



Germany's Serge Gnabry celebrates after scoring his team's first goal during the World Cup 2022 Group J qualifying soccer match between Germany and Romania in Hamburg, Germany. (AP)

# Sports

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## Netherlands, Germany battle to wins

Croatia, Russia stay neck and neck

**HAMBURG, Germany, Oct 9, (AP):** Davy Klaassen scored the only goal as the Netherlands beat Latvia 1-0 to solidify their position at the top of Europe Group G in World Cup qualifying as Turkey.

Midfielder Klaassen scored his eighth international goal in the 19th minute, easing into space and volleying home a corner from the right by Memphis Depay.

A minute later, Klaassen was in action at the other end, blocking a shot by Roberts Uldritis after a quick break by Latvia.

"We should have been better. But three points are very important for qualification," captain Virgil van Dijk told Dutch broadcaster NOS.

The results left the Netherlands two points ahead of second-placed Norway, missing injured striker Erling Haaland, drew with Turkey 1-1.

Kerem Aktürkoğlu gave Turkey the lead in the sixth minute in the first game for new coach Stefan Kuntz since he was recruited from the Germany Under-21 team. Kristian Thorstved leveled for Norway just before halftime. The Netherlands moved two points clear of Norway, with Turkey two points further back. Turkey have won just one of their last seven competitive games, and that was against tiny Gibraltar. Montenegro won at Gibraltar 3-0.

Germany made it four wins from four games under new coach Hansi Flick with a 2-1 win over Romania, but didn't have it all their own way.

Ianis Hagi, son of Romania great Gheorghe Hagi, gave Romania the lead early on before Germany missed a string of chances to equalize. Serge Gnabry finally got the Germans level with a powerful shot early in the second half - his fifth goal in seven games in the qualifying group - and Thomas Müller scored a second at a corner in the 81st for his 40th international goal.

### SOCCER

Germany extended their lead at the top of Group J to six points from North Macedonia and Armenia.

Flick's arrival has reunited the large Bayern Munich contingent in the German team with the coach who led them to winning the Champions League in 2020. Both goals Seven of 14 so far under Flick have been scored by players he coached at Bayern.

North Macedonia moved up from fourth place to second with a 4-0 win over Liechtenstein, and Armenia drew with Iceland 1-1.

Belgium are busy with the Nations League final four this week, so the focus was on the Czech Republic and Wales fighting for second place in Group E.

The Czechs and the Welsh stay level on eight points apiece - half the Belgians' total - after a tense 2-2 draw. Aaron Ramsey gave Wales the lead in the 36th minute but Jakub Pesek responded almost immediately by leveling for the Czechs. The hosts took the lead when Wales goalkeeper Danny Ward failed to control the ball and scored an own goal, but Daniel James hit back to level the score for Wales. Estonia beat Belarus 2-0.

Croatia and Russia stayed neck and neck at the top of Group J in one of the closest battles in the competition.

Croatia had to wait until first-half stoppage time to take the lead through Ivan Perisic's goal, even if the final score of 3-0 suggested a more comfortable result against last-placed Cyprus.

Russia's new coach, Valery Karpin, made it four games unbeaten with a 1-0 win over Slovakia but needed an own goal in Kazan from Slovakian defender Milan Skriniar. Russia have yet to concede a goal since Karpin took charge after the European Championship, but that's only because Slovakia missed a string of good chances to score. Slovenia beat Malta 4-0 to move up to third in the group.

Only the group winners directly qualify for the World Cup. Second-placed finishers face a playoff.



Turkey's Taylan Antalyali (left), fights for the ball with Norway's Veton Berisha during the World Cup 2022 Group G qualifying soccer match between Turkey and Norway at the Sukru Saracoglu Stadium in Istanbul, Turkey. (AP)

Red Sox power past Rays to even ALDS

## Giants rout Dodgers in NLDS opener

**SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 9, (AP):** Logan Webb struck out 10 pitching masterfully in his postseason debut. Buster Posey hit a two-run homer that held up, and the 107-win San Francisco Giants blanked the defending World Series champion Los Angeles Dodgers 4-0 Friday night in the opener of their NL Division Series.

Those two Giants standouts summed up this year perfectly for the NL West champs: A brilliant performance by the young right-hander supported by a veteran catcher who has shined on this big October stage so many times before.

Kris Bryant and Brandon Crawford also homered to back a combined five-hitter by Webb and a pair of relievers.

The Dodgers will try to even the series when they send 20-game winner Julio Urias to the mound for Game 2 on Saturday night opposite Giants All-Star right-hander Kevin Gausman.

Tyler Rogers relieved for the final out in the eighth and Camilo Doval worked the ninth.

### Red Sox 14, Rays 6

In St. Petersburg, Fla., J.D. Martinez hit a tiebreaking, three-run homer in his return to the lineup and Boston backed Tanner Houck's clutch relief effort with a franchise postseason record five home runs, beating Tampa Bay to even their AL Division Series at a game each.

Kiké Hernandez had five of Boston's 20 hits, including a homer and three doubles, becoming Boston's first player with four extra-base hits in a postseason game.

Xander Bogaerts, Alex Verdugo and Rafael Devers also connected for the Red Sox, who rallied for a blowout win after ace Chris Sale allowed a first-inning grand slam to Jordan Luplow and was pulled following just three outs.

Hernández's leadoff homer in the fifth off Collin McHugh tied it before Martínez went deep against Matt Wisler four batters later.

Houck kept Boston in the game after Sale was rocked for five runs in the first inning. The rookie right-hander came out of the bullpen to start the second inning and allowed one run and two hits over five frames, retiring his first 11 batters before yielding a two-out single to



San Francisco Giants' Camilo Doval pitches against the Los Angeles Dodgers during the ninth inning of Game 1 of a baseball National League Division Series in San Francisco. (AP)

Wander Franco in the fifth.

### Astros 9, White Sox 4

In Houston, Carlos Correa hit a two-run double during a five-run seventh inning and Houston beat Chicago for a 2-0 lead in their AL Division Series.

### BASEBALL

Kyle Tucker homered and drove in three runs as the Astros moved within one win of their fifth straight appearance in the AL Championship Series. Alex Bregman had two hits and scored twice, and Jose Altuve made a couple of big plays. Game 3 of the best-of-five series is Sunday night in Chicago.

The Astros grabbed the lead for good on Yordan Alvarez's tiebreaking RBI single off Aaron Bummer with one out in the seventh. Craig Kimbrel then took over and retired Yuli Gurriel before Correa's drive to right sailed just past a sprinting Leury García.

White Sox right-hander Lucas Giolito permitted four runs and three hits in 4 1/3 innings. He tied a season high with five walks in his second

career playoff start.

### Brewers 2, Braves 1

In Milwaukee, Rowdy Tellez spoiled Charlie Morton's gem with a two-run homer in the seventh inning and threw out a runner at home plate, leading Milwaukee over Atlanta in the opener of their NL Division Series.

Corbin Burnes, Adrian Houser and Josh Hader combined on a four-hitter that gave Milwaukee the early lead in this best-of-five series. Game 2 is Saturday in Milwaukee.

Former Brewer Orlando Arcia grounded to second with runners on the corners to end the game. That came after Brewers catcher Omar Narváez - who paired with first baseman Tellez on a key first-inning double play - blocked Hader's 1-2 pitch in the dirt to keep Freddie Freeman at third base.

After Morton hit Avisail García with a 1-2 pitch to start the seventh, Tellez ripped another 1-2 offering from Morton over the center-field wall to break a scoreless tie.

The hefty, bearded slugger had gone 1 of 13 against the Braves this season until delivering that 411-foot drive.

Ivory Coast dominate Malawi

## Algeria & Egypt back to winning in WC qualifying

**CAPE TOWN, South Africa, Oct 9, (AP):** Riyad Mahrez scored twice as African champions Algeria romped to a 6-1 win over Niger to return to winning ways in World Cup qualifying.

Egypt took top spot in their group from Libya by edging their encounter 1-0.

Ivory Coast claimed the other most significant result of the day as Max-Alain Gradel thumped in a volley to send the Ivorians on their way to a 3-0 victory in Malawi.

Manchester City's Mahrez opened the scoring for Algeria in the 27th minute in Blida but the other five Algerian goals came in the second half, including Mahrez's second from the penalty spot.

### SOCCER

Islam Slimani also scored a late brace as the Algerians rebounded from a draw in their last qualifier in Burkina Faso. Algeria and Burkina Faso are tied on seven points at the top of Group A after Burkina Faso won in Djibouti 4-0.

Mohamed Salah was back on home soil with his national team after missing Egypt's first home game



United States' Tyler Adams (4) and Jamaica's Shamar Nicholson (11) compete for control of the ball during a FIFA World Cup qualifying soccer match in Austin, Texas. US beat Jamaica 2-0. (AP)

of the qualifying campaign because of British travel regulations, which would have forced him to quarantine for 10 days before returning to action with Liverpool. Those rules have now been eased for travelers from Egypt.

Salah started but it was Omar Marmouh's goal just after halftime that gave Egypt three points at Borg el-Arab Stadium and Carlos Queiroz a winning start as the Pharaohs' new head coach. Queiroz took over in mid-campaign when Hossam el-Badry was fired last month after an unimpressive 1-0 win over Angola and a 1-1 draw in Gabon.

Egypt led Group F by a point from Libya halfway through the group-stage qualifiers. The winners of the 10 groups will progress to a final playoff round to decide Africa's five teams at the World Cup in Qatar next year.

Ivory Coast are on course to be there after beating Malawi to stay top of Group D. Gradel struck first in the 35th minute but the game was in the balance until Ibrahim Sangare made it 2-0 in the 85th and Jeremie Boga dodged past two defenders on the edge of the area and hit a left-footed shot into the top corner in injury time.

Cameroon are in a tussle with Ivory Coast to progress from that group and are a point behind after Bayern Munich's Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting scored two headers in a 3-1 win over Mozambique.

Only Tunisia, Morocco and Senegal have won all of their games in qualifying. Tunisia cruised past Mauritania 3-0 and have eight goals in three games without conceding.

Morocco produced a collection of high-quality goals in beating Guinea-Bissau 5-0. The pick of them was Ayoub el-Kaabi's scissor kick to make it 4-0. Morocco have two wins from two and have one game to make up after its qualifier in Guinea was canceled last month because of a coup in the West African country. That game was rescheduled for next Tuesday, meaning Morocco and Guinea will both play three games in seven days in this international window.