



Messi Makes World Cup History With Brace As Argentina Defeat Austria 2-0 In Dallas

Description

Lionel Messi rewrote the history books at the FIFA World Cup 2026 on Monday evening, scoring twice as Argentina defeated Austria 2-0 at AT&T Stadium in Dallas to advance to the Round of 32. The Messi World Cup scoring record now stands at 18 goals — two clear of Germany’s Miroslav Klose — after a performance that will be spoken about for generations. The Argentine captain shook off the frustration of a seventh-minute penalty miss to deliver a masterclass that sealed his status as the greatest scorer in World Cup history.

Messi World Cup Scoring Record: A Historic Night In Dallas

Argentina’s Group J encounter with Austria was not without its early anxieties. In just the seventh minute, referee CÃ¼neyt ÅakÅr pointed to the spot, and Messi stepped up with typical composure — only to see his penalty saved by Austrian goalkeeper Patrick Pentz, who guessed correctly to dive to his left. Lesser players might have been rattled. Messi, at 38 years of age and in what is widely expected to be his final World Cup, simply recalibrated.

The breakthrough arrived in the 30th minute. Thiago Almada, one of Argentina’s most energetic performers at this tournament, cut inside from the right flank before playing a perfectly weighted cutback into the path of his captain. Messi swept the ball into the far corner with trademark precision, notching his 17th World Cup goal and drawing level with Klose’s long-standing record. AT&T Stadium, packed with nearly 80,000 supporters — a significant contingent of them draped in the blue and white of Argentina — held its collective breath.



Photo: AFA (Argentine Football Association)

The record-breaking moment came in injury time. Messi collected possession in the Austrian penalty area, manufactured space with a drop of the shoulder, and drove the ball past Pentz with calm authority. Eighteen World Cup goals. Two ahead of Klose. A record that had stood since Brazil 2014, finally broken by the one player who always seemed destined to surpass it. The stadium erupted; the Argentine bench spilled onto the pitch; and football recorded another unforgettable chapter in its richest story.

The achievement carried additional statistical weight beyond the goal tally. Messi became only the third player in football history to score at six consecutive FIFA World Cup tournaments, having first graced the tournament stage as a teenager in Germany in 2006. That sustained excellence across two decades at the sport's highest level speaks to something that goes beyond mere talent — an

almost supernatural commitment to performance and longevity that defies conventional footballing wisdom.



Photo: AFA (Argentine Football Association)

Argentina Advance As Group Winners

The win moves Argentina onto six points from two Group J matches, confirming their place in the Round of 32 – the expanded knockout phase of the 48-team tournament – with one group game still to play. Lionel Scaloni’s side have been measured rather than flamboyant in the group stage, a deliberate approach from a manager who understands that sustainability matters more than spectacle when the stakes intensify.

Austria are effectively eliminated following their second defeat, their campaign ending without a victory on North American soil. Patrick Pentz’s save from Messi’s early penalty will be a footnote of consolation, but it was never going to change the fundamental balance of a contest between two sides operating at very different levels of the international game.

Argentina’s depth was again evident throughout the match. With Messi as the undisputed focal point, the supporting cast – Almada, Julián Álvarez, Rodrigo De Paul – provided the structure and dynamism that allowed their captain the space and freedom to be decisive. At the other end, goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez was barely troubled in a second half that Argentina managed with calm professionalism.

The Weight Of What Messi Has Achieved

To appreciate the true scale of Monday’s achievement, it is worth dwelling on the barrier that has been broken. Klose’s record of 16 World Cup goals, accumulated across four tournaments from 2002 to 2014, was considered by many football historians to be effectively untouchable. It stood as a monument to an exceptional career. That Messi has now surpassed it – at 38, at his sixth tournament, as the reigning world champion – is a testament to a career that has no meaningful precedent in the sport’s history.

He arrived at this World Cup already holding every honour the game has to offer at both club and international level. The record in Dallas is not the missing piece – it is the final flourish of a career that has spent decades confounding every expectation placed upon it. For fans across Asia, including the many in Singapore who will have stayed up through the night to witness the moment live, Monday in Dallas delivered the kind of memory that sport exists to create.

Argentina will face their final Group J opponents in three days’ time, with Scaloni expected to rotate his squad judiciously ahead of the knockout rounds. But with Messi in this form, on this stage, there is every reason to believe that La Albiceleste have not yet finished making history.

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Date Created

23/06/2026

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