Algeria needed a moment of real quality to break Democratic Republic of Congo's resistance; and it arrived just in time.

With penalties looming in Rabat, substitute Adil Boulbina struck in the 119th minute of extra time to hand the 2019 champions a dramatic 1–0 victory and a place in the quarter-finals of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations.

The Round of 16 contest had been tense and finely balanced from the outset. After 90 goalless minutes, both sides pushed forward in extra time, clearly determined to avoid the lottery of a shoot-out.

Algeria came closest. Fares Chaibi forced a sharp save from DR Congo goalkeeper Lionel Mpasi, who was quickly called into action again moments later when Baghdad Bounedjah weaved into the box and aimed low for the corner. Mpasi stood firm on both occasions, keeping his side alive.

But his resistance was finally broken one minute from the end.

Boulbina, who had barely featured at this tournament before Tuesday night, collected the ball on the edge of the area, shifted it onto his stronger foot and unleashed a fierce strike that crashed in off the underside of the crossbar. Rabat erupted.

It was a special moment for the 22**–**year-old Al Duhail forward, who had played just 13 minutes at AFCON 2025 before this match. At the final whistle, he was lifted into the air by delighted teammates, the unlikely hero of a gruelling night.

Algeria's reward is a mouth-watering quarter-final against Nigeria on Saturday, 10 **January**; a repeat of the 2019 semi-final, which the Fennec Foxes won 2–1 on their way to lifting the trophy.

Nigeria in ruthless form

Nigeria arrive for that clash full of confidence after producing one of the most commanding performances of the tournament so far.

The Super Eagles swept aside Mozambique 4–0 in Fes on Monday, backing up striker Victor Osimhen's pre-tournament warning that Nigeria were capable of

“damaging” any opponent.

Osimhen and Ademola Lookman gave Nigeria a 2–0 lead before half-time, both goals created by the impressive Akor Adams, as Mozambique struggled to cope with Nigeria’s pace and movement.

After the break, Lookman turned provider again, squaring for Osimhen to tap in his second at the far post before the Napoli forward was withdrawn early to protect him for the quarter-finals.

The night was rounded off in style when Lookman returned the favour to Adams, who thundered home from 15 metres to score his first international goal and cap a standout display.

With 12 goals in four matches, Nigeria are the tournament’s leading scorers, and now face Algeria in what promises to be one of AFCON 2025’s standout ties.

Nigeria dominated with goals from Ademola Lookman (1) and Victor Osimhen (2) plus Akor Adams, booking a quarter-final spot.

Elsewhere, Egypt won a hard-fought tie to reach the quarter-finals after defeating Benine 3-1 after extra time. Mohamed Salah scored the decisive goal late in extra time.

Defending champions Ivory Coast progressed comfortably to the quarter-finals after defeating Burkina Faso 3-0. Other teams already through from earlier last-16 matches include Senegal, Mali, and hosts Morocco.

Next Stage — Quarter-Finals

Senegal vs. Mali

Cameroon vs. Morocco

Algeria vs. Nigeria

Egypt vs. Ivory Coast