NBA selections with 21, along with a record 13 First Team appearances. The last time he missed out entirely, Shaquille O’Neal was still

wearing Purple and Gold. This time, the reason was not a dramatic decline in production. The 65-Game Rule Strikes Again. James played just 60 regular-season games after missing the first 14 games of the campaign because of sciatica. That left him short of the NBA’s 65-game minimum requirement for postseason awards and honours. The rule also rled out Stephen Curry and Giannis Antetokounmpo. For Curry, it ended an eight-



year streak of appearing on every All-NBA ballot, while Antetokounmpo also missed

out after years of consistent inclusion. Even at 41, James remained productive when-

ever he was on the floor. But availability ultimately decided his fate. A New-Look All-NBA Lineup. The First Team reflected the NBA’s shifting landscape, led by Luka Doncic, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Nikola Jokic. Also making the First Team were Victor Wembanyama and Cade Cunningham. The Second Team featured Jaylen Brown, Kawhi Leonard, Kevin Durant, Jalen Brunson and Donovan Mitchell.

First Time In Football World Cup History, No Real Madrid Player Will...

Spain names 26 man World Cup 2026 squad with no Real Madrid players for the first time in their history in the tournament.



Spain has announced a 26-member squad for the FIFA World Cup 2026, and for the first time in its 92 years of competing at the tournament, no Real Madrid players have made it. Madrid, the most decorated club

in the world (and not just Spain), finished the 2025-26 season without a major trophy. 21-year-old defender Dean Huijsen had the best chance of getting into the traveling party to America, but has missed out with Luis de la Fuente preferring Pau Cubarsi, Aymeric Laporte, and Eric Garcia. Former Real Madrid captain Dani Carvajal, who would leave the club this year, could have been a strong contender had his last few seasons not been ravaged by injuries. Spain did not take any Madrid players to the 2020 European Championship, the ‘Euros’, but three of them represented the Euro 2024-winning squad: Carvajal, defender Nacho, and striker Joselu. Nacho and Joselu have left the club since the competition. The squad is heavily represented by La Liga champions Barcelona with 8 players (Joan Garcia, Cubarsi,

García, Pedri, Gavi, Dani Olmo, Ferran Torres, Lamine Yamal). There are 3 players from Premier League winners Arsenal (David Raya, Martín Zubimendi, Mikel Merino), 3 from Athletic Club (Unai Simón, Laporte, Nico Williams), and 3 from Atlético Madrid (Marc Pubill, Marcos Llorente, Álex Baena). Spain has been drawn in Group H alongside Cape Verde, Saudi Arabia, and Uruguay and will begin its campaign against Cape Verde on June 14. With the likes of Yamal and Williams, La Roja would be one of the favorites to at least reach the semi-final of the competition. Spain’s FIFA World Cup 2026 Squad Goalkeepers: Unai Simón, David Raya, Joan García. Defenders: Marc Cucurella, Alejandro Grimaldo, Pau Cubarsi, Aymeric Laporte, Marc Pubill, Eric García, Marcos Llorente,

Pedro Porro. Midfielders: Pedri, Fabián Ruiz, Martín Zubimendi, Gavi, Rodrigo Hernández, Álex Baena, Mikel Merino, Mikel Oyarzabal. Forwards: Dani Olmo, Nico Williams, Jeremy Pino, Ferran Torres, Borja Iglesias, Víctor Muñoz. Lamine Yamal. Spain has announced a 26-member squad for the FIFA World Cup 2026, and for the first time in its 92 years of competing at the tournament, no Real Madrid players have made it. Madrid, the most decorated club in the world (and not just Spain), finished the 2025-26 season without a major trophy. 21-year-old defender Dean Huijsen had the best chance of getting into the traveling party to America, but has missed out with Luis de la Fuente preferring Pau Cubarsi, Aymeric Laporte, and Eric Garcia.