

Croatia in frenzy following Euro 2008 triumph over Germany

A cannonade of firecrackers, fireworks, guns and sirens in Croatian cities marked the victory of the young football nation over giants Germany in the top Euro 2008 Group B match in Klagenfurt Thursday.

Thousands of people were already in Zagreb streets, watching the match on a huge video-beam in the central Bana Jelacica Square, as many more poured out to celebrate, ceaselessly honking from cars adorned in the chequered red-and-white Croatia flags.

It was the same in Split, Zadar, Slavonski Brod, Sibenik, Osijek and virtually every city and town, local reports said. No incidents or injuries were immediately reported.

The football madness in Croatia is now, with the team's almost certain passage to the knockout stage, likely to go up by another notch, though it already matched the frenzy surrounding the country's advance to the 1998 World Cup semi final.

Croatia, which won independence from Yugoslavia in 1992, then also beat Germany, 3-0 that time, en route to the eventual third place and its largest football triumph to date.

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