The 2026 FIFA World Cup Group Stage turned into an outright shootout last night, as the world’s elite strikers went blow-for-blow across a slate of thrilling, high-stakes matches. Erling Haaland, Lionel Messi, and Kylian Mbappé all netted crucial doubles, but the biggest storyline of the night belonged to the history books in Texas.

Over at a rain-swept New York/New Jersey Stadium, Senegal’s World Cup ambitions suffered a devastating blow in a breathless 3-2 defeat to Norway. The loss leaves the Teranga Lions without a point after two matches, while firing Ståle Solbakken’s ruthless Norwegian side straight into the Round of 32.

An uncharacteristic first-half error from veteran defender Kalidou Koulibaly opened the door for Norway substitute Marcus Holmgren Pedersen, who smashed home the opener in the 43rd minute. Then, the second half became the Erling Haaland show Haaland collected a pinpoint thread from Martin Ødegaard, slotting it home even as he lost his balance on the 485h minute of the game.



Senegal’s Ismaïla Sarr dragged his side back into the match on the 53th minute with a resilient finish, sparking brief hope of a comeback. On the 58th Minute**,** Haaland answered almost immediately, adjusting beautifully to a hip-high cross from Patrick Berg to bag his second of the night and his 59th career goal for Norway. Though Sarr struck again deep into stoppage time (90+3′) to set up a frantic finish, Norway held firm.

Adding injury to insult, Senegal goalkeeper Édouard Mendy was forced off the pitch with a second-half injury, leaving coach Pape Thiaw with a mountain to climb ahead of their must-win group finale against Iraq.

in the other games, Argentina 2-0 Austria:

Messi Misses Penalty, Breaks World Cup Scoring Record History was rewritten at AT&T Stadium in Arlington as Lionel Messi officially became the World Cup's all-time leading goalscorer. Argentina walked away with a hard-fought 2-0 victory over a fiercely physical Austria, cementing the defending champions' place in the knockout rounds. The night easily could have gone sideways for the iconic No. 10. Just eight minutes into the match,

Messi dragged a penalty kick wide of the post after Stefan Posch brought down Lautaro Martínez. But true to form, the setback didn't rattle him: "Everything was bigger in Texas, thanks to Lionel Messi." In the 38th minute, Messi broke Miroslav Klose's long-standing tournament record of 16 goals.

Thiago Almada executed a brilliant dummy on a Facundo Medina cross, allowing Messi to swoop in and stroke a low shot into the bottom corner. Austria mounted a spirited second-half press anchored by David Alaba, but Messi put the game entirely out of reach in the 95th minute, picking up a loose ball in the box and firing home his 18th career World Cup goal.

France 3-0 Iraq: Mbappé Shines After Marathon

Thunderstorm Delay In Philadelphia, Les Bleus booked their ticket to the Round of 32 with a dominant 3-0 dismantling of Iraq.

The scoreline tells a tale of French supremacy, but the match itself was a test of pure endurance after a violent storm forced a mid-game delay lasting nearly an hour and forty minutes. Kylian Mbappé opened the scoring early in the 14th minute, showing zero rust from the unexpected weather pause.

The Real Madrid superstar struck again early in the second half (54′) before Ousmane Dembélé capped off the clinical performance with a 66th-minute goal. With six points from two games, France moves comfortably into the knockouts, matching Norway at the top of Group I.

Yesterday's Results at a Glance Group Fixture Final Score Key Performers

Match Status Group I Norway vs. Senegal **3 – 2** E. Haaland (48′, 58′), I. Sarr (53′, 90+3′)

Full-Time Group J Argentina vs. Austria **2 – 0** L. Messi (38′, 90+5′)

Full-Time Group I France vs. Iraq **3 – 0** K. Mbappé (14′, 54′), O. Dembélé (66′)