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'It was as if Real were playing with 10



Adebayor claims his family banned him



Angry boxing fans prepare \$5m lawsuit against Pacquiao for failing to disclose injury before fight



Chelsea plan La Liga raid for Pedro,



REVEALED: The FA favoured Emirates



MARTIN KEOWN: How Arsenal can



Arsenal takeo

## England 0-0 Costa Rica: Three Lions end World Cup 2014 with goalless draw

- England bow out of World Cup 2014 with goalless draw against Costa Rica
- Daniel Sturridge had Three Lions' best chance but curled effort wide of post
- Roy Hodgson handed first World Cup starts to Luke Shaw and Ross Barkley
- England finished bottom of Group D with just one point

By MARTIN SAMUEL

PUBLISHED: 17:51 GMT, 24 June 2014 | UPDATED: 07:47 GMT, 25 June 2014

439

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The modern demand around England is to take the positives, so here goes. Roy Hodgson's team ended their World Cup campaign with a goalless draw against the world champions.

Not world champions that you or I might recognise as such, of course. Not world champions as crowned by FIFA, at a World Cup. Not world champions who even know they have such a title, probably. Unofficial world champions, the term would be.

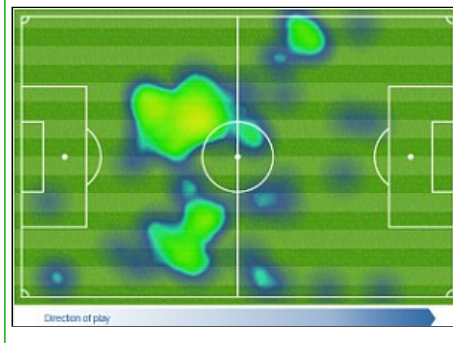
And it works like this. Take every international football match played since the game's inception, with England the first world champions, having earned the crown by beating Scotland, and transfer it only when the victors are defeated. Using that rationale, Uruguay came into this tournament as champions. They lost their opening game to Costa Rica, who took their title.

So, in the circumstances, this was no bad result. England did very well if we view football like boxing; or conkers.

**VIDEO** Scroll down for England players craved victory against Costa Rica in the World Cup

### Costa Rica - England: Match Zone

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### STARS OF SPORT

#### Crouch plays cameo part in music video for indie band Peace

Many footballers have failed to be as cool as Peter Crouch and he has upped his game again



#### Mascot Super Leo gets so drunk he can't even stand up following Austrian match

Austria Vienna's Super Leo got a little too 'merry' before his side's game



#### Suarez makes young cancer sufferer cry with emotional message

Luis Suarez showed his softer side in a heart-warming video with a young cancer patient



#### Chiellini suffers cut head during Champions League semi-final win over Real Madrid

Giorgio Chiellini will have woken up with a sore head on Wednesday



#### Sturridge ruled out for the rest of season after undergoing hip surgery in America

Daniel Sturridge has undergone surgery to correct a hip problem



### Season at a glance

LIVE TABLES

FIXTURES

SCORES

Premier League



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On target: Ross Barkley fires a shot at goal but sees his effort blocked by Ginacarlo Gonzalez in the area



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Taking aim: England No 9 Daniel Sturridge fires an effort towards goal during Tuesday's clash



© AFP/Getty Images

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Forced into action: Costa Rica goalkeeper Keylor Navas tips Sturridge's shot over the bar

Saturday 9 May		
Everton	12:45	Sunderland
Aston Villa	15:00	West Ham
Hull	15:00	Burnley
Leicester	15:00	Southampton
Newcastle	15:00	West Brom
Stoke	15:00	Tottenham
Crystal Palace	17:30	Man Utd
Sunday 10 May		
Man City	13:30	QPR
Chelsea	16:00	Liverpool
<a href="#">More fixtures</a>		

TOP SPORT STORIES

**Juventus 2-1 Real Madrid: Tevez's penalty gives Italians advantage**  
IAN LADYMAN AT THE JUVENTUS STADIUM: Carlos Tevez scored a first-leg winner for Juve



**Adebayor insist he has done everything for his family amid claims of lack of financial support**  
Emmanuel Adebayor has refuted claims of failing to support his family



**Moore's future hangs 'in the balance' after West Indies displays**  
England coach Peter Moores' future could hinge on the series against New Zealand



**Keane: Bale left Real like they were playing with 10 men!**  
Gareth Bale was accused of taking the night off as Real Madrid were defeated in Turin



**Coloccini writes open letter to Newcastle fans amid relegation crisis**  
Newcastle United captain Fabricio Coloccini has written an open letter to fans to apologise



**Messi is unstoppable, says Guardiola ahead of Barcelona return with Bayern Munich**  
PETE JENSON: Pep Guardiola praised his former star Lionel Messi



**Chelsea face competition for Japan star Muto from Mainz**  
German side Mainz will compete with Chelsea for Japan international Yoshinori Muto



**Pacquiao could face prosecution for perjury after failing to reveal shoulder injury ahead of Mayweather fight**  
Manny Pacquiao faces a potential lawsuit



**REVEALED: Jones is the best central defender under age of 23 in EUROPE (and Premier League teams should watch out for Felipe Anderson)**





© ANDY HOOPER

Strength: Jack Wilshere powers his way past fellow midfielder Yeltsin Tejada in the middle of the park

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© ANDY HOOPER

Moving on: James Milner leaves Cristian Gamboa in his wake as he moves forward with the ball down the wing

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**Arsenal targeted for takeover by Africa's richest man**

The Nigerian has an estimated fortune of £10.4billion and wants to buy the club



**Mourinho close to signing new two-year Chelsea deal**

Jose Mourinho and Chelsea are ready to conclude talks over a new contract



**Woods admits he hasn't slept for three days following break-up with Vonn and anniversary of his father Earl's death**

Says 'it's brutal'



**MORE STARS OF SPORT**

**Mario Balotelli enjoys joke with Liverpool team-mates during gym session**

He's endured a difficult season but Mario Balotelli was all smiles in the gym at Melwood



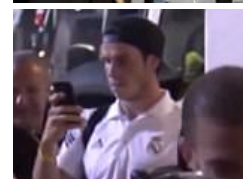
**Chelsea skipper Terry leads the title party with his wife Toni at West London club with Drogba and Cahill**

Chelsea's celebrations are well underway



**Bale turns photographer after fans SNUB him in favour of snap with team-mate Rodriguez**

Real Madrid supporters asked him to take a pic



**Not a scratch! Mayweather pictured for first time since beating rival Pacquiao**

He had been uncharacteristically quiet since fight night



**Lampard and Bleakley view De Niro's stunning £26m New York home ahead of MLS move**

Frank Lampard was spotted looking round actor's former home



**Happy St Tottenham's Day! Wright and Podolski lead Arsenal taunts as they guarantee finishing above Spurs (again)**

It's now an annual event



**Hamilton feels blue on the red carpet alongside stunning stars at Met Gala in New York**

F1 world champion joined likes of Kim Kardashian on show



**Legend Wright praises Hull over David Rocastle tribute sign at the KC**

Arsenal's support arrived at Hull to see a sign paying tribute to David Rocastle



**Hands up who's willing**



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© ANDY HOOPER

Making shapes: England defender Phil Jones appeals for a foul as centre back Gary Cahill also claims

**VIDEO** Costa Rica fans celebrate 'Group of Death' survival

If we view football like football, however, some pesky heretics are going to beg to differ. If we view football like football, with a score that is the arbiter of what has worked and what has not, then this was another disappointing day for England.

Not like June 20, 2006. Remember that date. It was the last time England scored more than a single goal in a game at the World Cup finals. A 2-2 draw with Sweden in the final group game in Cologne under Sven Goran Eriksson. This was the ninth World Cup match and England's record reads: one, nil, one, nil, one, one, one, one, nil.

At a tournament in which the beautiful game is in the ascendancy it is fair to say England are not going to be greatly missed.

There is only one thing worse than a dead rubber and that is a goalless dead rubber, and this is what England played out in the Belo

**MATCH FACTS**

**Costa Rica (3-5-2):** Navas 7, Duarte 6, Gonzalez 6.5, Miller 6, Gamboa 6, Borges 7 (Barrantes 78), Diaz 6, Tejada 6, Ruiz 7, Brenes 5 (Bolanos 59, 6), Campbell 6 (Urena 66, 6).

**Subs:** Pemberton, Acosta, Umana, Myrie, Francis, Granados, Calvo, Cubero, Cambroner.

**Manager:** Jorge Luis Pinto 6

**Booked:** Gonzalez.

**England (4-3-1-2):** Foster 7, Jones 6, Cahill 6.5, Smalling 6, Shaw 6.5, Lampard 7.5, Wilshere 6.5 (Gerrard 73, 5), Milner 7 (Rooney 76), Lallana 6 (Sterling 62, 5) Barkley 6.5, Sturridge 6.

**Subs:** Hart, Johnson, Jagielka, Welbeck, Henderson, Lambert, Baines, Oxlade-

**to play on with a broken nose and upper jaw...**

Bayern Munich star Robert Lewandowski has been fitted with a carbon mask



**Rooney enjoys family day at the seaside with Coleen and the kids**

Wayne Rooney's wife Coleen has revealed the striker is a softee behind closed doors

**Robson revs up for WTA tour return with speedboat ride**

Laura Robson has been pictured out of her rehabilitation with a friend... and a dog



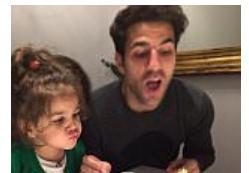
**Hull's Meyler plays on despite nasty gash near his eye in Arsenal loss**

David Meyler showed that you need to put your head in where it hurts in a relegation fight



**Chelsea midfielder Fabregas enjoys 28th birthday with family after sealing title win**

Cesc Fabregas had another reason to celebrate this week



**Seaside celebration for Bournemouth as fans turn out in thousands to salute club's Premier League promotion**

Bournemouth were out in force on Monday



**Drinking with Hatton, meeting Hamilton and spotting Jay Z... 'money can't buy' territory**

One fan from England, Ade Adebayo, was one of 16,000 at MGM Grand



**Is this dive by Ronaldinho the worst of all time?**

Former Barcelona star Ronaldinho was booked after throwing himself to the ground in Mexico



**Lampard poses with goalscorer Aguerro after win against Tottenham**

Manchester City's Frank Lampard congratulated his friends at Chelsea on their title triumph



**Brazilian state championship final erupts into violence at World Cup venue**

The climax to Brazil's state championships was marred by trouble



**Akinfenwa and pals show off their moves in Instagram video**

AFC Wimbledon striker Adebayo Akinfenwa swapped the football pitch for the dance floor



Horizonte sunshine. It was an ordinary game, slightly better after half-time, but still well short of the show manager Roy Hodgson should have wished to put on before departing this tournament.

The manager appeared close to delighted, however, took the usual raft of positives and the Football Association having all but decreed that results are irrelevant these days, who are we to argue? The coach and players went over to applaud the fans at the end and were well received.

Maybe this truly is where England are now. The happy travellers. Delighted just to be here, to lap up the branded goods and expect nothing but a little wave in return before getting the hell out when the serious stuff starts. The FA have them just where they want them. The marketing department must be so proud.

England players craved victory against Costa Rica in the World...



Referee! Sturridge appeals for an England spot-kick having been felled in the penalty area

Chamberlain, Forster.

**Manager:** Roy Hodgson 6

**Booked:** Barkley, Lallana.

**Referee:** Djamel Haimoudi (Algeria) 6

**Attendance:** 57, 823.

**Man of the match:** Frank Lampard

**Woods and Vonn split after three-year relationship**

Alpine ski racer Lindsey Vonn made the announcement on her official Facebook page



**Chelsea begin title celebrations after win against Crystal Palace**

The Blues claimed their fourth Premier League crown with victory at Stamford Bridge



**Make that 48-0! Mayweather masterclass as he slays arch rival Pacquiao**

Floyd Mayweather beat Manny Pacquiao by unanimous decision



**Beyonce and Jay Z head trail of stars at Las Vegas mega-fight**

Las Vegas was the place to be, with famous faces making their way to the MGM Grand for the bout



**Beckham shares selfie with Victoria as his 40th birthday bash comes to a close**

David Beckham took to Instagram to thank his wife Victoria



**Suarez, Messi and Neymar all on target as Barca run riot**

Barcelona beat Cordoba 8-0 to stay clear at the top with just three games left to play



**Ronaldo's hat-trick keeps rivals Real hot on Barca's heels**

Cristiano Ronaldo scored the 25th hat-trick of his Madrid career in their 3-2 win over Sevilla



**Life begins for Becks by joining Instagram**

As he celebrate his 40th birthday, David Beckham joined Instagram... and some famous faces showed their support



**Rotherham boss Evans keeps his promise to celebrate**

Steve Evans arrived in a shorts, T-shirt, flip-flops and a sombrero after securing safety



**Tevez and Co start the party as Juve seal fourth straight title**

Juventus wrapped up their fourth straight Serie A title after a routine 1-0 win over Sampdoria



**The nerves will help me run faster, admits Ennis-Hill**

MARTHA KELNER: Jessica Ennis-Hill lines up for her first race in almost two years



**Ajayi picked by Miami Dolphins in fifth round**

Jay Ajayi was the 149th pick of the NFL Draft and the London-born running



© AP

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Bend it like Sturridge: The England forward attempts to curl a shot into the inside of the net



© Getty Images

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Narrow miss: Daniel Sturridge looks on as his shot sails just wide of the far post



© Getty Images

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Landmark game: Everton midfielder Ross Barkley was handed his first World Cup start against Costa Rica

back could be set to play at Wembley this year



**Jimenez and Bradley in heated exchange**

The normally relaxed Miguel Angel Jimenez became embroiled in a remarkable row with Keegan Bradley



**Rooney goes back to school... United striker watches son Kai collect achievement certificate**

England captain Wayne Rooney found himself back in an assembly



**Carroll shows off the finished article of his impressive throne as striker gets comfortable for next season**

Andy Carroll's new grassy masterpiece

**From Prince Naseem flying to Hatton's fat suit and Mayweather's sombrero... the five most memorable ringwalks in history**

Remember these?



**Is this Sturridge's new celebration? Striker hints at 'Feed the Ducks' jig in dance-off**

Daniel Sturridge's dance moves were no match for a young Liverpool fan



**Wilshere shows his smart side at the BT Sport Industry Awards**

AP McCoy, Jack Wilshere, Nathaniel Clyne and Ryan Bertrand walked the red carpet



**Chelsea star Drogba presented with the Barclays Spirit of the Game award**

Following his charity work, Didier Drogba has been rewarded



**Winston deletes crab legs celebration photo, Gurley and the return of the running men and Brown's boast**

Takeaways from the first round of the NFL Draft



**Messi and wife expecting second baby**

Lionel Messi has confirmed he is to be a father again after posting a picture of his pregnant wife on social media



**Arsenal stars take Kylie Jenner's rapper boyfriend Tyga on Emirates tour**

Arsenal duo Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and Kieran Gibbs entertained Tyga



**Barca star Rakitic hits the beach with beautiful wife Raquel Mauri**

Ivan Rakitic took time out





Appearance: Frank Lampard heads the ball on during what could be his final appearance in an England shirt



Going close: Adam Lallana fires in a teasing cross along the six-yard box but Costa Rica's Navas stops the ball

A more dispassionate view would note that England were not ahead for a single minute of a single match in Brazil, that Raheem Sterling has played in a different position in every game which hardly suggests the manager is certain about how to use one of his best players, that this is England's poorest display in a World Cup tournament and the performances have deteriorated steadily from a promising start in Manaus against Italy.

This is no group of death either. It has been won by the team from Central America that were supposed to be the weak link, with Luis Suarez galvanising Uruguay into second place almost single-handedly. Hodgson pointed to the number of chances his team created against Costa Rica, but England were playing men already on the way to the second round. Costa Rica were content to conserve and contain, and it showed.

England had more to lose really. This was their last chance to leave some impression on the competition. They petered out and departed to indifference. Spain at least put Australia in their place, before slinking away. England could not even do that.

More...

- [England 0-0 Costa Rica World Cup 2014 LIVE: Score remains goalless](#)
- [ADRIAN DURHAM: Roy Hodgson is staying on as England manager despite his World Cup failure... so here's 10 things the Three Lions boss MUST do ahead of Euro 2016](#)
- [Steven Gerrard: Huge wages are reducing the desire of young players to succeed, we need more players with right character!](#)
- [BBC pundits Clarence Seedorf and Thierry Henry live in luxury while Gary Lineker and Alan Shearer make do with modest hotel](#)
- [Italy 0-1 Uruguay World Cup 2014 LIVE: Luis Suarez BITES Giorgio Chiellini before Diego Godin heads the ball home](#)
- [Yaya Toure claims Manchester City did not grant him leave to stay with his sick brother](#)

of Barcelona's title charge to spend the day on the beach



**Walcott just can't get away from the bench as Arsenal winger takes part in fashion photoshoot**

Theo Walcott took part in photoshoot

**Mayweather vs Pacquiao fight fan on how he bought ticket**

One fan, Ade Adebayo from Brighton, was lucky enough to get hold of a ticket. Here's his story

**Januzaj sinks the reds as he shows off potting skills with Murphy**

Adnan Januzaj swapped the lush turf of Old Trafford for the green baize at Sheffield

**Big three battle for 11-year-old Luton ace**

Arsenal, Tottenham and Chelsea are in a race to sign 11-year-old Charlie Patino from League Two Luton Town

**Daley takes gold in London as intruder takes a dive of his own**

A man managed to jump off the diving board at the London Aquatics Centre after evading security

**Odegaard named on bench for Real Madrid clash against Almeria**

But 16-year-old is forced to wait for his first-team bow as Real romp to 3-0 victory on Wednesday

**Hamilton gears up for Spanish Grand Prix by taking younger brother Nicolas out for a ride**

Lewis Hamilton took a break from his blistering start to the F1 season

**Boring, boring Chelsea? Give over!**

Didier Drogba shows he and his Chelsea teammates still have the skill to prove they aren't so boring after all

**The kids are alright! Everton senior players join in with the club's future generation of talent at Academy Day**

The feel-good factor at Everton continued

**Messi, Neymar and Suarez pass century of goals between them**

They are Bara's golden boys and the trio have reached yet another milestone for the club

**Messi, Neymar and Suarez celebrate with dressing room snap**



Rickie Lambert discusses the sombre mood in the England camp



Neymar published a photograph of himself with his fellow Barcelona attackers after their win



Stage is set as the ring at the MGM Grand is put up ahead of richest fight in history!

Floyd Mayweather vs Manny Pacquiao vs getting closer and closer

WATCH the moment Chicago Cubs rookie's bat flies into crowd leaving fan in hospital Addison Russell, 21, will remember his first game at Wrigley Field



United star Fellaini shares a toast with his identical brother Marouane Fellaini shared a glass of bubbly despite Sunday's heavy defeat against Everton



Fit-again Van Persie scores a double and Januzaj returns in United U21 win Robin van Persie scored twice in Manchester United U21's 4-1 win



Fergie goes snooker loopy as ex-United boss reveals why he thinks Ronaldo is the best Sir Alex Ferguson was speaking to John Parrott over a frame of snooker



© AFP/Getty Images

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Flying high: Gary Cahill flies through the air following a tackle from Oscar Duarte



© Getty Images

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Keep on going: England veteran Lampard evades the sliding challenge of Junior Diaz

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Season at a glance

LIVE TABLES FIXTURES SCORES

Premier League

Team	P	GD	Pts
1 Chelsea	35	42	83
2 Manchester City	35	35	70
3 Arsenal	34	33	70
4 Manchester United	35	24	65
5 Liverpool	35	11	61
6 Tottenham Hotspur	35	5	58
7 Southampton	35	20	57
8 Swansea City	35	-1	53
9 West Ham United	35	1	47
10 Stoke City	35	-5	47
11 Everton	35	0	44
12 Crystal Palace	35	-6	42
13 West Bromwich Albion	35	-13	40
14 Aston Villa	35	-21	35



Flying high: Costa Rica pair Gonzalez (left) and Celso Borges challenging Barkley in the air



Eyes on the prize: England wideman Adam Lallana fires a powerful volley into the box























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15	Newcastle United	35	-24	35
16	Leicester City	35	-15	34
17	Hull City	35	-15	34
18	Sunderland	34	-22	33
19	Queens Park Rangers	35	-22	27
20	Burnley	35	-27	26

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**LATEST SPORT COLUMNS**

## Midfield battle: Jack Wilshere attempts to get the better of Costa Rica's Yeltsin Tejada

On



Nipping in: Adam Lallana bends his foot around the ball ahead of Costa Rica frontman Bryan Ruiz



Fall to the floor: James Milner is grounded as Costa Rica's Junior Diaz manages to get a pass away



**NASSER HUSSAIN:** Downton's sacking will not mend our broken game, he's just latest victim to pay price for our abject global one-day failure

**CHARLES SALE:** Collymore turns the airwaves blue while watching Aston Villa from press box

**JAMIE CARRAGHER:** Harry Redknapp wants to return after leaving QPR... but why would he want the stress of being a boss again?

**MARTIN KEOWN:** Juan Cuadrado is a great talent who will breathe new life into Chelsea... the way he goes past people reminds me of Ronaldinho

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**JAMIE REDKNAPP:** Mourinho is not being clever by not talking, he's in a panic because Chelsea's eight-point lead over Manchester City disappeared

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**ROB SHEPHERD:** Liverpool must offload flop Balotelli before they line up a double swoop for Gonzalo Higuain and Sergio Romero

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**PATRICK COLLINS:** Football sees itself as unfettered by rules designed for ordinary people... and Steve Bruce's grotesque support of Ched Evans shows how much is still to be learned

**GRAHAM HUNTER:** Barcelona are unravelling dramatically as the vandalism of ex-president Sandro Rosell has put the marriage of Lionel Messi and sublime football on the brink of a divorce

**GRAHAM POLL:** Chris Foy should have sent off Gary Cahill for diving at Stamford Bridge but he was right to book Willian

**DEREK LAWRENSEN:** Rory McIlroy on course for record high as imperious world No 1 continues to dominate

**SIR CLIVE WOODWARD:** England guts up front and speed in the backs can tame brutal South Africa

**WORLD OF RUGBY:** RFU laws offer open invitation to game's divers as rugby is in danger of introducing football-style 'simulation' to con officials

**NEIL ASHTON:** Frank Lampard, David Beckham, Gary Neville, John Terry or another of the 'Golden Generation' should be the next England boss... those boys have The Knowledge

**ASH WEDNESDAY:** Manchester United will never reproduce the Class of 92, but Louis van Gaal must cling to club's history and not sell youth players (even if it's too late for Danny Welbeck)



© ANDY HOOPER

Hurdles: Young left back Luke Shaw does well to evade the challenge of Yeltsin Tejada



© AP

Take him on! Barkley marauds forward as Giancarlo Gonzalez and Oscar Duarte look to close him down



© PA

Crowded out: Barkley and Lallana gang up on Costa Rica striker Roy Miller

It is probably just as well that this was not the predicted group decider of more optimistic times, as it

would have been greatly frustrating for those watching at home. Daniel Sturridge, beside Gary Cahill the only England player to keep his starting place and position in all three games, missed several chances that could, in a parallel universe, have been significant. The first, a 12th-minute shot from a pass by Jack Wilshere, suggested he was ready to deliver on some bold talk before earlier games — but the others were a waste.

There were two first-half headers that went over the bar and a shot from Luke Shaw that deflected into his path after half-time, but was miscontrolled. His best chance came after 65 minutes, a lovely one-two with Wilshere, sadly unmatched by the finish. There were a couple of penalty-area tumbles that suggested Sturridge had taken to heart Wayne Rooney's advice about trying to be more streetwise but, even in that nefarious field, England seem to lack the flair of the continentals.

The late action was lively, with a chip from Rooney forcing an excellent save from Keylor Navas, but Hodgson introduced Steven Gerrard for what may be one final run around the block towards the end, giving the game a testimonial feel with Frank Lampard already captain.



Benched: Wayne Rooney, Leighton Baines, Phil Jagielka and Glen Johnson look on from the dugout



Aerial duel: Southampton defender Shaw goes up for a header with Fulham frontman Ruiz



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© ANDY HOOPER

**Challenge:** Defender Oscar Duarte stretches in an attempt to win the ball from England's Daniel Sturridge

Costa Rica, knowing they have bigger fish to fry, played on the break. Just before half-time, a long ball over the top — shades of Uruguay's winner — caught England's defence in repose yet again and almost enabled Randall Brenes to open the scoring.

A mistake by Phil Jones after 62 minutes let in substitute Christian Bolanos, too, but he failed to make the most of it. Costa Rica's best chance of the afternoon came from a free-kick curled beautifully by Celso Borges, with Ben Foster getting the merest fingertip touch to glance the ball over the bar.

This was the game that the FA sold in conjunction with a ticket for the knockout stage. England fans who have bought packages now wait for a rebate that arrives in a month or so. Flights, hotels, spending money for what was billed as the trip of a lifetime cannot be reclaimed. The faithful still have fun, singing in the sunshine, making the most of it as they always do, yet it would be impossible not to feel short-changed.



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**Painful:** England midfielder Lampard sinks to the ground following a late challenge from Costa Rica



Hotseat: England manager Roy Hodgson looks on during the Three Lions' match against Costa Rica

On Saturday the action begins in earnest with the sudden-death rounds. Those are the games that burn into the memory at any competition. England's group matches during Italia 90 are really quite forgettable. It is what followed against Belgium, Cameroon and West Germany that transformed football in this country.

No chance of that here. If this campaign was to have meaning beyond today, the FA refused to engage with that thought in the immediate aftermath of defeat by Uruguay. England now shrugs where it used to expect. Nobody at the FA asked for a galvanising, faith-restoring flourish here — a visual confirmation of the party line that England have moved forward at this World Cup, and were readying to take the European Championship finals by storm in 2016.

That is the revised view of this, of course. Good preparation, plenty in the experience bank, watch us go from here. It presumes that other countries are staggering around Brazil clueless, with no thought for development or the way ahead. That Euro 2016 will come as a complete surprise to France, Holland and Germany, while England will already have the blueprint in hand. No doubt it will involve excellent facilities, a media base at the training ground, just the right hotel to facilitate engagement with the locals and maybe some good deeds. As for the football, we no longer wish to be judged on that. And this is probably just as well.



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Singing loud and proud: England supporters cheer on the team despite the Three Lions' World Cup elimination

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