



NOW IT IS SERIOUS...



The Republic of Ireland will meet France in the World Cup play-offs over two legs which will be played on Saturday, 14 November at Croke Park, Dublin and Wednesday, 18 November at Stade de France in Paris.

Republic of Ireland manager Giovanni Trapattoni has insisted his team can carry with them into the upcoming World Cup play-off against France a genuine confidence as a consequence of an unbeaten qualifying campaign. Ten matches without defeat resulted in Ireland finishing second behind World Champions Italy in Group 8 with a sufficient yield of points to earn a play-off route into next year's South Africa-hosted finals.

Giovanni Trapattoni said, "We performed strongly throughout the qualifying group stages. We were undefeated in all ten games and this is a reflection of how we have played and also the mental strength of this team. France have a strong squad but we go into this play off knowing that we are only 180 minutes away from qualifying for the World Cup."

He said: "I will pray that we have no injuries from the club games. I will need strong individuals who are able to play the 180 minutes over the two games against France. We will have the support of our fans (in both games). I always say that, in football, the fans' support can give the team warmth."

Draw for the European World Cup play-offs Republic of Ireland v France

Portugal v Bosnia-Herzegovina
Greece v Ukraine
Russia v Slovenia

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