

EXTRA EXTRA!

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Golden opportunity for Gareth Southgate's side

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All the logic says England can win. All the talent says England can win. All the history shows they still have to prove they can win.

England's clear progress under Gareth Southgate can be measured in major tournaments. The trick now is to actually try to win one this summer or risk being forever labelled as the nearly men.

An examination of the talent at Gareth Southgate's disposal makes it easy to understand why many would regard an inability to do so this time as failure.

England are blessed with a reliable goalkeeper in Everton's Jordan Pickford. They have two defenders of the highest class who are at home in elite company in Manchester City pair John Stones and Kyle Walker.

Declan Rice is a truly outstanding holding midfield player, who has looked worth every penny of the £105m Arsenal paid to West Ham United last summer, while team-mate Bukayo Saka is, along with Manchester City's Phil Foden, a rare creative talent.

Manchester United's 18-year-old Kobbie Mainoo looks a timely arrival, ready made for this England side despite his tender years and after only



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making one start. He could be the answer to Southgate's questions around the make-up of his midfield. And then we come to the two jewels in England's crown — two players who have taken foreign soil by storm at club level this season.

Jude Bellingham is already one of the best players in the world in his position, which can be an orthodox midfielder or more often a number 10 capable of anything.

Harry Kane is England's leader, an irreplaceable talisman who is the all-time record goalscorer for his country as well as former club Tottenham.

In Bellingham and Kane, Southgate has two stellar individuals who will be the envy of every other country at Euro 2024.

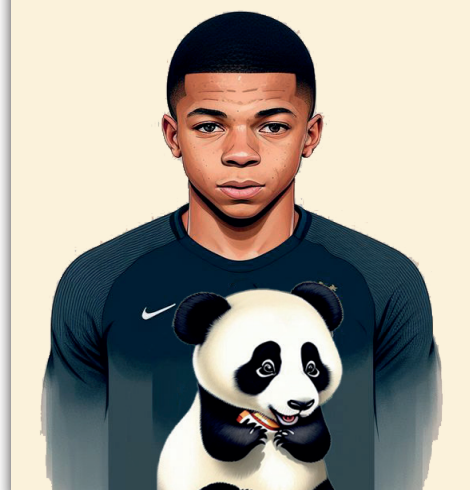
This may be Southgate's farewell as England manager. Win or lose, very few international managers get a fifth tournament without winning any of the previous four. And if England are triumphant Southgate may even feel his work is done.

Euro 2024 is now the time for England to deliver. And, in Germany, they can.

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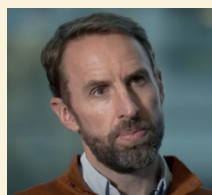


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