



AFC WOMEN'S ASIAN CUP
**TECHNICAL
REPORT** ▶
JORDAN 2018



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AFC PRESIDENT**

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FOREWORD BY **AFC PRESIDENT**

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 is the oldest continental women's football competition in the world and its 19th edition created history by being held in West Asia for the first time.

The eight-team competition was played at two stadiums in Jordan's capital city Amman. This report offers a technical analysis of the developing trends of the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 as analysed by the AFC Technical Study Group.

I would like to congratulate winners Japan again for retaining the title against tough opposition Australia, who were champions in 2010. The final match was top-class entertainment and a great showcase of the stature women's football has in Asia.

My thanks go to the Jordan Football Association and the Local Organising Committee for all their efforts on making this historic tournament a memorable experience, and for providing the best possible conditions for our teams, their delegations, the match officials, the AFC Administration, the fans and the media. The AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 showed that women's football has a foothold in the region.

I would like to congratulate China PR, Thailand and Korea Republic who also qualified from

the tournament, alongside Japan and Australia, as Asia's representatives in the FIFA Women's World Cup, to be held in France in 2019.

Japan have already won the FIFA Women's World Cup and the quality of performances during the AFC Women's Asia Cup suggested that Asia will again provide a strong challenge in France next year.

The AFC's stated ambition in its women's football development strategy is to close the gap between the top and the aspiring women's teams in Asia. The performance of teams like Thailand, beaten by Australia in the semi-final on penalties, showed progress towards this aim.

Finally, I would like to thank the Technical, Competitions and Referees Committees and Divisions and Departments for all their support of this competition and of women's football in general. Thank you also to the Technical Support Group for their efforts and expertise in identifying trends and recognising patterns of play during this tournament. It helps all our teams improve and will aid more of them to succeed on the world stage.

I trust that this Technical Report will provide very interesting and useful insights to its readers.



Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
AFC President





TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

GROUP STAGE

China PR, Thailand, Australia and Japan all qualified for the semi-finals – as well as the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019 – following a dramatic group stage campaign.

Eight-time winners China finished top of Group A to reach the last four along with Thailand who finished three points behind in second, while Australia topped Group B with Japan as runners-up.

The Philippines and Korea Republic claimed third place in their respective groups to go through to the play-off for fifth and sixth – the winner of which would also qualify for France 2019.



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GROUP A

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW



A perfect group stage campaign saw China PR emerge as Group A winners following three impressive displays during which they racked up 15 goals and conceded only one.

Head coach Sigi Eyrólfsson's charges opened their account at the Amman International Stadium with a routine 4-0 win over Thailand, before helping themselves to another three-point haul thanks to a similarly comfortable 3-0 defeat of the Philippines on Matchday Two.

The eight-time Asian champions, with livewire striker Li Ying and influential midfielder Wang Shuang constantly to the fore, duly made it a hat-trick of victories with a resounding 8-1 defeat of Jordan - the host nation's third successive defeat of the tournament following previous losses to the Philippines and Thailand.

China's pole position finish saw them set up a semi-final clash with regional rivals and fellow Asian football heavyweights Japan who had claimed the runners-up spot in Group B.

Elsewhere in the group, and with wins over Jordan under both of their belts,

Thailand and the Philippines faced off on Matchday Three knowing that whoever won the ASEAN showdown would also book their ticket through to the semi-finals behind the table-topping Chinese.

In the end, Kanjana Sung-Ngoen's brace along with Silawan Intamee's delightful free-kick in a 3-0 success helped Thailand seal a place in the last four - the first time they had progressed to the competition's knockout phase in 32 years - and a meeting with Group B winners Australia.

Despite the defeat, Rabah Benlarbi and his Philippines side had done enough to claim third place ahead of rock bottom Jordan, with their reward a place in the play-off for fifth and sixth against Korea Republic - the winner of which would, along with the top two in each group, progress to the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup.





GROUP B

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW



Featuring three of the continent's strongest teams, Group B was a nail-biting affair which remained in the balance until the final minutes of Matchday Three, with Australia and Japan ultimately advancing to the semi-finals.

The two regional heavyweights finished deadlocked on five points apiece alongside Korea Republic, who were eliminated despite being the only team to navigate the group stage without conceding a goal, while Vietnam suffered three consecutive defeats to finish bottom of the table.

Such was the close-fought nature of the group, eventual table-toppers Australia were just four minutes away from being eliminated, when they found themselves trailing 2-1 against Japan on Matchday Three.

Asako Takakura's Japan began their campaign with a straightforward 4-0 victory over Vietnam, before playing out a goalless stalemate of their own against the impenetrable Koreans.

With both East Asian sides defeating Vietnam by four clear goals, it was ultimately Japan's 1-1 draw with Australia which saw the reigning champions through, with the goals scored in matches between the three tied sides acting as the all-important tiebreaker in a remarkably tight group.

While Australia and Japan marched on to their respective semi-finals against Thailand and China PR, Korea Republic advanced to a play-off for fifth place, and qualification for the 2019 FIFA World Cup, against the Philippines.



Star striker Sam Kerr's late equaliser kept the Matildas alive in the tournament, and rocketed them to the top of standings by virtue of their earlier 8-0 win over Vietnam and 0-0 draw with Korea Republic.

Group B played host to football of the highest international quality played by some of the continent's best talents with Japan's Mana Iwabuchi, Korea Republic captain Cho So-hyun and the ever-dangerous Kerr all delivering Player of the Match performances at key stages for their respective countries.

5TH PLACE PLAY-OFF

With China PR, Thailand, Australia and Japan having already confirmed their tickets to the FIFA Women's World Cup, Korea Republic, who finished third in Group B to miss out on automatic qualification, proved too strong for the Philippines as they ended their continental adventure on a high to also ensure their place at France 2019.



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PHILIPPINES 0-5 KOREA REPUBLIC



Following credible displays against both Australia and Japan, Korea Republic were heavily favoured to prevail in the play-off, and took the early initiative despite losing Jung Seol-bin to injury in the opening minutes.

Jung's replacement, Choe Yu-ri, came close to opening the scoring in the 14th minute, having two attempts at goal blocked within a matter of seconds during a goalmouth scramble, as the Southeast Asians doggedly fought to keep their dream alive.

Philippines goalkeeper Kearra Bastes-Jones produced a number of excellent saves to keep the sides level, but after 34 minutes of Korean dominance, it seemed only a matter of time until the East Asians scored, and when they did, it was a goal worth waiting for.

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

Jang Sel-gi - who famously scored Korea Republic's crucial goal against DPR Korea in qualifying - proved she is truly a player for the big occasion, when she curled a sublime right-footed shot into the top corner from 20 yards.

Lee Min-a then underlined her status as one of the stars of the tournament, making it 2-0 after being found expertly by Ji So-yun in the third minute of added time.

Any hopes of a Filipino fightback were extinguished 10 minutes into the second half, when Rabah Benlarbi's side failed to mark Lim Seon-joo at a set-piece, allowing the central defender to prod Jeon Ga-eul's delivery past the stranded Bastes-Jones.

Korean captain Cho So-hyun added to the scoring when she headed home Jeon's corner in the 65th minute, before hammering home a penalty to make it 5-0 six minutes from time, after Alexa Diaz fouled Choe Yu-ri.

SEMI-FINALS

Australia and Japan confirmed their places in the final after contrasting performances which saw the Matildas overcome Thailand on penalties, and Japan defeat regional rivals China PR 3-1. Australia's nail-biting victory guaranteed them a fourth title showdown in five years, while Japan's win saw them seal a second successive final appearance following their triumph in the competition's 2014 edition.



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SEMI-FINALS

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

AUSTRALIA 2-2 THAILAND

(Australia won 3-1 on penalties)



Australia needed an injury-time equaliser and a penalty shootout to finally see off a gallant Thailand, in a dramatic semi-final won 3-1 on penalties following a 2-2 draw after 120 minutes.

After making two key errors during the match, goalkeeper Mackenzie Arnold emerged as Australia's unlikely hero, making three saves in the shootout, leaving substitute Sam Kerr to convert the kick which took them to a third consecutive final.

Australia dominated early on and took the lead when defender Kanchanaporn Saenkun headed Emily Gielink's dangerous cross into her own net in the 17th minute, only for Thailand - led by the magnificent Kanjana Sung-Ngeon - to equalise almost immediately through the number 21's lobbed effort which Arnold could only fumble across the line.

Thailand duly went ahead on 64 minutes, Thongsombut Rattikan slamming a brilliant shot from 12 yards into the top corner after errors from both Arnold and Alanna Kennedy.

Thailand's task became more difficult when Wilaiporn Boothduang was dismissed three minutes from time for a second bookable offence, and Kennedy gave the Matildas a lifeline in the first minute of injury time, when she headed home Elise Kellond-Knight's corner to level matters.

Kerr had a gilt-edged chance to win the game in the 118th minute but she poked her side-foot volley narrowly over the crossbar from close-range, before, in a gripping shootout, van Egmond's miss gave the Thais the early advantage and Arnold went from villain to hero with three consecutive saves, allowing Kerr to slot the decisive kick and send Australia into the final.



SEMI-FINALS

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

CHINA PR 1-3 JAPAN



Reigning champions Japan joined Australia in the final thanks to a 3-1 win over China PR in an entertaining last four encounter.

Mana Iwabuchi's early strike and Kumi Yokoyama's second half brace proved the difference as the Japanese booked a fifth final appearance to keep alive their hopes of successive continental crowns with a hard-fought victory that further underlined the glowing reputation of Asako Takakura's talented team.

Having watched the Matildas overcome the impressive Thais on penalties in the day's earlier semi-final, Japan were the first to threaten when Rumi Utsugi's angled shot was expertly gathered by China goalkeeper Peng Shimeng on seven minutes, before eight-time champions China responded through Ren Guixin's miscued shot from close-range following a pinpoint Li Danyang corner.

With little to choose between the regional rivals, Japan eventually found the breakthrough in the 39th minute as striker Iwabuchi unleashing a powerful shot from the edge of the area which flew past the diving Peng.

China rallied after the break and came close to restoring parity through Song Duan's fierce drive which fizzed just inches wide of the post within four minutes of the restart.

Japan were matching their opponents all the way though, and with the clock ticking down substitute Yokoyama added a degree of gloss to the scoreline with a sumptuous shot and a well struck penalty after Wang Shanshan had handled in the area.

Li Ying's subsequent last gasp spot kick proved to be a mere consolation for China, as Japan held on to claim their place in the final.



3RD PLACE PLAY-OFF



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3RD PLACE PLAY-OFF

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

CHINA PR 3-1 THAILAND

China PR concluded their AFC Women's Asian Cup campaign in style thanks to a 3-1 win over Thailand in the play-off for third place.

China had never lost to Thailand in 13 previous meetings, and it was the East Asians who looked the brighter of the two teams early on with a fierce Gu Yasha drive forcing goalkeeper Waraporn Boonsing into a smart save.

Thailand responded through a dipping Nipawan Panyosuk shot which custodian Peng Shimeng did well to tip over, before Song Duan came close to giving China the lead courtesy of a superb volley that flashed narrowly wide of Waraporn's left-hand post on 15 minutes.

With China continuing to press, influential midfielder Wang Shuang saw her 36th minute strike from 12 yards comfortably gathered by Waraporn and, in the final genuine chance of the half, tournament leading scorer Li Ying's scuffed effort from close-range was once again held by the impressive Waraporn.

The breakthrough came six minutes after the restart, Li Danyang's pass finding Li Ying who turned and unleashed a terrific shot that nestled into the corner of the net to register her seventh goal of the competition.

Worse was to come for Thailand, as first Wang Shanshan reacted quickest to turn the ball home after Waraporn had parried Ren Guixin's initial effort, and then Song made it 3-0 from 25 yards following hesitation in the Thai defence with an hour played.

Thailand briefly threatened to stage a stirring comeback when Thongsombut Rattikan netted from close-range on 81 minutes after Silawan Intamee's shot had ricocheted back off both uprights, but it proved too little, too late as China resolutely held on to claim the win.





THE FINAL

Japan were crowned AFC Women's Asian Cup champions for a second time thanks to a thrilling 1-0 win over Australia in the final at the Amman International Stadium.

Kumi Yokoyama's superb late goal proved the difference on a night of high drama, as head coach Asako Takakura's side added the title to the continental crown they claimed won in 2014.

Japan's stunning success provided a fitting climax to the tournament which was staged in West Asia for the first time, and which had also provided a myriad of momentous moments to further underline the growth of women's football throughout Asia.

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

For most who had been following the AFC Women's Asian Cup, it was probably not a too big a surprise to see Australia and Japan in the final.

Despite needing to beat Thailand via a penalty shootout in the semi-finals, Australia entered the title showdown as one of the strongest teams not only in Asia but also the world, and clearly focused on winning the trophy.

While reigning champions Japan - following their FIFA Women's World Cup triumph in 2011 and the runners-up spot they achieved four years later at the global extravaganza - were in the process of building an exciting new team that was eager to be crowned champions for a second successive competition.

On what was to be a night of high drama, it was Australia who started the brighter of the two, with head coach Alen Stajcic's side enjoying a degree of success down the flanks and, for the most part, regaining possession whenever it was lost thanks to their high and well-organised pressing.

The first scoring opportunity of the match came in the ninth minute when midfielder Tameka Butt's run and cross from the left was almost converted by Emily van Egmond at the near post.

Japan goalkeeper Ayaka Yamashita then produced a fine double save to keep out Samantha Kerr's powerful shot from eight yards and Lisa De Vanna's subsequent follow-up.

Australia continued to press, and their early dominance duly paid dividends in the 14th minute when they were awarded a penalty after the previously immaculate Yamashita failed to clear her lines and, in the ensuing melee, central defender and captain Saki Kumagai handled the ball.

Midfielder Elise Kellond-Knight stepped up to take the spot kick, but Yamashita played a key role for her side yet again as, diving to her left, she made a vital stop to keep the scores level and leave Australia rueing a missed opportunity to take what would have been a well-deserved lead.



Despite Yamashita's star turn, Japan, up until this point, were struggling to play their own - short - combination style of play. That, combined with the ease with which Australia's defenders mopped up Japan's long forward passes to their strikers, saw the reigning champions kept under almost constant pressure by the Matildas.

However, Japan's first opportunity was to come in the 24th minute, Kerr blocking a fierce shot from striker Mana Iwabuchi that seemed destined for the top corner, and Rumi Utsugi firing the rebound narrowly wide as, with the Nadeshiko seeing more and more of the ball, the game began to open up.

After an error in the build-up by Australia's right-back Ellie Carpenter, Japan left-sided midfielder Yui Hasegawa dribbled the ball inside the box and played it square only for Iwabuchi's attempt from the edge of the six-yard box to be well blocked by Alanna Kennedy.

Iwabuchi then received the ball on the right close to the halfway line, and, withstanding pressure from three Australian players, brilliantly drove forward before finding Hasegawa who cut in front of Carpenter, controlled the ball and released a strike that was tipped over the bar by custodian Lydia Williams.

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW



Australia were not, however, without chances of their own and they had a great opportunity when Kerr reacted quicker than Japan's two central defenders to a forward ball, but the striker's first touch proved to be too heavy allowing Yamashita to block the effort as the first half came to an enthralling end.

With no substitutions made by either side at half-time, Australia resumed after the break looking to regain the clear initiative they had at the start of the contest.

With Japan enjoying a greater share of possession and defending in a far more controlled manner, it took Australia until the 53rd minute to register their first attempt of the second period, midfielder van Egmond's powerful attempt from 30 yards striking the crossbar and rebounding to safety. Australia duly began to dominate once again, and with Japan unable to feed their two forwards, Asako Takakura charges regained the ball in and around their own box with short combination play, only to relinquish possession after long – and at times hopeful – passes towards Iwabuchi and Yuika Sugasawa.



The Matildas continued to work hard to create opportunities, but, along with resolute Japanese defending that saw bodies being put on the line, Australia's lack of precision in the final third – exemplified by their inability to deliver precise crosses or push enough bodies into goalscoring positions – ensured the score remained 0-0.

Indeed, Australia continually found creating chances from a central position a decidedly difficult task, as Japan squeezed that area to limit the space needed for combination play or shots on target. There was, though, room to operate on the flanks, something that those in all gold could potentially utilise to find the breakthrough.

One such moment of opportunity came on 73 minutes when captain Stephanie Catley – from wide left in Australia's final third – brilliantly used 'the Zidane' movement to weave past three opponents by playing the ball through the legs of one of them. Unfortunately, her subsequent cross went out of play beyond the far post despite their being enough support in the box.

Meanwhile, Japan had made their one and only substitution of the match when Kumi Yokoyama came on for Sugasawa, a striker for a striker. It was to prove vital when, against the run of play, and despite Australia's best endeavours, the breakthrough finally came in the 84th minute.

The excellent Yamashita intercepted a curling van Egmond cross and duly found Hasegawa on the left who deftly moved the ball past Carpenter and into midfield before finding Yokoyama.



The substitute shook off one defender and then went past Kennedy to unleash a cracking shot with her right foot that ended in the top right corner of the Australian goal. 1-0 to Japan.

After going behind, Australia continued to go forward, and their final opportunity came when Yamashita was on hand to deny the onrushing Kyah Simon following Kellond-Knight's raking pass.

Referee Ri Hyang Ok duly blew for full-time to spark celebrations among a Japan side that had made one moment of quality count as they secured the AFC Women's Asian Cup title for a second time, and leave Australia pondering what could have been.



TECHNICAL TOPICS





TECHNICAL TOPICS

Asian teams are among the best national teams in the world," commented Moya Dodd, who chairs the AFC Women's Football Committee. "But they still need to improve because they are not yet consistently the best." "I think some qualities are getting better and better all the time," added Chan Yueng-ting, the AFC Coach of the Year in 2016. Among observers, the final tournament in Jordan produced an amalgam of satisfaction and hunger for further improvement.

There was not a great deal of diversity in terms of team shapes with four of the eight opting for 1-4-3-3 as their default setting, along with three who preferred the 1-4-2-3-1 variant with two screening midfielders.

Vietnam were alone in operating a 1-4-4-2, although Philippines switched from 1-4-3-3 to 1-4-4-2 during their match against Thailand. Defensive structures were generally based on 1-4-4-2 (to be more precise, 1-4-4-1-1 or 1-4-1-4-1) with Australia prepared to press high in their attacking 1-4-3-3 formation with a view to regaining possession in advanced areas.

The AFC Technical Observers remarked on a notable improvement in terms of teams' ability and readiness to play out from the back. The stronger teams were able to do so with greater variation in building from the goalkeeper. Australia were up-to-date with the trend towards spreading the centre-backs

wide; pushing the two full-backs forward towards the halfway line; and relying on a holding midfielder to drop deep to receive between the centre-backs and to participate in the initiation of attacking moves. When switching to attacking mode, most teams allowed freedom of the touchline to both full-backs, with only a minority adopting a 'one-at-a-time' philosophy and keeping one full-back in a back line of three.

One of the key areas of comparison among the top eight was their ability to play out under pressure. The elite teams were the ones who remained composed and comfortable on the ball when opponents closed them down quickly. The positional awareness and solo skills required to retain possession for the team in tight situations are becoming basic requirements in player



Japan and China PR adopted a similar approach to the identity of the central midfielder responsible for dropping back - the two screening midfielders alternating in this particular function. Korea Republic executed a variation on the theme by dropping wide midfielders back to cover for overlapping full-backs.

development. In Jordan, Japan and Korea Republic had no qualms about using the long pass as an antidote to Australia's high-pressure game, rather than risk costly losses of possession in the final third. But it was noticeable that the less successful teams were the ones who were obliged

to resort most frequently to uncontrolled clearances of the ball (sometimes out of play) or, quite simply, surrendered possession when demands were made on them.

In terms of building from the back, most goalkeepers were comfortable with the ball at their feet and contributed to combination play. A minority of teams preferred the keeper to play long to the striker, while most keepers were prepared to exercise that option if opponents applied high pressure. The observers noted that, by and large, distribution with the feet had improved, along with competent positional play and handling when the ball was passed back. On the other hand, they acknowledged that mistakes by goalkeepers were still a fact of life. Apart from basic shot-stopping technique, their reports included question-marks about essential areas such as positioning, the organisation of defensive walls and decision-making when it came to dealing with high balls – for example, making optimal judgements on when to catch and when to punch. The frequency of errors highlighted the importance of the work to be done by competent goalkeeper coaches at club as well as national team levels.

Australia, China PR, Japan and Korea Republic successfully used high-quality long diagonal passing to exploit spaces which appeared when opponents dropped into narrow defensive blocks. The ability to hit these long passes with precision requires training-ground work at development levels.

A similar concept could be applied to work done by full-backs. In Jordan, the general trend was for them to make overlapping – rather than underlapping – runs, with the wingers or wide midfielders cutting inside to open pathways along the touchline. The AFC observers discussed the efficiency of this common attacking trend and wondered how often the full-backs are coached not only in the mechanisms of their upfield work but also the art – if they are essentially taking roles as wingers – of delivering good-



quality crosses and cut-backs. In other words, coaching this role requires attention to the 'end product' which, in this case, is the creation of scoring chances. On the other hand, the observers noted an improvement in the quality of deliveries at set plays.

Among the factors which separated the top teams in Jordan was the ability to play composed combination football in the final third. Japan excelled in this department on account of, as Moya Dodd put it, "positional sense, combinations and creating space with movement off the ball". Korea Republic also caught the eye, while Australia's attacking potential was also hinged to physical presence and athletic condition, which made them difficult to contain.

Effective counterattacking was not a weapon in all armouries but a number of the teams in Jordan were equipped for

fast defence-to-attack transitions. Thailand produced some good examples in their semi-final against Australia and Vietnam in their fixture against Korea Republic. The formula most generally adopted for rational counterattacking was quick, short combinations in the defensive third after regaining the ball and, once possession had reached a player able to spot the pass, a forward delivery into the path of sprinting forwards. The key factor in this equation was the mental composure to retain possession for the team while under pressure and deliver the ball to a team-mate better-placed to execute the telling pass. This may sound like a simplistic comment – but the observers in Jordan saw many scenarios where regaining possession was followed by a pass that immediately returned it to the opposition or a 'blind' forward pass that either needed to be chased over a distance or which allowed the opponent to re-start an offensive.



TECHNICAL TOPICS

Transitions in the other direction provided an interrelating topic - in other words, the methods used in order to counter the counter. With most teams attacking with two advanced full-backs and with the wingers or wide midfielders so frequently making infield movements, cameras could often capture images of a halfway line protected by two central defenders with a great deal of space at their backs. The top teams recognised that a degree of risk-management was called for, usually by ensuring that the balancing midfielders were occupying correct positions and that the goalkeeper was alert to the potential dangers of a direct back-to-front pass over the top.



first line of defence, the two strikers (either in parallel or one in the wake of the other) working hard to disturb the opposition's build-up.

Although Australia provided a prime example of collective high pressing, most teams initiated their most aggressive ball-winning attempts as from midfield. The general tendency was to base defensive organisation on zonal marking. But the tournament in Jordan provided scenarios of individual marking in midfield areas, backed a zonal line of four. This made it relatively easy for opponents to create spaces in the approaches to the final third, to open pathways for 1 v 1 confrontations with the back four and to load extra pressure on to the centre-backs in terms of giving them positional problems to solve.



only one or two players, while the rest of the side retreated rapidly into its own half to assemble the defensive block. "Defensive transition and defensive organisation are still areas that can be improved," said Belinda Wilson. "I feel that most of the countries at that next level should focus more on defensive aspects before they look for ways of creating more opportunities to attack." The issue is one that is also pursued in the Talking Points section of this report. The tournament, however, did provide examples of well-coached defensive play with Korea Republic coming through their four matches without conceding a goal - despite finishing third in their fiercely competitive group. They, along with China PR and Japan, opted for two defensive lines of four with, as the



The answer most frequently adopted by Australia, China PR, Japan and Korea Republic was to react to loss of possession in the attacking third with well-orchestrated collective pressing, based on three, four or even five players swarming immediately around the ball-carrier and cutting off the short-passing options quickly enough to prevent the opponents from picking out and delivering the counterattacking pass. By contrast, other teams preferred to harass the ball-carrier with



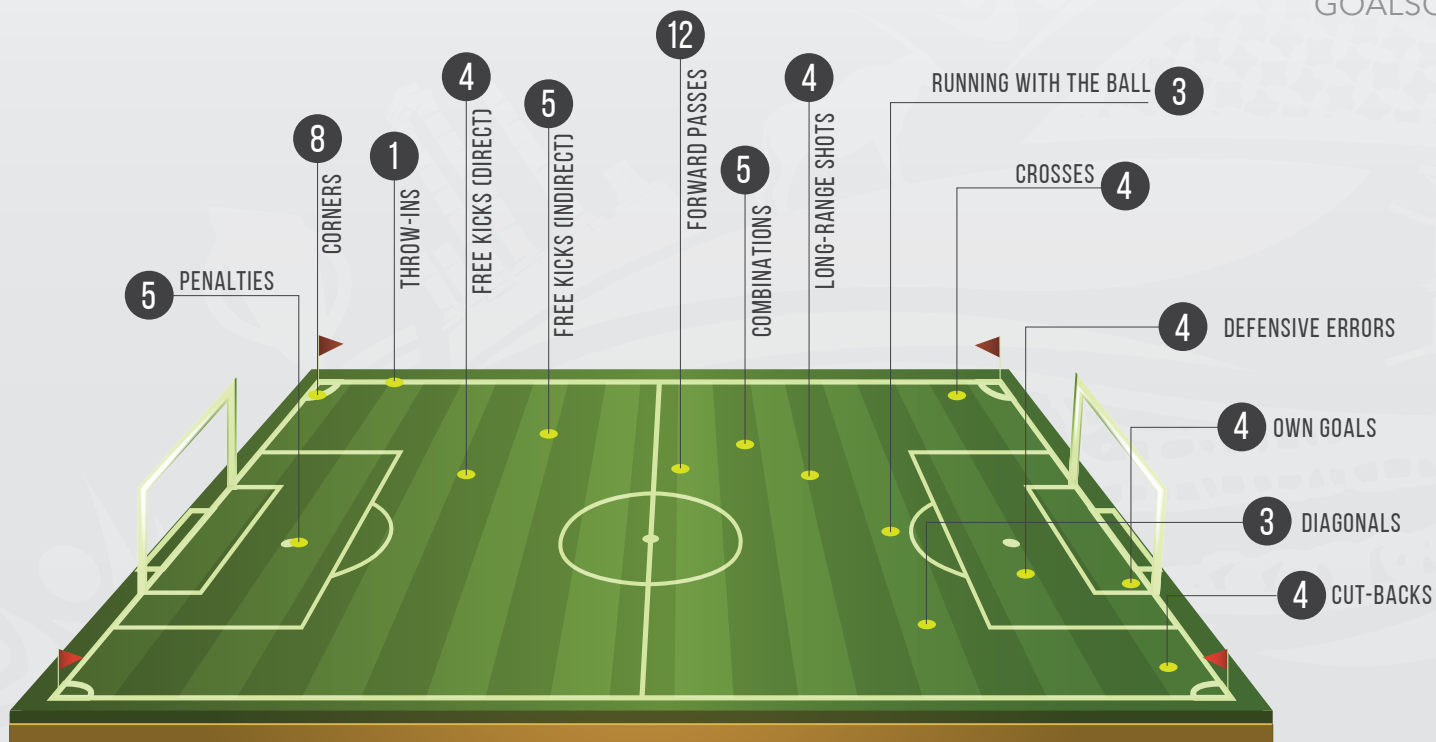
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GOALSCORING ANALYSIS



GOALSCORING ANALYSIS



GOALS FROM SET PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Corners	Direct from / following a corner	8
Free kicks (direct)	Direct from a free kick	4
Free kicks (indirect)	Following a free kick	5
Penalties	Spot kick (or follow-up from a penalty)	5
Throw-ins	Following a throw-in	1

GOALS FROM OPEN PLAY

ACTION	GUIDELINES	GOALS
Combinations	Wall pass / combination move	5
Crosses	Cross from the wing	4
Cut-backs	Pass back from the bye-line	4
Diagonals	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	3
Running with the ball	Dribble and close-range shot / dribble and pass	3
Long-range shots	Direct shot / shot and rebound	4
Forward passes	Through pass or pass over the defence	12
Defensive Errors	Bad back-pass / mistake by the goalkeeper	4
Own Goals	Goal by the opponent	4

TOTAL GOALS SCORED : 66

GOALSCORING ANALYSIS



RANKING	PLAYER	COUNTRY	MATCH
1	No. 7 Silawan Intamee	Thailand	Thailand vs Jordan
2	No. 14 Alanna Kennedy	Australia	Australia vs Thailand
3	No. 8 Cho So-hyun	Korea Republic	Philippines vs Korea Republic
4	No. 8 Ma Jun	China PR	China PR vs Jordan
5	No. 7 Silawan Intamee	Thailand	Thailand vs Philippines

RANKING	PLAYER	COUNTRY	MATCH
1	No. 7 Lee Min-a	Korea Republic	Korea Republic vs Vietnam
2	No. 20 Kumi Yokoyama	Japan	Japan vs Australia
3	No. 8 Ma Jun	China PR	Philippines vs China PR
4	No. 8 Mana Iwabuchi	Japan	China PR vs Japan
5	No. 12 Jang Sel-gi	Korea Republic	Philippines vs Korea Republic
6	No. 20 Kumi Yokoyama	Japan	China PR vs Japan
7	No. 21 Kanjana Sung-Ngoen	Thailand	Australia vs Thailand
8	No. 10 Mizuho Sakaguchi	Japan	Japan vs Australia
9	No. 11 Maysa Jbarah	Jordan	Jordan vs Philippines
10	No. 16 Shahnaz Jebreen	Jordan	Thailand vs Jordan



**TALKING
POINTS**

A THAI BREAK?

The question of how to bridge gaps has featured prominently at recent AFC coaching and coach education events – and the issue continued to fuel discussion at the final tournament in Jordan. The annals of the game reveal that, in the seven editions of the AFC Women's Asian Cup played since the turn of the century, only four countries have disputed the final. And one of that quartet has always taken third place as well – with the exception of 2003 when Korea Republic took the bronze medal.

Projecting that fact on to the world backdrop, it could be argued that this type of dominance also exists in other confederations. The last seven European Championships, for example, have been a tale of German domination. On the other hand, seven different countries have disputed the seven finals, hinting at a much less rigid hierarchy. So, to what extent can the fourth-place finish by Thailand at the tournament in Jordan be regarded as a sign that gaps at the top level are, indeed, being bridged?

Building on experience gained at the FIFA World Cup in 2015, Nuengrutai Srathongvian's team can now consolidate their newfound status by taking benefit from a second appearance on the world stage. Even so, they suffered a 4-0 defeat against China PR in their opening game in Jordan – one of the three matches settled by that substantial margin during a group phase which also produced scorelines of 8-0, 8-1 and 6-1, followed by a 5-0 in the play-off match which decided AFC's fifth representative at the FIFA World Cup. Is the familiar pattern



of high winning margins a sign that gaps remain unbridged? To what extent can Thailand's success be considered a break with that tradition?

The technical observers in Jordan echoed the sentiments expressed by their colleagues after the AFC U-19 Women's Championship, played a few months earlier in China. Even within a starting field of eight, they had observed, three distinct tiers were visible – and were reflected by spectacular scorelines. The final outcome was a total of 66 goals (almost tallying with

the 67 scored at the previous tournament in 2014) at a very high average of 3.88 per game. This can be interpreted as a healthy symptom. But it can also fuel debate about...

DAMAGE LIMITATION

The statistics contrast sharply with the average of 2.19 at the European finals in 2017 and, if we prefer to draw comparisons closer to home, the mean of 2.13 per match at the AFC U-23 Championship for men played in China at the beginning of the year. Europe, however, provokes interesting reflections. The



TALKING PONTS

expansion of the final tournament to 16 teams (from 12) raised questions about the relationship between quantity and quality. Would the 'new' teams be overpowered by the established elite?

The answer was categorically negative. One of the debutants – Austria – reached the semi-finals; the pre-tournament favourites – including serial champions Germany – were eliminated in the quarter-finals; apart from Scotland's opener against England, games were tight and intense. And the all-time low of 2.19 goals per match was inflated by a six-goal final. The average in the previous 30 games had been 2.07. Technical observers highlighted the defensive discipline that had underpinned the low scoring. Austria coach Dominik Thalhammer explained "we prioritised good defending. We based our game on deep defence with five at the back and transitions to 1-4-2-3-1 attacking, knowing that we wouldn't have a lot of possession". As one of the technical observers remarked, "Austria provided a prime example of a strategy built on defensive efficiency."

It may have been a roundabout route, but this eventually leads to the talking point to emerge from Jordan. The AFC technical observers pointed out that one of the contributing factors to the high scores was that teams often fell apart after falling behind. So should 'damage limitation' form part of the curriculum for players and coaches? Is it legitimate to expect teams to place greater emphasis on strengthening their defensive organisation with a view to making it more difficult for opponents to score against them?

Responses might be tempered by other considerations. Going back to Europe for a moment, France coach Olivier Echouafni said "we play an offensive game but other teams refuse to play and concentrate only on defending. It's very difficult to play against them." And Spain's head coach Jorge Vilda commented "some teams focused on staying compact, shutting down spaces, defending close to their own goal and then trying to hit opponents with counterattacks. The more defensive style



was generally getting the edge over the teams who prefer the attacking approach and who, in my opinion, try to offer the fans a more attractive way of playing."

So to what extent should coaches take into account the need to offer fans an attractive way of playing? How important is it to continue to 'promote' women's football as a spectator sport? As the AFC technical observers in Jordan reflected, "defensive organisation provides the foundations of the team but this doesn't mean per se that teams need to park the bus in front of their goal. It's a question of finding a balance."

For coaches, there are further questions. How important, in terms of player development, is it to sidestep the negative momentum of heavy defeats? And, also in terms of player development, to what extent is it legitimate to focus on the arts of defending rather than the creative elements of the sport? What is the most appropriate development pathway? What more can be done to 'promote more Thailands' and to help member associations to bridge the gap towards the top teams? What more can AFC do to help?

WELL PREPARED?

From philosophical questions to pragmatism. How much time do national team coaches get with their players? Is it enough to design and negotiate the development pathways mentioned above? Of the top teams, Japan had already initiated their preparation programme for the Olympic Games, featuring a transition to a new group of players. Within this framework, the champions' specific preparations for the tournament in Jordan amounted to ten days.

China PR had started preparatory work in the previous November and head coach 'Siggi' Eyjólfsson, although satisfied with the level of domestic league football, would have welcomed more competitive international matches. Australia's Alen Stajcic acknowledged that preparations were conditioned by rest-and-recovery factors, as their pre-tournament training camp started so soon after the end of the national league.

Thailand coach Nuengratal Srathongvian, after leading her team at the final tournament of the AFC U-19 Championship, had reflected "We learned that our training and preparation weren't enough. We need to develop with more training and coaching for our players to be better in Asia." Prior to Jordan, she was happy to use the South East Asian Games in Malaysia as a key component in preparation schedules but, even so, would have welcomed a greater number of competitive international matches. How important are the latter in player development and helping to bridge gaps?



TEAM PROFILES

AUSTRALIA

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPER	
1 LYDIA WILLIAMS	13-05-1988
12 CASEY DUMONT	25-01-1992
18 MACKENZIE ARNOLD	25-02-1994
DEFENDER	
2 CAITLIN COOPER	12-02-1988
4 CLARE POLKINGHORNE	01-02-1989
5 LAURA ALLEWAY	28-11-1989
7 STEPHANIE CATLEY	26-01-1994
14 ALANNA KENNEDY	21-01-1995
21 ELLIE CARPENTER	28-04-2000
MIDFIELDER	
3 AIVI LUIK	18-03-1985
6 CHLOE LOGARZO	22-12-1994
8 ELISE KELLOND-KNIGHT	10-08-1990
9 ALEXANDRA CHIDIAC	15-01-1999
10 EMILY VAN-EGMOND	12-07-1993
13 TAMEKA BUTT	16-06-1991
19 KATRINA GORRY	13-08-1992
FORWARD	
11 LISA DE VANNA	14-11-1984
15 EMILY GIELNIK	13-05-1992
16 HAYLEY RASO	05-09-1994
17 KYAH SIMON	25-06-1991
20 SAMANTHA MAY KERR	10-09-1993
22 LARRISA CRUMMER	10-01-1996
23 MICHELLE HEYMAN	04-07-1988



COACH

ALEN STAJCIC

NATIONALITY
AUSTRALIA



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-4-3-3; Possession game



DEFENDING

- 1-4-1-2-3; High pressure on half of the opponent

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-3-3 secured build up from the back
- Two centre halves splitting up with no.10 dropping off
- Efficient switch of play to change the tempo of attack
- Both full backs in attacking role and wing players cutting inside midfield
- Wing play focusing on crosses and diagonal balls in the box

- Attacking midfielders 13 and 19 make runs over the top to accompany no.20 in scoring positions
- Wide range shots from midfield
- Immediate pressure to regain possession is strong quality of the team; good teamwork
- Strong and effective in set plays with 20 and 14 as good headers of the ball



CHINA PR

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPER	
1 ZHAO LINA	18-09-1991
12 PENG SHIMENG	12-05-1998
22 XU HUAN	06-03-1999
DEFENDER	
2 LIU SHANSHAN	16-03-1992
3 XUE JIAO	30-01-1993
4 LI DANYANG	08-04-1990
5 WU HAIYAN	26-02-1993
6 LIN YUPING	28-02-1992
8 MA JUN	06-03-1989
MIDFIELDER	
13 LYU YUEYUN	13-11-1995
14 XU YANLU	16-09-1991
15 SONG DUAN	02-08-1995
18 HAN PENG	20-12-1989
19 TAN RUYIN	17-07-1994
20 ZHANG RUI	17-01-1989
23 REN GUIXIN	19-12-1988
FORWARD	
7 WANG SHUANG	23-01-1995
9 TANG JIALI	16-03-1995
10 LI YING	07-01-1993
11 WANG SHANSHAN	27-01-1990
16 YAN JINJIN	10-09-1996
17 GU YASHA	28-11-1990
21 XIAO YUYI	10-01-1996



COACH

SIGURÐUR EYJÓLFSSON

NATIONALITY
ICELAND



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-2-4-4 with 10 as target player



DEFENDING

- 1-4-4-1-1 compact zone defense

KEY FEATURES

- Play out from the back, combination play from central defenders through midfield
- Both full backs in attacking role, good wing play
- Two central midfielders dropping off in build up play
- Wingers cutting inside midfield, 15 on right side very strong in 1v1
- Good link up play between strikers no.10 and no.7
- Compact aggressive defending with two lines of four
- Quick in both transitions




JAPAN

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD **DATE OF BIRTH**

GOALKEEPER

1	SAKIKO IKEDA	08-09-1992
18	AYAKA YAMASHITA	29-09-1995
21	CHIKA HIRAO	31-12-1996

DEFENDER

2	RUMI UTSUGI	05-12-1988
3	AYA SAMESHIMA	16-06-1987
4	SAKI KUMAGAI	17-10-1990
5	NANA ICHISE	04-08-1997
6	SAORI ARIYOSHI	01-11-1987
17	HIKARI TAKAGI	21-05-1993
22	RISA SHIMIZU	15-06-1996
23	SHIORI MIYAKE	13-10-1995

MIDFIELDER

7	EMI NAKAJIMA	27-09-1990
10	MIZUHO SAKAGUCHI	15-10-1987
12	HIKARU NAOMOTO	03-03-1994
14	YUI HASEGAWA	29-01-1997
15	MOENO SAKAGUCHI	04-06-1992
16	RIN SUMIDA	12-01-1996
19	RIKA MASUYA	14-09-1995

FORWARD

8	MANA IWABUCHI	18-03-1993
9	NAHOMI KAWASUMI	23-09-1985
11	MINA TANAKA	28-04-1994
13	YUIKA SUGASAWA	05-10-1990
20	KUMI YOKOYAMA	10-09-1996



COACH

**ASAKO
TAKAKURA**

NATIONALITY
JAPAN



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-2-4-4; Short combination play



DEFENDING

- 1-4-4-2; Compact middle third/own half

KEY FEATURES

- Secured build up combined with direct play forward from the goalkeeper
- Rotating midfield players to receive the ball from the centre halves and link up with forwards
- Wing play with attacking full backs, one at the time
- Outside midfield players 7 and 14 cutting inside midfield
- At times very good combination play with accurate switch of play

- No.10, 8, 7 and 14 very skilful in tight areas in the final third
- Immediate pressure to regain possession
- Good teamwork in winning the ball back
- Compact zone defending in own half
- Quick forward play transition to attack with keeping possession at times

 **JORDAN**

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD **DATE OF BIRTH**

GOALKEEPER

1	SHERIN RAI'D ALSHALABE	03-06-1994
12	SALMA MOHANAD GHAZAL	19-10-1998
22	MALAK KHALED ABED SHANNAK	01-08-1998

DEFENDER

2	HAYA MARWAN KHALIL	12-09-1994
7	YASMEEN KHAIR	27-06-1987
17	ROUZBAHAN RAED A FRAIJ	07-04-2000
18	HEBAH FAKHER ELDDIN	19-11-1990
19	AYAH FAISAL AL-MAJALI	09-03-1992

MIDFIELDER

4	LUNA RAMI ALMASRI	09-03-1994
8	STEPHANIE ALNABER	12-07-1987
15	MAI SALEM BUTROS SWEILEM	25-09-1995
20	SHOROOQ KHALIL SHATHLI	06-01-1987
21	RAND IYAD JAWDAT ABU-HUSSEIN	01-03-1997
23	TASNEEM ABU-ROB	14-11-2000

FORWARD

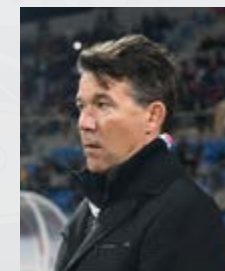
3	TALA AL BARGHOUTHY	11-04-2002
5	ANFAL ALSUFY	14-10-1995
6	RAZAN ALZAGHA	23-03-1995
9	ALIA SALMAN EL HAWA	11-01-1997
10	SARAH BASEM ABU-SABBAAH	27-10-1999
11	MAYSA JBARAH	20-09-1989
13	LANA WALEED ISSA FERAS	01-06-1998
14	HANNAH IBRAHIM AL-KOUSHEH	21-01-1997
16	SHAHNAZ JEBREEN	28-07-1992



COACH

MICHAEL DICKEY

NATIONALITY
USA



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-4-3-3 direct play



DEFENDING

- 1-4-1-4-1 in own half

KEY FEATURES

- Direct forward play from goalkeeper or defenders
- Both full backs push on
- No. 11 central striker as target player
- No.16 quick wing player on the right, good in 1v1
- Quick forward play after regaining possession

- Defending in own half combination of man marking and zone
- Immediate pressure on the ball after losing possession



KOREA REPUBLIC

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH
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GOALKEEPER

1 YOON YOUNG-GEUL	28-10-1987
18 KANG GA-AE	10-12-1990
21 JUNG BO-RAM	22-07-1991

DEFENDER

2 PARK CHO-RONG	20-02-1988
3 KIM HYE-YEONG	26-02-1995
4 KIM DO-YEON	07-12-1988
5 HONG HYE-JI	25-08-1996
6 LIM SEON-JOO	27-11-1990
12 JANG SEL-GI	31-05-1994
20 KIM HYE-RI	25-06-1990
23 CHOI YE-SEUL	24-12-1998

MIDFIELDER

7 LEE MIN-A	08-11-1991
8 CHO SO-HYUN	24-06-1988
13 LEE YOUNG-JU	22-04-1992
15 LEE SO-DAM	12-10-1994
22 JANG CHANG	21-06-1996

FORWARD

9 JEON GA-EUL	14-09-1988
10 JI SO-YUN	21-02-1991
11 JUNG SEOL-BIN	06-01-1990
14 CHOE YU-RI	16-09-1994
16 HAN CHAE-RIN	02-09-1996
17 LEE GEUM-MIN	07-04-1994
19 SON HWA-YEON	15-03-1997



COACH

**YOON
DUK-YEO**

NATIONALITY
KOREA REPUBLIC



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-4-3-3; Fluid attacking play



DEFENDING

- 1-4-1-4-1; Well organised in defending

KEY FEATURES

- Assured combination play through wide and central areas
- Switch play quickly to opposite side to change tempo in attack
- Both fullbacks in attacking role at the same time and wingers cutting inside midfield
- Good wing play, good crosses into the box
- Strong attacking midfield with 7, 8 and 10 rotating, linking up with striker no 11

- Well organised compact zone defending with no.8 as screening midfield player in front of two strong centre halves
- Good aggressive teamwork in winning the ball back
- Quick and structured counter attacks creating many scoring opportunities

 **PHILIPPINES**

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD **DATE OF BIRTH**

GOALKEEPER

1	INNA KRISTIANNE BEZA PALACIOS	08-02-1994
12	KEARRA THERYES JONES	29-05-2001
16	STACEY JANET CAVILL	20-11-1994

DEFENDER

2	CLAIRE LIM	24-10-1996
3	ALESA NAZARENO DOLINO	26-10-1992
5	HALI LONG	21-01-1995
6	MORGAN EMMALISE BROWN	20-10-1995
15	ALEXA DIAZ	19-09-1993
17	CALAH SIMARAGO	09-10-1996
19	PATRICE IMPELIDO	09-10-1987

MIDFIELDER

4	KRYSTAL VICTORIA DE RAMOS	16-03-1997
8	MARIA PARK	25-08-1991
11	KRISTEN RYLEY BUGAY	23-01-1996
14	SARA ISOBEL ARRIETA CASTANEDA	05-12-1996
18	TAHNAI ANNIS	20-06-1989
20	QUINLEY QUEZADA	07-04-1997
21	JESSICA ANNE MICLAT	08-10-1998

FORWARD

7	KATHLEEN CAMILLE MULDONG RODRIGUEZ	27-12-1994
9	JESSE ANNE SHUGG	02-05-1992
10	CAITLYN ROSE KREUTZ	28-01-1997
13	LEAH JANESSA LAROT	26-08-1989
22	CHALISE BAYSA	30-12-1980
23	SARINA BOLDEN	30-06-1996



COACH

RABAH BENLARBI

NATIONALITY
FRANCE



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING
• 1-4-2-3-1 / 1-4-4-2



DEFENDING
• 1-4-4-1-1

KEY FEATURES

- Build up with long ball from goalkeeper, in open play combinations through the thirds.
- Focus is on the strong centre forward no.23
- Midfielder 8 strong on the ball to link up with strikers
- Fullbacks attacking and wingers cutting in midfield.
- Immediate pressure on the ball after losing possession, mainly individually
- Early individual pressure on build up of opponent
- Defending with two lines of four
- Quick forward play to 23 in transition to attack

 **THAILAND**

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPER	
1 WARAPORN BOONSING	16-02-1990
18 SUKANYA CHOR CHAROENYING	24-11-1987
22 NATTARUJA MUTHTANAWECH	21-08-1996
DEFENDER	
2 KANCHANAPORN SAENKHUN	18-07-1996
3 NATTHAKARN CHINWONG	15-03-1992
4 DUANGNAPA SRITALA	04-02-1986
5 AINON PHANCHA	26-01-1992
16 KHWANRUDI SAENGCHAN	16-05-1991
19 PITSAMAI SORNSAI	19-01-1989
20 WILAIORN BOOTHDUANG	25-06-1987
MIDFIELDER	
6 PIKUL KHUEANPET	20-09-1988
7 SILAWAN INTAMEE	22-01-1994
9 WARUNEE PHETWISSET	13-12-1990
10 SUNISA SRANGTHAISONG	06-05-1988
11 ALISA RUKPINIJ	02-02-1995
12 THONGSOMBUT RATTIKAN	07-07-1991
13 ORATHAI SRIMANEE	12-06-1988
15 NIPAWAN PANYOSUK	15-03-1995
21 KANJANA SUNG-NGOEN	21-09-1986
FORWARD	
8 SUCHAWADEE NILDHAMRONG	01-04-1997
14 SAOWALAK PENGNGAM	30-11-1996
17 TANEKARN DANGDA	15-12-1992
23 KANYANAT CHETTHABUTR	24-09-1999



COACH

NUENGRUTAI SRATHONGVIAN

NATIONALITY
THAILAND



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-4-3-3 direct from the back and short combination play



DEFENDING

- 1-4-1-4-1 own half with screening midfielder

KEY FEATURES

- Build up long ball from goalkeeper
- In open play good combination play through the thirds
- No. 8 strong central striker, good in keeping the ball, linking up with midfield players 6 and 7
- Wing play with attacking full backs and skilful wingers no.17 and no.21
- Quick in transition to attack with fast right winger 21 as main target

- Retreat in own half after losing possession
- Defending in own half with one screening midfield player between the two lines of four



VIETNAM

TEAM PROFILES

SQUAD	DATE OF BIRTH
GOALKEEPER	
1 DANG THI KIEU TRINH	19-12-1985
14 TRAN THI KIM THANH	18-09-1993
22 KHONG THI HANG	10-10-1993
DEFENDER	
2 NGUYEN THI XUYEN	06-09-1987
3 CHUONG THI KIEU	19-08-1995
4 VU THI THUY	08-08-1994
5 BUI THI NHU	16-06-1990
6 BUI THUY AN	05-10-1990
15 PHAM THI TUOI	26-06-1993
17 TRAN THI HONG NHUNG	28-10-1992

MIDFIELDER	DATE OF BIRTH
7 NGUYEN THI TUYET DUNG	13-12-1993
8 NGUYEN THI LIEU	18-09-1992
9 TRAN THI THUY TRANG	08-08-1988
10 THAI THI THAO	12-02-1995
16 NGUYEN THI BICH THUY	01-05-1994
18 NGUYEN THI VAN	10-01-1997
20 PHUNG	11-03-1994
21 TRAN THI PHUONG THAO	15-01-1993
23 PHAM HOANG QUYNH	20-09-1992

FORWARD	DATE OF BIRTH
11 NGUYEN THI THUY HANG	19-11-1997
12 PHAM HAI YEN	09-11-1994
13 NGUYEN THI MUON	07-10-1988
19 HUYNH NHU	28-11-1991



COACH

MAI DUC CHUNG

NATIONALITY
VIETNAM



TEAM SHAPES



ATTACKING

- 1-4-4-2; Quick transition to attack



DEFENDING

- 1-4-4-1-1; Own half

KEY FEATURES

- Combination play from the back combined with direct play forward
- Quick transition to attack with combination play and long forward pass in wide areas
- No.19 very quick and good dribbler of the ball
- Defending deep in own half with two lines of four

- Combination of zone and man marking, aggressive defending on player in possession, full back no 2 good in 1v1
- Quick retreat in own half after losing possession with individual pressure from two strikers to prevent counter attack
- Wide midfielders support defensive line in wide areas



AFC WOMEN'S
ASIAN CUP
JORDAN 2018



**PLAYERS TO
WATCH**

GOALKEEPERS



AYAKA YAMASHITA (JPN)



YOON YOUNG GEUL (KOR)

DEFENDERS



AYA SAMESHIMA (JPN)



SAKI KUMAGAI (JPN)



NANA ICHISE (JPN)



KIM DO YEON (KOR)



LIM SEON JOO (KOR)



MA JUN (CHN)

MIDFIELDERS



EMI NAKAJIMA (JPN)



MIZUHO SAKAGUCHI (JPN)



HASEGAWA YUI (JPN)



LEE MIN A (KOR)



CHO SO HYUN (KOR)



JI SOYUN (KOR)



EMILY VAN EGMOND (AUS)

FORWARDS



MANA IWABUCHI (JPN)



WANG SHUANG (CHN)



LI YING (CHN)



KYAH SIMON (AUS)



SAM KERR (AUS)



KANJANA SUNG NGOEN (THA)



**WINNING
COACH**



TAKAKURA'S TITLE-WINNING TALENTS

There is a difference between the winning coach and a winning coach. In Jordan, Asako Takakura was the winning coach. But lifting the trophy reinforced the status of Japan's first female national team coach as a serial winner. Indeed, the temptation when writing about her is to fill the page with her ample c/v. Ignoring it would be equally remiss. There can be no doubt that 79 appearances as a national team player, starting from a debut at the age of 16, built a solid platform. So did six AFC Women's Asian Cups, a couple of FIFA World Cups and the 1996 Olympic Games. Carrying that priceless baggage into coaching offered advantages and challenges - which Takakura has met in rational and humble fashion.

Starting as assistant coach in 2009, she has worked her way through Japan's age-limit teams, picking up, as head coach, AFC U-16 and U-18 titles, in addition to winning the FIFA U-17 World Cup in 2014. She admits, however, that stepping up to the senior post in 2016. "The young teams and senior teams are totally different and I have had to face difficult days in the last two years." Many of them

stem from indifferent results during a transitional phase.

"The idea was to lay solid foundations by bringing in younger players," she explains. "I would say I've been working with three categories of players: the senior players who were around 30; players in their mid-20s; and young players. The senior players have a lot of experience and know what it's like to win a World Cup or an Olympic medal. In the middle category, I found players of 25 or 26 years of age who were short of opportunities to play at senior level because of the players above them. And then we have the young players who have had a winning experience at the youth levels. The potential is really high. During my first year in charge, we didn't select young players because I was still working with the U-20 group. But then, after the U-20 World Cup, I started to bring them all together and, in one year, to prepare a team with a new look to it."

Moving through a process of experimentation into the Asian Cup was, Takakura admits, not a walk in the park. Nor was the tournament in Jordan



leading to the final against Australia. "In our preparations, the emphasis was on piling up experience, work on aspects such as collective defending...to find the Japanese way of playing. And I noticed a great development among the players during the tournament itself. I had a plan in my head about how to use the best combinations of players and they did a great job of implementing my plan. I challenged them not to lower the level of the team, no matter who started or who was on the bench. Of course the matches were very close and we were on the edge. But we won matches and I felt that we reached another level of development."

After Kumi Yokoyama had come off the bench to win the final, Takakura commented "I believe it was a match worth watching and one of the best games that Asia can show at the moment. We were aware of expectations of Olympic gold in Tokyo in 2020 and, to move towards that, we needed to qualify through this competition. We had difficulties against Australia - not for a short time but for long periods of the match. But the satisfaction was the feeling that, in Jordan, we won the title by playing in the Japanese way. That gives us confidence to go further. And I must also go further. As a coach, I am still on the way."



“ **WE WON THE TITLE BY PLAYING IN THE JAPANESE WAY. THAT GIVES US CONFIDENCE TO GO FURTHER.** ”



REFEREES

REFEREE LIST

REFEREES

REFEREES

1	Katherine Jacewicz	AUS
2	Casey Reibelt	AUS
3	Qin Liang	CHN
4	Yoshimi Yamashita	JPN
5	Hyeon Jeong Oh	KOR
6	Hyang Ok Ri	PRK
7	Thein Thien Aye	MYA
8	Mahsa Ghorbani	IRN
9	Cong Thi Dung	VIE
10	Edita Mirabidova	UZB

ASSISTANT REFEREES

1	Heba Saadieh	PLE
2	Kum Nyo Hong	PRK
3	Cui Yong Mei	CHN
4	Fang Yan	CHN
5	Uvena Fernandes	IND
6	Naomi Teshirogi	JPN
7	Maiko Hagio	JPN
8	Seul Gi Lee	KOR
9	Kyoung Min Kim	KOR
10	Truong Thi Le Trinh	VIE
11	Ensieh Khabaz Mafi Nezhad	IRN
12	Rohaidah Binte Mohd Nasir	SIN





AFC WOMEN'S
ASIAN CUP
JORDAN 2018



TOURNAMENT RESULTS



TOURNAMENT RESULTS

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
CHINA P.R.	3	3	0	0	15	1	14	9
THAILAND	3	2	0	1	9	6	3	6
PHILIPPINES	3	1	0	2	3	7	-4	3
JORDAN	3	0	0	3	5	16	-13	0

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
------	--------	-------	--------

06/04/18	CHINA P.R.	4-0 (0-0)	THAILAND
06/04/18	JORDAN	1-2 (1-0)	PHILIPPINES
09/04/18	PHILIPPINES	0-3 (0-2)	CHINA P.R.
09/04/18	THAILAND	6-1 (4-1)	JORDAN
12/04/18	JORDAN	1-8 (1-2)	CHINA P.R.
12/04/18	THAILAND	3-1 (1-0)	PHILIPPINES

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
AUSTRALIA	3	1	2	0	9	1	8	5
JAPAN	3	1	2	0	5	1	4	5
KOREA REPUBLIC	3	1	2	0	4	0	4	5
VIETNAM	3	0	0	3	0	16	-16	0

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
------	--------	-------	--------

07/04/18	JAPAN	4-0 (2-0)	VIETNAM
07/04/18	AUSTRALIA	0-0 (0-0)	KOREA REPUBLIC
10/04/18	KOREA REPUBLIC	0-0 (0-0)	JAPAN
10/04/18	VIETNAM	0-8 (0-5)	AUSTRALIA
13/04/18	JAPAN	1-1 (0-0)	AUSTRALIA
13/04/18	KOREA REPUBLIC	4-0 (2-0)	VIETNAM

5th/6th PLACE MATCH

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
16/04/18	PHILIPPINES	0-5 (0-2)	KOREA REPUBLIC

SEMI-FINALS

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
17/04/18	AUSTRALIA	2-2 a.e.t. (2-2,1-1) 3-1 PSO	THAILAND
17/04/18	CHINA P.R.	1-3 (0-1)	JAPAN

3rd/4th PLACE MATCH

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
20/04/18	CHINA P.R.	3-1 (0-0)	THAILAND

FINAL

Date	Team A	Score	Team B
20/04/18	JAPAN	1-0 (0-0)	AUSTRALIA





AFC WOMEN'S
ASIAN CUP
JORDAN 2018



EXTRA-TIME

AFC Executive Committee Member and Chairperson of the AFC Women's Football Committee Moya Dodd followed the action in Jordan in her role as Head of Delegation. She gave her insights of the teams' performances and the way forward for women's football in Asia.



WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE TEAMS COMPETING AT THE AFC WOMEN'S ASIAN CUP JORDAN 2018?

Moya Dodd: The strongest teams are technically strong and there are some excellent individual players. You can see that the teams are highly motivated, and they put in the effort. Generally they are very disciplined.

However, generally speaking, the players didn't grow up in a football culture for them to play from a young age. And tactically they are not as mature as the very best teams, for example in occupation of the field, combinations, and finding space with movement off the ball.

The teams playing in Jordan vary their tactical approach in response to the situation but Japan is the exception to this, especially in field positioning, combinations and movement off the ball. Generally, the players are not as physically imposing as the very best teams in the world, with Australia being the exception. And the goalkeeping standard is variable.

HOW CAN ASIAN TEAMS IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCES?

Dodd: Better coaches lead to better quality of training, and better tactical learning. The Member Associations should aim to create a more professional environment, including injury management, load management, conditioning, etc. Many players even at the Women's Asian Cup level still work in another job alongside football. Also, the league competitions need to be improved, with stronger clubs and better club football environments around Asia.

DIGITAL STATISTICS



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IMPRESSIONS

9.39 MIL

REACH

6.57 MIL

VIDEO VIEWS

1.6 MIL

MINUTES WATCHED

1.33 MIL



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IMPRESSIONS

4.5 MIL

ENGAGEMENTS

86.9 K



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REACH

2.72 MIL

LIKES

176.7 K

COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	COUNTRY
MR. SAOUD AL-MOHANNADI	CHAIRPERSON	QATAR
MR. LIN XIAOHUA	DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	CHINA PR
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MR. MARK FALVO	MEMBER	AUSTRALIA
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MR. TETSU HIRAI	MEMBER	JAPAN
MR. CHUN HANJIN	MEMBER	KOREA REPUBLIC
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MR. SALAH EDDIN RAMADAN	MEMBER	SYRIA
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MR. ALIM ARIFOV	MEMBER	UZBEKISTAN
DR. TRAN QUOC TUAN	MEMBER	VIETNAM
MS. CRISTINA D'ALESSIO	CO-OPTED MEMBER	LAGARDÈRE SPORTS

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

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MS. SUSAN SHALABI MOLANO	DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	PALESTINE
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MS. NGUYEN THANH HA	MEMBER	VIETNAM



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ASIAN CUP**
JORDAN 2018

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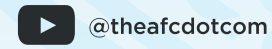
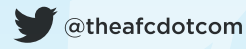
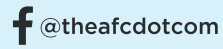
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