



AFC
U-19 WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONSHIP
CHINA 2017

TECHNICAL REPORT AND STATISTICS





FOREWORD FROM AFC PRESIDENT

Dear friends

On behalf of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) we offer our congratulations to Japan for their continued success in the AFC U-19 Women's Championship - winning their fifth title at this level in China PR.

Their victory over the spirited DPR Korea team in the final was another example of the dominance that both women's teams exert at this level of the game and is reflected in the pages of this excellent Technical Report.

I am sure that many of the players we have seen in the AFC U-19 Women's Championship will graduate possibly even to the AFC Women's Asian Cup this year and also shine on the world stage, starting with the FIFA Women's U-20 World Cup in France in 2018.

We wish all our qualifiers for France - both Japan and DPR Korea as well as third-placed China PR - every success as they continue to build on the foundations laid in this tournament.

We thank the Chinese FA for being such outstanding hosts of the tournament and their LOC for ensuring that the event went smoothly both on and off the field at the two venues in Nanjing.

The AFC also recognises the contribution of the Member Associations whose teams competed in the AFC U-19 Women's Championship and we are grateful for their commitment to excellence through participation in AFC events.

I extend my thanks to the AFC Technical Committee, the AFC Women's Committee, the AFC Referees' Committee as well as the Technical department and the Technical Study Group for their contributions to what I believe is a most informative report.



Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
AFC President



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Tournament Overview

Japan continued their run of dominance at the AFC U-19 Women's Championship, winning the title for a fifth time thanks to their 1-0 victory over a customarily strong DPR Korea in the final in Nanjing.

The two East Asian sides stood out as the tournament's best from their very first appearances in the group stage, where Japan beat Vietnam 8-0 and DPR Korea put nine goals past Thailand, and few were surprised to see them meet in a repeat of the 2015 final.

DPR Korea were yet to concede a goal going into the decider, but the first blow they suffered in the tournament proved fatal, as a superb second-half strike from the talented Japan forward Riko Ueki made all the difference for Futoshi Ikeda's side.

Ueki was arguably the Young Nadeshiko's best throughout the tournament. She provided one goal and six assists in her two group stage appearances, before scoring in the semi-final win over China PR, as well as the final.



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Ueki was ably supported by Saori Takarada, who led Japan's scoring with five goals, as well as Hinata Miyazawa, Honoka Hayashi and Moeka Minami, who performed with distinction in a squad bursting with quality, which featured 11 individual goal scorers.

DPR Korea – coached by German Thomas Gerstner – came into the tournament as world champions at U-17 and U-20 level, and it was easy to see why, as they swept aside Thailand, Uzbekistan, China and Australia with little fuss.



They too featured a number of talented individuals, but their undoubted star was diminutive striker Sung Hyang-sim, who scored six goals in five matches, and took home the official awards for top scorer and Most Valuable Player.



Host nation China, under the leadership of experienced Dutch head coach Hesterine de Reus, started the tournament strongly with back to back wins over Uzbekistan and Thailand to advance to the semi-finals, where they suffered a 5-0 defeat at the hands of Japan. Despite the setback, de Reus was able to motivate her charges for one final challenge, and they produced a superb performance to beat Australia 3-0, finish third and claim the final Asian qualifying ticket to the 2018 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in France.

The result was a blow for Australia after they had reached the tournament's final four for the first time since 2006 having beaten Vietnam and Korea Republic, whose own run of U-20 Women's World Cup

appearances came to an end after they won just one of three group matches.

Uzbekistan failed to reach the final four, but showed a vast improvement from their 2015 showing, earning a 2-2 draw with Thailand, who recovered from their heavy opening loss to DPR Korea to show their ability. Japan, DPR Korea and China can now look forward to a competition won twice by Asian teams, and one which has seen an Asian representative reach the semi-final or better for the past seven editions.

Based on the quality on show in Nanjing, few would bet against a repeat performance in France.

Results and Statistics

GROUP A

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
DPR KOREA	3	3	0	0	13	0	13	9
CHINA P.R.	3	2	0	1	4	2	2	6
UZBEKISTAN	3	0	1	2	2	6	-4	1
THAILAND	3	0	1	2	2	13	-11	1

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
15 Oct,17	15:00:00	CHINA P.R.	2-0 (1-0)	UZBEKISTAN
15 Oct,17	19:00:00	DPR KOREA	9-0 (5-0)	THAILAND
18 Oct,17	15:00:00	THAILAND	0-2 (0-1)	CHINA P.R.
18 Oct,17	19:00:00	UZBEKISTAN	0-2 (0-1)	DPR KOREA
21 Oct,17	15:00:00	CHINA P.R.	0-2 (0-2)	DPR KOREA
21 Oct,17	15:00:00	THAILAND	2-2 (1-1)	UZBEKISTAN

GROUP B

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
JAPAN	3	3	0	0	15	1	14	9
AUSTRALIA	3	2	0	1	8	7	1	6
KOREA REPUBLIC	3	1	0	2	5	4	1	3
VIETNAM	3	0	0	3	2	18	-16	0

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
16 Oct,17	15:00:00	KOREA REPUBLIC	0-2 (0-0)	AUSTRALIA
16 Oct,17	19:00:00	JAPAN	8-0 (3-0)	VIETNAM
19 Oct,17	15:00:00	VIETNAM	0-5 (0-2)	KOREA REPUBLIC
19 Oct,17	19:00:00	AUSTRALIA	1-5 (1-0)	JAPAN
22 Oct,17	15:00:00	JAPAN	2-0 (0-0)	KOREA REPUBLIC
22 Oct,17	15:00:00	AUSTRALIA	5-2 (3-0)	VIETNAM

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SEMI-FINALS

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
25 Oct,17	15:00:00	DPR KOREA	3-0 (2-0)	AUSTRALIA
25 Oct,17	19:00:00	JAPAN	5-0 (0-0)	CHINA P.R.

THIRD/FOURTH PLACE

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
28 Oct,17	15:00:00	AUSTRALIA	0-3 (0-1)	CHINA P.R.

FINAL

Date	Time	Team A	Score	Team B
28 Oct,17	19:00:00	DPR KOREA	0-1 (0-0)	JAPAN



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Team Profiles





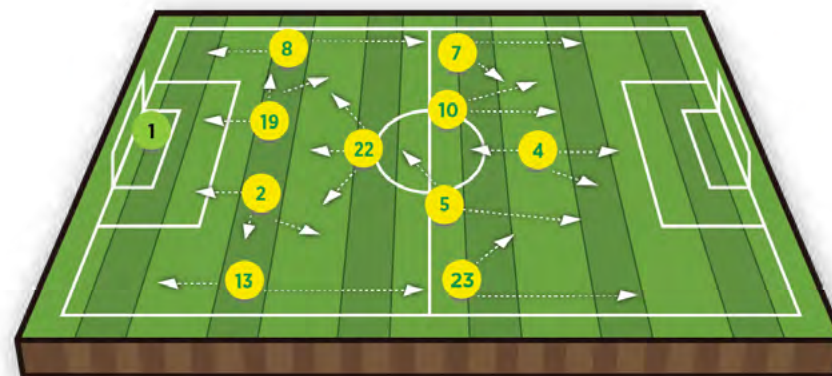
AUSTRALIA

Head Coach

Gary van Egmond



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	JADA MATHYSSEN	24-10-1999	Goalkeeper
2	ELLIE CARPENTER	28-04-2000	Defender
3	SUSAN PHONGSONGKHAM	12-02-2001	Midfielder
4	REMY SIEMSEN	10-11-1999	Forward
5	RACHEL LOWE	19-11-2000	Midfielder
6	ALLY GREEN	17-08-1998	Midfielder
7	PRINCESS IBINI-ISEI	31-01-2000	Forward
8	CLARE WHEELER	14-01-1998	Midfielder
9	CORTNEE VINE	09-04-1998	Forward
10	ALEXANDRA CHIDIAC	15-01-1999	Midfielder
11	KAITLYN TORPEY	17-03-2000	Defender
12	GEORGIA BORIC	17-07-1998	Goalkeeper
13	ANNABEL MARTIN	23-10-1998	Defender
14	GEORGIA PLESSAS	02-10-1998	Midfielder
15	TAYLOR RAY	22-04-2001	Defender
16	MELINA AYRES	13-04-1999	Forward
17	BETHANY GORDON	08-08-2000	Midfielder
18	ANNALEE GROVE	15-06-2001	Goalkeeper
19	GRACE MAHER	18-04-1999	Midfielder
20	SOPHIE NENADOVIC	08-04-1998	Defender
21	HANNAH BACON	06-03-1998	Forward
22	AMY SAYER	30-11-2001	Midfielder
23	EMILY CONDON	01-09-1998	Forward



Formation:

4-1-2-3

Defensive organisation:

4-5-1

Style of play:

Attack:

- Build up from the back
- Possession play in the middle third
- Wing play with combination through attacking midfielders and full-backs.
- Determined forward pass in the attacking third.

Defence:

- Pressing in the middle third.
- Immediately pressure when lose ball
- Holding midfielder stays deeper
- Compact in own half

Transition:

Fast retreat from attack to defence

Mental strength:

Determination, good team spirit

Key players:

#1 GK, #10, #2



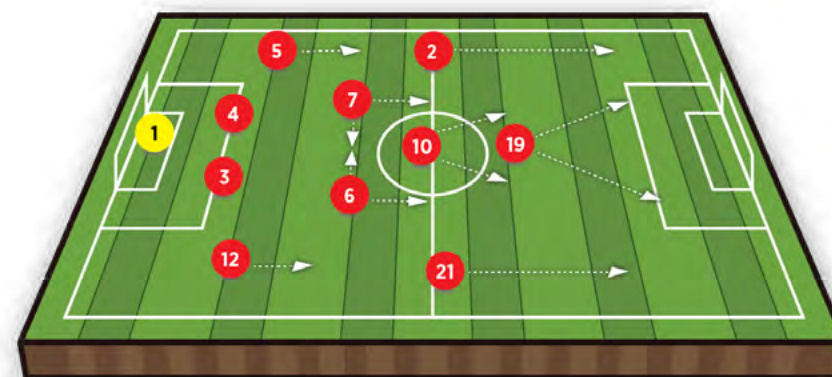
CHINA

Head Coach

Hesterine de Reus



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	PENG SHIMENG	12-05-1998	Goalkeeper
2	JIN KUN	04-10-1999	Midfielder
3	DOU JIAXING	29-02-2000	Defender
4	WANG LINLIN	04-08-2000	Defender
5	CHEN QIAOZHU	08-09-1999	Defender
6	LIU JING	28-04-1998	Midfielder
7	WANG YANWEN	27-03-1999	Midfielder
8	SHEN MENGJU	19-08-2001	Midfielder
9	ZHUO MAJI	04-10-2000	Midfielder
10	ZHAO YUJIE	28-04-1999	Forward
11	XIE QIWEN	27-05-1999	Midfielder
12	HE LUYAO	23-02-1999	Defender
13	HE XING	27-04-1999	Defender
14	TU LINLI	08-03-1999	Defender
15	ZHANG JIAYUN	16-02-1999	Forward
16	MA XIAOLAN	16-02-1999	Midfielder
17	YANG XIAOXIA	08-10-2000	Midfielder
18	CUI MENGQI	04-10-1999	Defender
19	CHEN YUANMENG	03-01-2000	Forward
20	ZHOU PING	18-05-1999	Forward
21	ZHI JIE	22-03-1998	Midfielder
22	LIANG JIAHUI	28-07-2000	Goalkeeper
23	XU HUAN	06-03-1999	Goalkeeper



Formation:

1-4-2-3-1

Defensive organisation:

1-4-2-3-1

Style of play:

Attack:

- Constructive build-up from the back to middle third
- Once the play arrives in middle third looked to penetrate to final third with either long diagonal ball to wide forwards or through defence splitting passes onto the runs from deep midfield and strikers

Defence:

- 2 blocks
- Front block to press the ball 3+1
- Back block to cover and protect central areas 4+2
- Press to win the ball as soon as they lose possession but isolated defender

Transition:

- Quick from defence to attack
- Slow transition attack to defence

Mental strength:

Disciplined and focused. Play as a collective

Key players:

#6, #21, #7, #19

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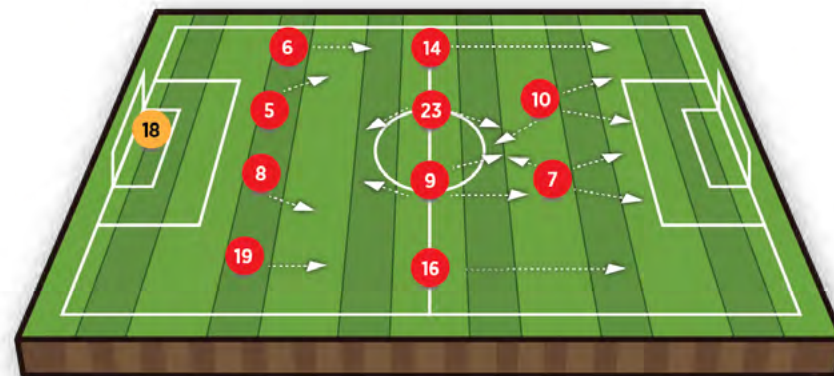
DPR KOREA

Head Coach

Thomas Gerstner



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	KIM UN GYONG	18-06-1998	Goalkeeper
2	JON YUN SIM	01-01-1999	Defender
3	AN KUK HYANG	25-03-2001	Defender
4	RI UN GYONG	20-02-2001	Forward
5	SON OK JU	07-03-2000	Defender
6	RI CHUN GYONG	23-10-1999	Forward
7	SUNG HYANG SIM	02-12-1999	Forward
8	RYANG RYONG MI	20-06-1998	Defender
9	KIM POM UI	02-02-1999	Midfielder
10	RI HAE YON	10-01-1999	Forward
11	KIM UN JU	20-12-2001	Forward
12	KIM JONG SIM	26-09-1999	Midfielder
13	PAK HYON JONG	12-06-2000	Midfielder
14	RIM JIN A	17-02-2000	Midfielder
15	RI POM HYANG	15-03-1998	Defender
16	AN SONG OK	16-03-1998	Midfielder
17	PANG UN SIM	29-06-2001	Midfielder
18	RI JONG SIM	12-04-2001	Goalkeeper
19	RI POM HYANG	08-06-1999	Forward
20	RI SUK YONG	26-06-1999	Forward
21	HAN KWANG NYO	02-01-2001	Goalkeeper
22	RI CHONG GYONG	06-04-2001	Forward
23	JU HYO SIM	21-06-1998	Midfielder



Formation:

1-4-4-2

Defensive organisation:

1-4-4-2

Style of play:

Attack:

- Played forward at first opportunity, either with defence splitting passes or long diagonal pass behind opposition back line
- Mixed direct and combo play

Defence:

- Looked to press to win the ball in the middle third
- Stayed narrow and compact and aggressive when ball was in wide areas to regain possession

Transition:

- Quick reaction at both transition moments.
- Press immediately when lose possession.
- Fast counter-attack, direct to 2 strikers

Mental strength:

Winning mentality, determination, focused

Key players:

#7, #9, #10, #23

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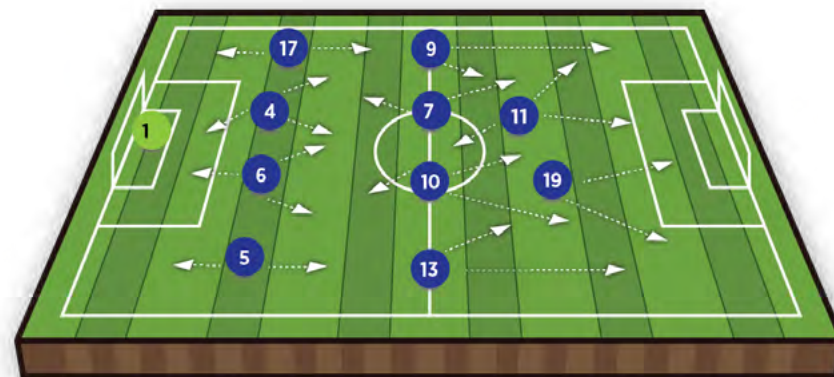


JAPAN

Head Coach
Futoshi Ikeda



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	AGURI SUZUKI	13-10-1998	Goalkeeper
2	NANA ONO	01-05-1999	Defender
3	MIYU TAKAHIRA	04-11-1999	Defender
4	MOEKA MINAMI	07-12-1998	Defender
5	RIKO USHIJIMA	12-12-1999	Defender
6	HANA TAKAHASHI	19-02-2000	Defender
7	HONOKA HAYASHI	19-05-1998	Midfielder
8	YUI FUKUTA	20-05-1998	Midfielder
9	HINATA MIYAZAWA	28-11-1999	Midfielder
10	FUKA NAGANO	09-03-1999	Midfielder
11	SAORI TAKARADA	27-12-1999	Forward
12	REINA NAGASHIMA	12-09-1998	Defender
13	ASATO MIYAGAWA	24-02-1998	Defender
14	MAMI MURAOKA	11-03-1998	Forward
15	RINA MEHARA	23-07-1998	Forward
16	FUKA KONO	15-01-1998	Forward
17	NANAMI KITAMURA	25-11-1999	Defender
18	HANNAH STAMBAUGH	24-12-1998	Goalkeeper
19	RIKO UEKI	30-07-1999	Forward
20	OTO KANNO	30-10-2000	Midfielder
21	MAI FUKUTA	20-05-1998	Goalkeeper
22	JUN ENDO	24-05-2000	Forward
23	MIZUKA SATO	19-09-1998	Midfielder



Formation:

4-4-2

Defensive organisation:

4-4-2

Style of play:

Attack:

- Possession play
- Fluid passing moves with good options
- Patient build-up from the back
- Combination with short and defence-splitting pass
- Collective off-ball movement with full support

Defence:

- Press high and in middle third.
- Fast interceptions immediately after ball-loss followed by ball-oriented pressing
- Compact unit with lines well-linked

Transition:

- Rapid transition
- Defence to attack counter in attacking third.
- Attack to defence quick retreat to stay compact with 2 lines if unable to press immediately

Mental strength:

Winning mentality, strong team spirit

Key players:

#1 GK, #10, #9, #19, #11



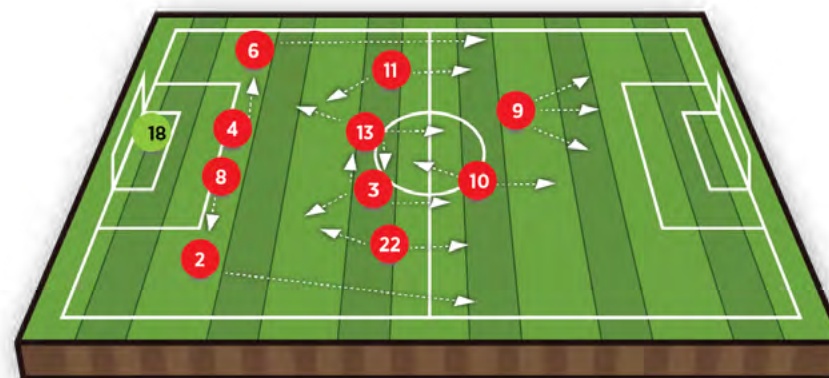


KOREA REPUBLIC

Head Coach
Jong Song-chon



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	KWON HAEIN	09-11-1998	Goalkeeper
2	KIM JINHUI	07-10-1998	Defender
3	CHOI YESEUL	24-12-1998	Midfielder
4	KIM HYEONAH	05-12-1998	Defender
5	SEO JINJU	31-07-1998	Defender
6	KIM EUN SOUL	19-01-2000	Defender
7	MOK SEUNGYEON	03-04-1998	Midfielder
8	PARK SEONGRAN	19-03-1998	Midfielder
9	CHOI JINA	06-05-1998	Forward
10	KIM SOEUN	20-09-1998	Forward
11	KANG CHAERIM	23-03-1998	Midfielder
12	OH JIEUN	24-02-1998	Defender
13	KIM HYEJI	23-07-1998	Midfielder
14	YOON HYEIN	14-11-1999	Defender
15	SIM SEOHUI	17-12-1998	Forward
16	KIM SEOYEON	13-12-2000	Forward
17	KIM YESEUL	08-07-1998	Midfielder
18	KIM YEALIN	29-05-1998	Goalkeeper
19	KANG TAEKYUNG	10-12-1998	Forward
20	JU YEEUN	17-03-1999	Defender
21	JEON MINYEONG	07-07-1999	Goalkeeper
22	MUN EUNJU	01-09-2000	Forward
23	SHIN NAYEONG	09-10-1999	Midfielder



Formation:

4-4-2

Defensive organisation:

4-4-2

Style of play:

Attack:

- Long and diagonal passes to space, mixed direct and combo play
- Forwards ability to run beyond the defensive back line
- Midfielders step up for second ball
- Direct long ball from back if under pressure

Defence:

- High pressure in the wings with ball-oriented pressing
- Retreated very quickly as a group
- Well organised and disciplined compact defence in own half

Transition:

Quick transition from attack to defence

Mental strength:

Play with discipline, good understanding and communication between lines and units. Stayed focused and stuck to the game plan.

Key players:

#3, #4, #10, #22

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FA THAILAND

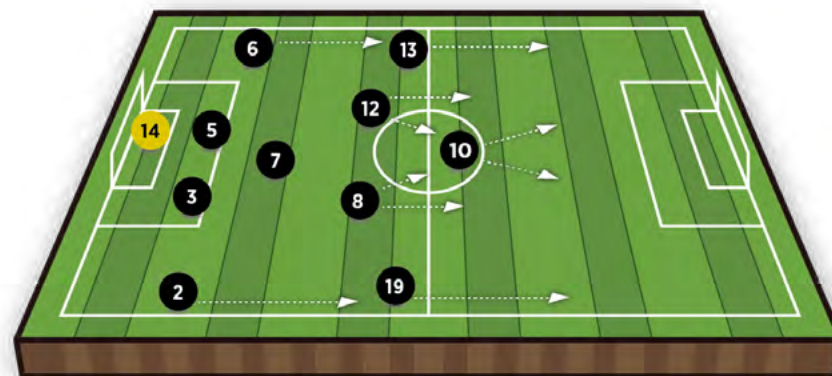
THAILAND

Head Coach

Nuengrutai Srathongvian



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	PANITA PHOMRAT	27-10-1998	Goalkeeper
2	ORRAPAN BUNGTHONG	01-01-1998	Defender
3	PHONPHIRUN	08-04-1999	Defender
4	THANAPORN PHETON	26-06-1998	Defender
5	TIPKRITTA	17-06-2000	Defender
6	TAMONWAN	24-02-2000	Defender
7	KULLASATREE JAITON	19-01-1998	Midfielder
8	KANCHALIYA	10-07-2000	Midfielder
9	TARNTIP PANDECH	01-04-2000	Midfielder
10	KANYANAT CHETTHABUTR	24-09-1999	Forward
11	ANUTHIDA MALASRI	11-05-2000	Forward
12	NUTWADEE PRAM-NAK	09-10-2000	Forward
13	SIRIKAN PHAYAKNET	11-06-1998	Forward
14	PRADTHANA SONGKRAM	11-07-1999	Midfielder
15	CHANIKAN MANEECHOTES	27-11-1998	Defender
16	CHANINAT MANEECHOTES	27-11-1998	Defender
17	SUPARAT SRIBOONHOM	03-09-1998	Forward
18	PANTIP	25-01-1999	Goalkeeper
19	U-RAIPORN YONGKUL	17-08-1998	Forward
20	SARUDA KONFAY	09-01-1999	Defender
21	TANATTHA SANGTHONG	28-07-1998	Defender
22	A APHINYA AONGKLANG	10-03-1999	Goalkeeper
23	WALUKA SRISUN	29-09-1999	Forward

**Formation:**

1-4-2-3-1/1-4-1-4-1

Defensive organisation:

1-4-2-3-1/1-4-1-4-1

Style of play:**Attack:**

- Played with a mix of a counter attack and possession based, depending on opposition

Defence:

- Defended in a block in middle third as soon as the ball entered this zone
- Pressed to force the ball wide to regain possession in wide areas
- More comfortable and organised in the 1-4-1-4-1 shape

Transition:

Transition into defence was slow as recovering players did not support 1st defender quickly enough. Transition into attack was quick and direct.

Mental strength:

Disciplined approach in defending

Key players:

#12, #7



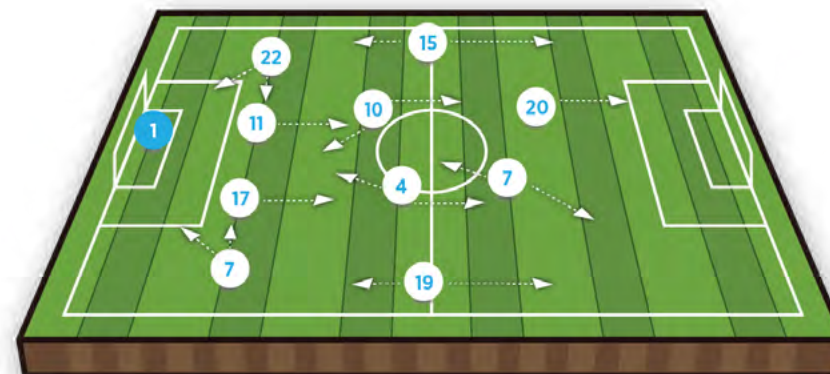
UZBEKISTAN

Head Coach

Bahrom Norsafarov



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	JONIMQULOVA MAFTUNA	26-07-1999	Goalkeeper
2	BOBOEVA ZARINA	16-08-1999	Defender
3	MANNOBOEVA GULKHAYO	04-07-1998	Defender
4	FEDOSENKO DARINA	05-06-1998	Midfielder
5	SHODIEVA LAYLO	26-03-2000	Defender
6	AMIROVA GULZODA	13-10-1999	Midfielder
7	KURBONOVA SHAHNOZA	01-05-2000	Forward
8	ZARIPOVA KAMILA	19-11-1998	Midfielder
9	BOBOKHUJAEVA FERUZA	05-10-1999	Defender
10	B BURKHONOVA MALIKA	22-02-1999	Midfielder
11	SHOYIMOVA MAFTUNA	01-01-1999	Defender
12	ERGASHEVA	22-12-1998	Goalkeeper
14	ERGASHEVA DILDORA	18-03-1999	Midfielder
15	ZOIROVA UMIDA	22-04-1998	Midfielder
16	KULTURAYEVA SHOIRA	07-07-1998	Forward
17	KAMOLTOEVA NOZIMA	19-09-1998	Defender
18	SHAKIROVA SHAKHNOZA	10-04-1999	Forward
19	KHABIBULLAEVA DIYORAKHON	15-09-1999	Forward
20	NORMURODOVA SEVARA	01-03-1999	Midfielder
21	MAHMUDOVA NARGIZA	04-04-1999	Goalkeeper
22	KHUSNIDDINOVA SOLIKHA	22-01-1998	Defender
23	PANJIEVA MAFTUNA	11-09-1999	Midfielder



Formation:

1-4-4-2

Defensive organisation:

1-4-4-2

Style of play:

Attack:

- Played direct and on the counter
- Long pass forward from back to front line with midfield support for 2nd ball

Defence:

- Played with a mix of zonal and man to man marking

Transition:

Quick transition to defence with immediate pressure and cover. Transition to attack was quick with direct long pass forward.

Mental strength:

Determined and good fighting spirit. High level of focus and discipline shown by players.

Key players:

#11, #1 GK, #17, #10

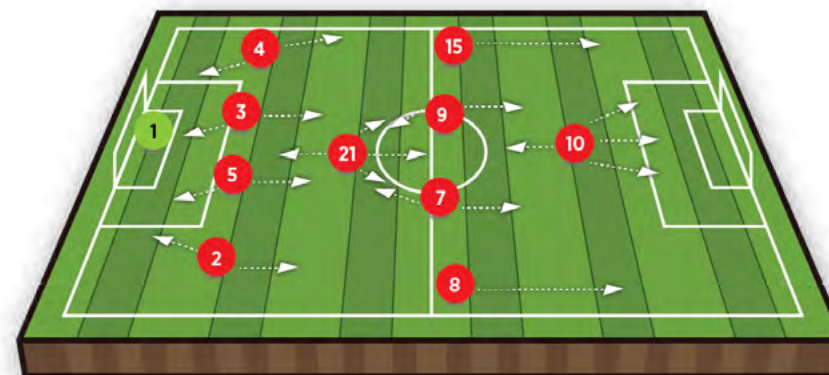


VIETNAM

Head Coach
Vu Ba Dong



JERSEY NO.	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	POSITION
1	TRAN THI HAI YEN	12-09-1998	Goal Keeper
2	BUI THANH THUY	17-07-1998	Defender
3	LUONG THI THU THUONG	01-05-2000	Defender
4	NGOC LE	24-02-1999	Defender
5	NGUYEN THI MINH ANH	21-02-1999	Defender
6	VO TUYEN	08-01-1999	Midfielder
7	TRUC HUONG	04-03-2000	Midfielder
8	HA THI NHAI	15-03-1998	Midfielder
9	BACH THU HIEN	23-07-1998	Forward
10	TUYET NGAN	10-02-2000	Forward
11	NGUYEN THI NGA	10-06-1999	Midfielder
12	NGUYEN THI THUY	17-01-2001	Forward
13	TRUONG T ANH NGUYET	31-01-1999	Forward
14	DINH THI THUY DUNG	25-08-1998	Midfielder
15	NGUYEN THI HOA	28-11-2000	Defender
16	NGUYEN THI XUAN DIEP	01-02-2000	Defender
17	NGOC GIAU	15-08-1999	Forward
18	DOAN THI NGOC PHUONG	01-02-1998	Goal Keeper
19	TRAN THI HAI LINH	08-06-2001	Midfielder
20	TRAN THI NGOC ANH	07-02-2000	Goal Keeper
21	CU THI HUYNH NHU	07-08-2000	Midfielder
22	NGUYEN THI LOAN	02-07-1998	Midfielder
23	NGUYEN THI NU	16-03-1999	Forward



Formation:

4-1-4-1

Defensive organisation:

4-1-4-1

Style of play:

Attack: 4-5-1 or 4-3-3

- Direct and long pass to the target striker and the other players follow up for the second ball
- Counterattack through direct long ball
- Combination play in the middle third follow by forward-diagonal pass behind

Defence:

- Compact defence in the middle third through holding midfielder cover behind
- Zonal and mixed defending in defensive third
- Isolated the ball carrier with 3 or 4 players to delay and block forward passing.

Transition:

Transition defence to attack was quick and often very direct with a long pass to the striker.

Mental strength:

Stay focused after laying back, positive playing attitude.

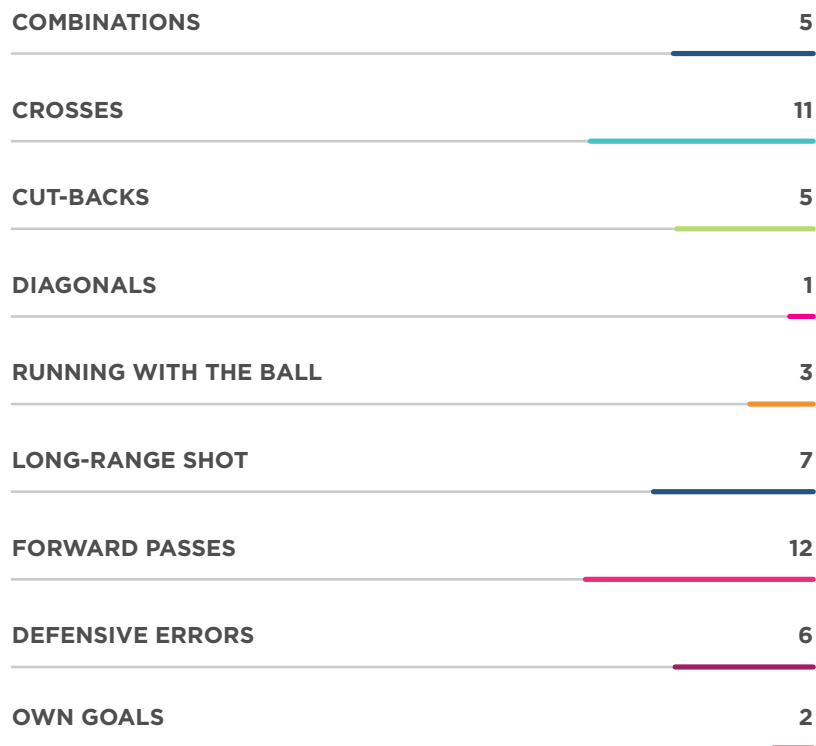
Key players:

#7, #10



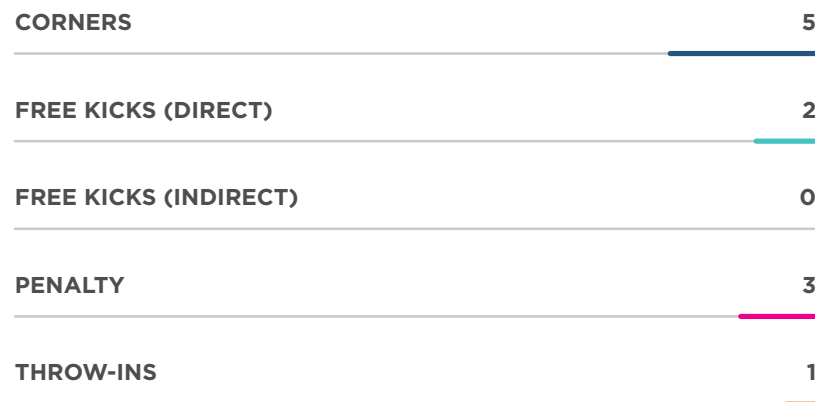
Goalscoring Analysis

82.5% of goals in the tournament were from open play



Total: 52 goals

17.5% of goals in the tournament were set plays



Total: 11 goals

Nearly two-thirds of the goals came from two teams: JAPAN AND DPR KOREA

Average 3.94 goals per game

- 23% of open play goals came from forward passes
- 21% of open play goals came from crosses

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TOP GOALSCORERS

NAME	JERSEY NO.	COUNTRY	GOALS	ASSIST
SUNG HYANG SIM	7	DPR KOREA	6	2
SAORI TAKARADA	11	JAPAN	5	2
REMY SIEMSEN	4	AUSTRALIA	3	4
RI HAE YON	10	DPR KOREA	3	1
KIM POM UI	9	DPR KOREA	3	0



SUNG HYANG SIM



SAORI TAKARADA



KIM POM UI



RI HAE YON



REMY SIEMSEN

Technical Trends

The final tournament in China was marked by the diversity of the eight teams' preparations. The contrasts were sharp. DPR Korea coach Thomas Gerstner had his squad together for five months, training mostly twice a day, six days per week. The hosts had four training camps with durations of 10-12 days (but were handicapped by not securing the release by their clubs of players born in 1998). The Thailand squad had four months of full-time environment and played 18 fixtures as one of the teams in the domestic league. Most played practice games against senior and/or boys teams. And yet the champions, Japan, had practically no preparation time as the domestic championship was still under way and assembled the squad barely eight days before the ball started rolling in China.

The pre-tournament parameters were echoed by a diversity in playing structures similar to the rich weave which had adorned the U-16 tournament played earlier in the year. Team shapes, however, had less relevance than the manners in which game plans were implemented. Hesterine de Reus, head coach of the China PR team which encountered both finalists along the pathway to a bronze medal and a FIFA World Cup place, commented after the group match against DPR Korea "we struggled with their speed and explosiveness. They were very mature in all positions and their speed was so high that my players had to solve situations they hadn't had to solve in previous games." In other words, the problems posed by the top teams stemmed from tempo and intensity rather than team structures.

However, the technical observers noted that, of the six member associations who had fielded teams at the U-16 final tournament, four adhered to the same structure at both levels. On the other hand, Thailand and Korea Republic switched from 1-4-1-2-3 to 1-4-1-4-1 and 1-4-4-2 respectively.



The latter team shape was the default setting adopted by the two finalists in China, along with Uzbekistan and, as previously mentioned, Korea Republic. Implementation, nevertheless, varied substantially. Uzbekistan, for example, were equipped to defend with individual marking and direct counterattacks as soon as the ball was won. Korea Republic played rapidly from the back into the middle third and, once possession in that area was assured, attacked with combination moves or long diagonal passes to the wide midfielders. Japan and DPR Korea also adopted neat combinations

as their preferred modus operandi, although the latter mixed their short passing with through balls and long diagonals into the areas behind the opposition's back line.

Thailand and Vietnam were the two teams who opted for the 1-4-1-4-1 structure, with both Nuengrutai Srathongvian and Vu Ba Dong admitting that defensive work had been the top priority during preparations for the final tournament. Both teams placed the emphasis on deep defending and direct counterattacking via passing to the lone striker, with the central midfielders pushing forward in support and the wide midfielders making themselves available to receive on the flanks.

China PR were alone in using the 1-4-2-3-1 shape and joined the 1-4-4-2 exponents in using two midfielders in screening roles ahead of the back four. They operated the system with rapid transitions to 1-4-3-3 attacking, with the wide players pushing high to attack the space behind the opposition's full-backs, often relying on long diagonal deliveries from central midfield. But, as Hesterine de Reus commented, "one of the strengths of the team was its flexibility and ability to play different systems". Korea Republic coach Jong Song-chong spoke in similar vein: "we focused on tactical flexibility, being equipped to adapt our playing system to meet the requirements imposed by different opponents."

Australia, although defending higher than Thailand and Vietnam, also operated with a single screening

midfielder. The emphasis was on exploiting the wide areas, with the wingers using their speed and both full-backs pushing forward to create overloads. Behind the players involved in the team's high-pressing strategy, there was an interesting mix of zonal and individual defending – the latter based on picking up an opponent and pursuing her until the move broke down.

Defensive tactics

Like Australia, the two finalists also pressed aggressively when opponents were trying to play out from wide areas at the back. “At the beginning we pressed well,”



said Australia coach Gary van Egmond after the group game against Japan. “We got some good outcome from that and made life difficult for them. But, for us, to sustain that level of pressing was very difficult. Fatigue crept in and Japan were able to come into the game.” Japan coach Futoshi Ikeda agreed. “In the first half, Australia pressed us hard and the players felt it.

But in the second half we improved against that sort of pressure and focused on the accuracy of our passing from the back.”

In general, ball-carriers were pressed hard while defensive blocks were being assembled. The main trend, however, was well-organised, disciplined, compact defending, with a narrow block encouraging opponents to play through the wide areas rather than look for routes through the more populated central areas. Even so, as the goalscoring analysis reveals, 23% of the open-play goals stemmed from through passes.

Attacking tactics

China, Japan, DPR Korea and Australia were the teams who focused on building through the thirds with short- and medium-distance passing moves. They used positional rotations with the objective of creating space to receive the ball in wide areas and the interior



corridors, with Japan especially adept at adjusting their off-the-ball movements in response to the positions of the ball, defenders and team-mates. “We had all-round players who could operate in different positions within the team,” said Japan coach Futoshi Ikeda, “and this gave us great flexibility in our playing system.”

Whereas Japan excelled in playing one-touch combinations in restricted spaces and short forward passes to players driving into attacking pockets, DPR Korea and China adopted a more vertical approach to their attacking play, working their way from midfield into the final third via diagonal passes into the areas behind the opposition's back line. DPR Korea coach Thomas Gerstner remarked “we worked on changing the habit of keeping the ball for the sake of retaining possession. The idea was that if we could play forward, we should play forward. And to play with speed while we were moving forward. We also focused on finishing in and around the box – being confident enough to take the ball first-touch. It was important not to want to stop the ball before shooting.”

Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Thailand relied more heavily on direct attacking based on long deliveries to the lone striker, with quick support from midfield. Dividends, however, were slim, with the trio scoring two goals apiece and returning home after the group stage.

Transition play

As the AFC technical observers noted, “all teams were quick in their defence-to-attack transitions, though Japan, DPR Korea and China PR were notably more purposeful in their transition play. This was one of

the keys to China's success in the play-off against Australia, as their transitions created a great many scoring opportunities or corners."

Apart from the two finalists, Uzbekistan impressed with their attack-to-defence transitional play, with immediate aggressive pressure on the ball to delay forward movement and one or two players closing-in to cut off short-passing options, disturb the opponents' build-up and, very often, regain possession in high areas.

Set plays

As the goalscoring analysis reveals, 17.5% of the tournament's goals were derived from set plays – a very low return in comparison with habitual balances of 25-30% in other competitions. What's more, three of the 11 goals were from the penalty spot. Corners produced five successes, although teams such as China PR and Japan often permuted short corners with long deliveries into the box, with a view to re-initiating a passing move and working into the interior corridors within the opponents' box. In general, the delivery of long corners offered room for improvement, while the timing of runs to connect with the delivery also frequently fell short of perfection.

Australia adopted the play of lining-up players in a straight line just short of the penalty spot, with players dispersing in different directions to confuse markers. The delivery however, was usually aimed at the area adjacent to the far post. All eight teams defended set plays with a mixture of zonal and individual marking.

The top four teams

Japan

The champions based their success on disciplined, well-organised defending, aggressive, compact pressing from midfield, ball-winning ability in 1 v 1 situations and great strength-in-depth on the bench in a squad of great versatility. Attacking was based on assured combination play and the technical ability to retain possession in tight situations. There were good links between the lines and plenty of 1 v 1 skills in the final third to supplement fluent combination play.

In terms of individuals, the outstanding prospects included :



#9 HINATA MIYAZAWA excellent solo skills to break through opposition lines; off-ball movements to drag defenders out of position; good defence-splitting passes and diagonals behind defensive line.

#10 FUKA NAGANO good attacking and defensive qualities; the stabilising element and key component in linking lines.

#19 RIKO UEKI strong dribbling, passing and finishing skills; fast and mobile with excellent off-the-ball movement; good anticipation skills and sense of timing.

DPR Korea

The silver-medallists entered the tournament with a winning mentality and rich ingredients for success: compact, disciplined defending; ball-winning ability based on immediate aggressive pressure after loss of possession; and solid links between team lines. Attacking was purposeful, based on a cocktail of direct forward passing and assured high-tempo ball circulation, allied with excellent off-the-ball movement. The influential individuals included:

#7 SUNG HYANG SIM good technique and positional flair in creating scoring situations; effective combinations with wide players and midfielders; hardworking in defence; ready to coach her team-mates.

#23 JU HYU SIM key component in ball-circulation; good reading of game and ability to link team lines; defence-splitting passes and determined, well-timed runs into opponents' box.

#9 KIM POM UI impressive movements to support attack and defence; good technique and ability to link combination moves.

China PR

The hosts had worked on skills, speed, agility and tactical flexibility during the run-up to the tournament, with four training camps designed to focus on defensive organisation, transition play, build-up from the back to

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the middle third and finishing skills. The result was a good all-round team which ticked a lot of technical and tactical boxes – and, in the meantime, won the fair play award. The players who caught the eye were:



#6 LIU JING good technical skills and ability to play the balancing role; sense of anticipation, good reading of the game, positional sense; the defence-to-attack catalyst, playing forward quickly.

#8 SHEN MENGYU ability to switch direction of attacks; high-tempo one- or two-touch play in midfield; good positional sense; hardworking in defensive play.

#7 WANG YANWEN good positioning and ball-winning in the defensive line or midfield; skilful catalyst in defence-to-attack transitions.

Australia

A creditable campaign by a team that came through the qualifying round, based on good athletic qualities,

spells of effective collective high pressing, constructive build-up play and counterattacking, neat combination play and excellent off-the-ball movement in attacking play which involved two adventurous full-backs. The key players were:



#2 ELLIE CARPENTER a captain with leadership qualities and fighting spirit; powerful in 1 v 1 situations; offered good cover for team-mates; very focused in box with good body-positioning.

#10 ALEXANDRA CHIDIAC skilful and mobile with quick feet; dangerous in final third.

#1 JADA MATHYSSEN calm, confident goalkeeping with good positioning and aerial ability; good ability with feet, dealing confidently with back passes, dribbling outside box, initiating build-up from the back.

All four teams operated a possession-based game but used the ball purposefully with vertically-orientated combination moves and defence-splitting forward passes. The two finalists were the teams capable of sustaining high-tempo ball circulation and posing constant problems to opponents by working between lines and drawing defenders to one side before switching play to the other. As DPR Korea coach Thomas Gerstner said after the final, “one shot, one goal, one is a winner, one is a loser. Congratulations to Japan because they played a nice final with nice passing and nice ball control. They had, most of the time, control of the match. But we weren’t bad...”



Talking Points

Changing opinions?

Results v player development is a permanent fixture on debating tables at this level. The tournament in China was no exception and the incentive of FIFA World Cup places argued forcefully for results to be prioritised. One of the many factors to enter into equations was the use made of 23-player squads during the final tournament. As the AFC technical observers pointed out, the final provided a graphic illustration of contrasting approaches.



Japan coach Futoshi Ikeda maintained “the whole squad is on the same level, so I select the players who are, in my opinion, in the best shape on the day.” The result of this philosophy was a constantly rotating starting line-up which, on average, registered half a dozen changes

from game to game. As China PR coach Hesterine de Reus commented after the group stage, “we could see how Japan rotated their players and most of the key performers didn’t play three matches. The other teams tended, more or less, to field their strongest teams. So I think Japan were more rested than the others when it came to the final stages of the tournament.”

By contrast to the champions’ approach, Thomas Gerstner, coach of silver-medallists DPR Korea, made a clear statement: “we didn’t change. In all our matches we went with the same starters. For our players it wasn’t a problem. Two days between matches gives them sufficient rest-and-recovery time.” In other words, his philosophy was to restrict changes to those enforced by injury.

Among the other coaches, the tournament schedule provoked a dilemma or two. Australia’s Gary van Egmond, for example, commented “we want to have players coming through and experiencing international football. But we wanted to qualify for the World Cup as well.” Marrying the two objectives was not always easy. “We had to go in with some fresh players because some of the squad had played all the previous games,” he said after the semi-final defeat by DPR Korea. “We knew that if we wanted to play the final, the best way was going to be to rest some players.”

Of the starters he selected against DPR Korea, six had previously played 10 minutes or less during the final



tournament. “We felt we had a complete squad,” he added, “and it was very important for us to stick to our principles – in other words, not only approaching the tournament from a results point of view but also respecting the player-development point of view.”

Had you been on one of the benches in China, which approach would you have adopted? In one sense, just being part of a final tournament represents valuable exposure on the international stage. But how important is it to share playing time around the squad at this point on the development pathway?

Bridging the gap

Most of the coaches in China expressed satisfaction with the eight-team format of the final tournament.

Only two would have embraced an expansion – on the basis that it would offer international experience to a wider range of member associations. Some would prefer the competition to be played on an annual basis (for the same reason) though footballing enthusiasm is tempered by organisational issues. The greater concern, however, is to enhance the competitive nature of the final tournament by helping teams to bridge the gap between themselves and the elite.

The technical observers felt that they had been witnesses to a three-tier tournament punctuated by 9-0 and 8-0 scorelines, plus a quartet of matches in which one team scored five. The diversity provoked a degree of self-examination. “We learned that our training and preparation weren’t enough,” Thailand coach Nuengrutal Srathongvian reflected. “We need to develop with more training and coaching for our players to be better in Asia.” Uzbekistan, competing at the final tournament for the fourth time, were applauded for an improvement provoked, their coach admitted, by a heavy defeat during their previous appearance. “After that unfortunate game,” said Bahrom Norsafarov, “we analysed everything – tactics, playing style...everything. We did a huge amount of work with a new group of players and that is why we have improved.”

Australia, who travelled all the way from the qualifying round to the bronze-medal match, provided another example of notable improvement. Even so, Gary van Egmond reflected “we have to work with our development pathway to produce better technical players and players with a better understanding of the game.” What more can be done to help more member associations to build ladders and climb the gaps between the current tiers?



Players to Watch

MATCH DAY 1



CHINA VS UZBEKISTAN
MVP: #6 LIU JING (CHN)

Defensive Midfielder: Moves the ball well in build-up phase. Good technique, good understanding of her role defensively and in attack. Circulates the ball well through the thirds.



DPR KOREA VS THAILAND
MVP: #7 SUNG HYANG SIM (DPRK)

Striker: Skilful, fast foot movement with or without ball; willing to go forward, determination for finishing.

MATCH DAY 2



JAPAN VS VIETNAM
MVP: #23 MIZUKA SATO (JPN)

Right Midfielder: Technically good on passing and dribbling. Excellent crosses with good timing / speed / feeling. Well-balanced to join in attack and defence, strong aerobic capacity.



KOREA REPUBLIC VS AUSTRALIA
MVP: #1 JADA MATHYSSEN (AUS)

Goalkeeper - Good saves in one-on-one situations, confident and calm, key game-saving moments.

MATCH DAY 3



THAILAND VS CHINA
MVP: #6 LIU JING (CHN)

Defensive Midfielder: Moves the ball well in build-up phase. Good technique, good understanding of her role defensively and in attack. Circulates the ball well through the thirds and creates goalscoring opportunities.



UZBEKISTAN VS DPR KOREA
MVP: #7 SUNG HYANG SIM (DPRK)

Striker: Skilful, fast foot movement with or without ball; willing to go forward, determination for finishing, links well with midfield and changes point of attack quickly.

MATCH DAY 4



VIETNAM VS KOREA REPUBLIC
MVP: #10 KIM SOUEN (KOR)

Striker: Target player with good strength on the ball to hold up play, good technique on the ball to create space for dribble, pass or shot. Times her runs into the box well and has a winning mentality in the final third.



AUSTRALIA VS JAPAN
MVP: #7 HONOKA HAYASHI (JPN)

Central Midfielder: Circulates the ball and changes direction quickly, excellent technique, links well with the lines, screens her back line. Scored the crucial second goal to boost team's confidence.

MATCH DAY 5



THAILAND VS UZBEKISTAN

MVP: #12 NUTWADEE PRAM-NAK (THA)

Central Midfielder: Technically good with the ball, playmaker with good balance in defending and attacking.



CHINA VS DPR KOREA

MVP: #23 JU HYU SIM (DPRK)

Central Midfielder: Links well with lines, reads play well and initiates good attacking moments moving the ball forward quickly and changing the direction of attacks.

MATCH DAY 6



JAPAN VS KOREA REPUBLIC

MVP: #8 YUI FUKUTA (JPN)

Central Midfielder: Good intelligent play, excellent technique, links well with lines and leads the line defensively and in attacks creates excellent moments to go forward and create scoring chances.



AUSTRALIA VS VIETNAM

MVP: #10 ALEXANDRA CHIDIAC (AUS)

Central Midfielder: Scored 3 goals, positive with the ball passing and running with the ball. Aggressive in the box. Good pressure and cover in transition to defence, as the team wants to win the ball as high as possible.

SEMI-FINALS



DPR KOREA VS AUSTRALIA

MVP: #7 SUNG HYANG SIM (DPRK)

Striker: Threatening forward runs, good link up play with midfield and second striker. Good attacking in one-on-one situations and worked hard when defending from the front. Ability to anticipate and time forward runs/passes to create opportunities in front of goal. Excellent ability to finish on goal scoring two goals from open play.



JAPAN VS CHINA

MVP: #9 HINATA MIAZAWA (JPN)

Left Midfielder: Excellent technique on and off the ball. Excellent support play and ability to play decisive forward passes into the runs of the strikers and timed her runs into the box to score from great build-up play.

3rd / 4th PLACE



CHINA VS AUSTRALIA

MVP: #10 ZHAO YUJIE (CHN)

Striker: Key player in the attacking third creating many opportunities for her team mates. Her ability to switch positions with the attacking midfielder created space for her team mates to attack the goal. Good individual technique to drive at defenders.

FINAL



JAPAN VS DPR KOREA

MVP: #19 RIKO UEKI (JPN)

Striker: Scored the only goal of the game giving Japan the title of Asian Champions. Excellent individual technique with great attacking ability in 1v1 moments, read the game well and provided key passes into the box creating goalscoring opportunities.

MVP OF THE TOURNAMENT



#7 SUNG HYANG SIM (DPRK)

Striker: Key player for DPR Korea, consistently performed at the highest level throughout the tournament. Played every minute of every game and created excellent opportunities. Finished the tournament with six goals and two assists earning her the Golden Boot award. She led her team's front line in attack but also worked extremely hard in defence, isolating her opponent for her team mates to win possession and transition to attack.

Coaches' Talking Points



Regional international club competitions for women's senior National Leagues

To develop more interest in club football and to increase the number of Under-20 players who stay in the game and in turn create more motivation for them, a discussion has developed among coaches around an international club competition for Senior Women's Football in the five regions of AFC, utilising the regional federations. It was agreed that the main issue would be costs as club football has very little financial support in the women's game and most clubs are self-funding.

Create yearly youth AFC Women's Competitions

The aim would be to create annual youth competitions where qualifiers are held at the beginning of the year

and finals at the end thus allowing for youth teams from all Member Associations to participate in international competitions yearly. This will help keep the pathway for players to stay in elite environments and continue their development to becoming senior players. The players will be able to move into the next age group seamlessly instead of the even odd years for age group competitions. For example, 2001 born players for U-16 (2017) and 1998 born players for U-19 (2017). The problem in some MA's is that the Elite Player development pathway stops at U-17 level and after this age group players return to club football where the standard of coaching and consistency of training decreases significantly, especially in MAs where the National Women's League lasts less than four months or the standard is not very high. If there are more consistent competitions for this age group then

the MA will create consistent programs for the U-19 age group domestically.

Create a Coaches Forum with the Head Coaches participating at final tournament

The idea to create a one-day coaching forum/workshop for Coaches who are participating in the final tournament was suggested. This forum can be conducted on a designated day in the morning/afternoon/evening within the tournament as now two rest days are scheduled. The objective of the forum/workshop is for coaches from different MAs to discuss and share information on player development programmes, Coach Education programmes and any other aspects which could help all MAs to develop the game further.

Referees

REFEREES	COUNTRY
KATHERINE MARGARET JACEWICZ	AUS
QIN LIANG	CHN
MI SIYU	CHN
FUSAKO KAJIYAMA	JPN
HYANG OK RI	PRK
HYEON JEONG OH	KOR
THEIN THEIN AYE	MYA
ANNA SIDOROVA	UZB

ASSISTANT REFEREES	COUNTRY
RENAE LEE COGHILL	AUS
BAO MENGXIAO	CHN
FANG YAN	CHN
UVENA FERNANDES	IND
ENSIEH KHABAZ MAFI NAZHAD	IRN
NAOMI TESHIROGI	JPN
MAIKO HAGIO	JPN
KYOUNG MIN KIM	KOR
KUM NYO HONG	PRK
ZILOLA RAHMATOVA	UZB



Extra-time

Coaches' Interviews

GROUP A

CHINA PR VS UZBEKISTAN

Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR



"Of course I am happy with the result because a win is a win. Uzbekistan made it really difficult for us and they created a lot of trouble, so I'm not happy the performance, but it's a big compliment for Uzbekistan that their defending made it so hard for our players. Too many times we lost the ball too easily. Uzbekistan did one on one marking and many times they won that situation. I substituted number 10 and 19 because they can do better. I think they underperformed, a lot."

Bahrom Norsafarov, Head Coach, Uzbekistan

"I am happy with our game today. I can say, the match was actually 50-50. We could score and they could

score, but in football you have to have a bit of luck. We weren't lucky today – that's why we couldn't score. We conceded a goal we didn't expect. Luck wasn't on our side. After that unlucky game (where China PR beat Uzbekistan 9-0) two years ago, we analysed everything. Tactics, how to play, everything. We made selections of new players and did a huge amount of work to prepare. That's why we have improved so much."

DPR KOREA VS THAILAND

Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea



"I expected it to be more difficult in the first half but we scored. I expected Thailand to play more defensive but after the first goal it was easier for us. I expected the win and it was nice to see. I started five months ago with my training, but I knew that the players already

had experience. That is very important for us and today we saw these (experienced) players were very good."

Nuengrutai Srathongvian: Head Coach, Thailand

"We learned that our training and preparation weren't enough. We have to develop with more training and coaching for our players to be better in Asia. For this match, our players aren't upset. Our players enjoyed the challenge against DPR Korea. For the next match they will prepare with more training and more meetings, because the next match is against the host (China PR). We have already studied both teams (China PR and Uzbekistan) and both teams have their strengths."

GROUP B

AUSTRALIA VS KOREA REPUBLIC

Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia

"It's a great result. Of course in any tournament you want to start off positively, and that's what's happened. Performance wise; we have played better, but I think the opposition made it very difficult for us to play the way we want to play. They were very skillful and had some great technicians, but defensively we were solid, and our goalkeeper (Mathyssen) made some crucial saves. We took our chances – we knew we would get chances, and we were able to bury them. (Our three senior internationals) were absolutely outstanding and showed great leadership - Ellie (Carpenter) in particular, she still has room for improvement but you could see her class."

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Jong Song-chon: Head Coach, Korea Republic

"We had many chances to score a goal in both the first half and the second half but we couldn't score, and that's the reason why we lost today. We have two matches left – against Vietnam and Japan – so I will ask our players to recover and we will do our best to qualify."

JAPAN VS VIETNAM**Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan**

"I think the performance is in line with our expectations. I am happy with the performance. The whole (23-player) squad are on the same level, so I chose the players with the best condition tonight. Both us and Australia now have three points, so the winners of the next match will have six points, which will be a very important match."

**Vu Ba Dong: Head Coach, Vietnam**

"I'm pleased with the performance of my players, because they stayed with Japan to the end of the match and, as you know, Japan are a very strong team. They are among the top teams in the FIFA rankings, and we learned a lot from their players. That's the most important thing. It's a good opportunity for my players to learn from a match against a stronger team."

GROUP A**CHINA PR VS THAILAND****Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR**

"Of course it was an important match, because winning means you qualify for the next round and that's what we did. We scored two goals, and we wanted to score more. I think Thailand did a good job. At times they defended close to the goal and they had some good counter-attacks. They played much better than in their opening match, maybe having the striker (Kanyanat) available made a difference, but I am happy with the win. To score goals, you need players in the right positions, which didn't happen today. I saw the players worked really hard today and tried their best to have a good performance."

**Nuengrutai Srathongvian: Head Coach, Thailand**

"For this game, it was one of the fun games. We improved in our training from the last game. We feel sorry that we lost a goal to an own goal. In the second half we improved our play but China are still one of the stronger teams. Compared to the match with DPR Korea – we watched the match and worked on our mistakes. Kanyanat was the main player of our team

and it was good to have her back. It improved the game for our team."

DPR KOREA VS UZBEKISTAN**Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea**

"We won the match, so any coach would be happy, but we didn't play well today. First, the opponents did it well. We knew before the match they would do it like this but we had bad passing today – it was not like the passing against Thailand, but okay – we have a victory and that's what's important. It's normal to learn from each match, maybe our opponents will learn from this, but we will also learn from them, and next time we'll play like we can play."

Bahrom Norsafarov, Head Coach, Uzbekistan

"I am really proud of my girls because they played a very good game and I am happy with what they showed. What I can say is, this team (DPR Korea) showed their class and showed why they are champions of the world and we saw their strength. As I said yesterday, we wanted our key players to show their skills and lead the rest of the team and they did that. Last time we played DPR Korea (at senior level in April) we lost 4-0, this time we played very well and only lost 2-0, so it's not a bad result. You can see that we have improved by the result."

GROUP B**JAPAN VS AUSTRALIA****Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan**

"In the first half Australia pressured us, and the players felt it, but in the second half we improved against their pressure. So overall, my assessment of the performance is that it was very good. At halftime my message was three things: be confident, be quicker, and focus on the accuracy of your passes. (Riko Ueki) always, always gives her best. She is that kind of player. You can see that she is a very hardworking player. I hope she will continue to develop further and further in this tournament."

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Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia

"In the beginning we obviously pressed well and we got some outcome from that and we made it difficult for them, but for us to be able to sustain that was very difficult, and Japan started to come into the game as the first half wore on and we obviously fatigued a bit more and was more difficult to keep that form. From a competition level, we just weren't used to a team play like that, but you take your hat off to the way they play, and full credit to them. It's great for our players to play against such an opposition to see what can be achieved from that age group, and for a lot of these girls, they're in the W-League teams, but now they see the standard in Japan and internationally is a lot higher."

GROUP A**CHINA PR VS DPR KOREA****Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR**

"I think DPR Korea are one of the strongest teams in the competition and they play at very high speed. We started quite well but conceded an early goal and struggled with their speed and explosiveness, but we adjusted quite well, so in the end I'm happy with how they adjusted to the speed of the game. DPR are very mature in all positions. Directly from the kick-off you could see that our players were really eager to play at high speed and make something good in the game. Because the speed was so high they had to solve situations they hadn't had to solve in previous games. There were many things they could learn in this game so I think that's our benefit to take from this game."

Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea

"For this game, it was one of the fun games. We improved in our training from the last game. We feel sorry that we lost a goal to an own goal. In the second half we improved our play but China are still one of the stronger teams. Compared to the match with DPR Korea – we watched

the match and worked on our mistakes. Kanyanat was the main player of our team and it was good to have her back. It improved the game for our team."

GROUP B**JAPAN VS KOREA REPUBLIC****Jong Song-chon: Head Coach, Korea Republic**

"We've qualified for the (U-20 Women's) World Cup since 2010, and this year we prepared a lot and the players did their best. We were in a group with some of the strongest teams in Asia and I congratulate them for qualifying for the knockout stage. After the second



match we focused on the recovery of our players and at half time I ordered the players to attack and try to score so we could qualify, but it wasn't to be. We competed with Australia, Japan and Vietnam. Australia and Japan showed outstanding performances, Vietnam are rapidly developing as well – so I think we need to develop more to achieve our goals in the future."

Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan

"Before the match we tried to think about Korea's formation and qualities. I told the players to think for

themselves. Anyone can play any match (in this team), so I choose the players in the best condition. We are good at finding the gaps in the defence. We are often able to locate the weakest defender. We played against China last month and it was a draw. China have good wide players and we'll have to take care of them. When we played against China last month, I had a strong impression from their number 21 – Zhi Jie."

AUSTRALIA VS VIETNAM**Alexandra Chidiac: Australia's hat-trick hero**

"It wasn't our best performance but we're happy to get the win and go through to the semi-finals. We know it will be a tough game (against World U-17 and U-20 champions DPR Korea) but we want to win the tournament and you need to beat the best and they're the best. The three goals are for my mum, my family and my grandma."

**Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia**

"The result was terrific, obviously we needed to win. The performance – I think we can improve on that. I think the girls were a little bit nervous knowing how much there was at stake, and ensuring that we had to win the

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game. The bulk of the team have played all three games now, so they'll welcome the rest ahead of the semi-finals. (Japan and Korea Republic) are powerhouses in women's football – particularly youth football, so for us to get ourselves in a position where we have a shot at the World Cup is terrific. We know (DPR Korea) are a very very strong outfit and they've done very well historically. They're very strong, physically fit and well organised and we know its going to be a difficult game, but (Australia are) a real resilient group, and I wouldn't put anything past them. We will draw some inspiration from the Matildas. We want to have players coming through and experiencing international football – all of these factors are very important. We'll be doing everything to qualify for this World Cup.

BEFORE SEMI-FINALS

Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR

"Of course playing in a world Cup is fantastic for players," said the former head coach of Australia and Jordan's women's national teams.

"That's a great opportunity to further your talent because all the matches there are at a really high level - but to play there, you first have to win a ticket, so we're not focusing on the ticket, we're focusing on the next match and that match is against Japan.

"Football is all about playing to win, but we also realise it's a very difficult job because Japan is a very strong team in this tournament.

"Our players play in youth leagues, so it's a big, big, big step up to play against one of the top nations, but that's also a challenge and an opportunity to learn from this tournament."

"Yes, we have had an extra day but you could see that Japan rotated their players and most of their best

players didn't play three matches," she said.

"All the other teams, more or less, played their strongest teams, so I think Japan are more rested than all the other teams."

Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan

Former Urawa Reds defender Ikeda, who rates the Chinese team's technical qualities highly, said the extension of his squad's competition into a second week will provide long term benefits to his players.

"First of all, I'm happy that we won our first three matches and qualified for the semi finals," he said.

"The players can now play five matches in this tournament, and they will take away precious experiences."

Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea

"In total we had three nice matches and (my players) did many things well, but this is history," said the former Arminia Bielefeld manager.

"I don't prefer to talk about the past. I want to speak about the future, and the future is one match tomorrow against a strong opponent.

"We saw (Australia) three times. We analysed them. My team will be very prepared as usual.

"Three victories in the group stage was nice, but it's nothing now. Like them, we start at zero."

DPR Korea – who currently hold world titles in both the U-17 and U-20 women's categories – have been highly impressive thus far, winning all three matches, and scoring 13 goals without conceding any at the other end.

Understandably, relative newcomer Gerstner says he inherited a team playing at a high level, but says he has been able to leave his mark on the team's playing style.

"When I arrived in April, the team was already strong," he said.

"I think my experience as a professional coach in professional clubs in Germany and Austria will help them.

"On the pitch, you can see we have changed. We are playing faster, we are playing more forward, so I think that is one of the reason why it looks very nice, and they improved and increased their physical condition as well."

Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia

"We know that to get to this stage, all the teams are very, very good," said van Egmond, who led Newcastle Jets to their only AFC Champions League Appearance in 2009.

"We've seen (DPR Korea) three times and they have been very impressive. We're under no illusions, but you never know what occurs in games.



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"It would be the first time to qualify (for the semi-finals) in 12 years, and this group is very committed. They're looking forward to the challenge, they want to be challenged by the best teams, and it's fantastic that we're in this semi final.

"It's not every day do you get the opportunity to go to a World Cup, so our players will be working extremely hard to try and earn this," he closed.

"Australia has definitely risen in women's football over the last couple of years," he said.

"From the (2015 Women's) World Cup, where we qualified in Canada, to qualifying in the Olympics for the first time in a long time, and the rankings - they're going higher.

"We had a number of younger players, who got exposure very early to World Cups - in Germany (2011) for example - so a number of young girls got experience very early and it has led to our national team becoming stronger.

"Our style has also changed, we've become a lot more proactive, which, from our culture and the way that we are as people, is very natural to us," he said, adding that he believes his players are becoming more comfortable as the tournament goes on.

DPR Korea have won all four of their matches against Australia in AFC U-19 Women's Championship history, recording a 6-2 triumph in their last meeting four years ago.

With the odds seemingly stacked against them, van Egmond called on his players to show courage.

"We need to be brave, we need to play with no fear. We know that we're against a strong opponent and we embrace that."

"We know that we have to continue being brave to give ourselves the best chance of winning."

AFTER SEMI-FINALS

Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea

"We had a nice result so we are in the final. In the first half the players played very well. The high pressure put the Australians in trouble many times. The Australians did what they can do. They fight, they run, but it was not enough to beat us. We were sure that we would win this match, and I'm very impressed because my players did exactly what I told them. If they do this in the final that will be okay also. I looked at the (Australian) start list, but I had no reaction, because we know they play with a 4-1-4-1. The players aren't of interest, the system of interest. I would prefer Thailand in the final (not Japan or China). Both Japan and China are strong teams, and the best team will win. We have our strategy, and we will have a look at the opponent, and the best team will win."

Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia

"We knew it would be a difficult match. We had to go in with some fresh players because we have some who had played the last three games. Full credit to (DPR) Korea, they deserved to win. We created a couple of chances, but overall they were the better side. We knew before this game, we had to play two games - and if we were to make the final the best way would have been by resting players. Now we have a situation where we have been able to rest a number of players for the next game. We feel very well prepared from a complete squad. It's very important for us to keep to our principles, not only from a result point of view but from a player development point of view. We didn't do it exactly how we wanted to do it, but there were times when we did get it right. We'll keep to our principles.

We know that's how we want to play football, and we'll keep on working on getting better at how we execute and put those principles into play."

Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan

"First of all, I am pleased that we proceeded to the final and got the ticket for the World Cup. I requested for the players to be quick in switching between attack and defence before the tournament. I always choose the players who are in the best condition. We continued our passing football and that's why we were able to get many goals in the second half."

Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR

"I think China started really well in the first half. We created some danger, and of course we also had some difficulties on our right side. After half-time we conceded two quick goals and that broke the spirit a bit, so the second half was not as good as the first half. Tomorrow is time to recover. Recover our bodies and recover emotionally. The eagerness to play a good game next time will be stronger than the disappointment of this game. It's not too difficult to leave this game behind and focus on the next one. The aim in this tournament is to win the ticket for the World Cup and that is still possible."

BEFORE FINAL

Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia

"I think China are a very good team," he said. "They're well prepared, and a very dangerous team with some fast players."

"I think it'll be a close match. I don't think it'll be like the scores from the semi-finals. We're pretty evenly matched in a lot of ways, so we're really looking forward to the challenge and the contest.

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"Both teams know what's on the line – the possibility of a World Cup berth, and both teams won't leave anything in doubt."

Unbeaten DPR Korea handed Australia a 3-0 loss in their semi-final, with the Aussies making eight changes to the line-up from their previous match, a 5-2 win over Vietnam.

Of Australia's 11 starters against DPR Korea, six had featured for 10 minutes of game time or less in the tournament, but van Egmond explained the logic behind the decision.

"The main objective for me was looking for what would be the best way to win the game, and the best way was having fresh players," he said.

"And we've now given minutes in this tournament to everyone, so anyone who comes in is really well prepared to do the job against China."

While those personnel changes made life difficult against DPR Korea, it now means a number of Australia's key players – including all four of their goal scorers in Nanjing – are rested and ready for the crucial clash with the hosts.

Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR

China head coach Hesterine de Reus, who relied on more familiar faces in her team's semi-final, believes Australia's squad rotation could also have an adverse effect.

"Resting your players can work out to be positive or negative, because by doing it you can break the rhythm," she said.

"My team had an extra (game to) practice, so yes, they had a little extra rest, but you never know how that will work out."

The experienced de Reus has ample knowledge of the Australian game.

She was the senior national team's head coach until April 2014, even coaching van Egmond's daughter – star midfielder Emily – during her 14-month tenure, and she sees some recognisable qualities in the Young Matildas class of 2017.

"I think their playing style is developing, so they've changed their style a little bit," she said.

"It's now more players going forward, but it's the same attitude, the same desire to win, so it will be tough opponents.

"They are – in a positive way – aggressive. They play very fast forward, and they are maybe similar to Uzbekistan (who China beat 2-0) in that they are very tough in defending."

Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan

"The players don't have any extra motivation just because we are playing against DPR Korea," he said.

"They are motivated by winning the competition, and not anything else."

Ikeda, who believes all of his players have the potential to play senior international football, spoke having just overseen a training session full of laughter and excitement, something he believes is an important side of his team's mental preparation.

"We always have fun and keep a positive mood. I want the players to feel strong and have confidence on the pitch," he explained,

Positivity and confidence haven't been an issue for Japan so far in Nanjing, racking up 20 goals, spread across 10 different players, in their four matches.

But the Young Nadeshiko, who have scored 85 per cent of those goals in the second half of matches, will face a new challenge in the shape of a DPR Korea side renowned for their physical fitness,

"I requested that players enforced their physical strengths, but we haven't done any special physical training. There's no advantage," he said

"They have a German head coach, but as far as their approach, they still play with the same style, and they are still very strong physically."

Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea

The head coach to whom Ikeda refers, former Bundesliga defender Thomas Gerstner, agrees that neither side have a physical advantage, despite their vastly different approaches to squad rotation.

"I don't know if we are much better prepared, but we are well prepared and so are Japan," he said.

"In all their matches they changed players. We didn't change. In all our matches we went with the same starters.

"For our players it's not a problem. If we have two days between matches they will do it like they did when we had three days."

Gerstner said he had been impressed by Japan, both before and during this tournament, but felt their semi-final thrashing of China was to be taken with a grain of salt.

"Last year in the U-17 (Women's) World Cup final they were the stronger team. They had a nice performance there and normally they have to win this final, but they didn't score," he said.

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"We know that they are strong and many of the players from that game are here also, like us, so I was not surprised (at their quality).

"They had a nice performance against China, but you have to see the opponents. China were not as strong as they can be."

But Gerstner - who was non-committal on the playing availability of key attacking cog Kim Pom-ui who was stretchered off against Australia, believes it is his side's defensive strength that could decide the match.

"It will be a nice match, because both teams have nice attacking and we will see who has the better defending. I expect a very, very interesting match.," he said.

AFTER 3/4TH

Hesterine de Reus: Head Coach, China PR

"Of course everybody's very happy, especially the players. I'm very proud of them because they were tired, and everyone can see they were tired, but they stuck together, played together and produced a great effort to show everybody that they really wanted to secure the ticket to the World Cup. We spoke about mentality, because everybody knows its quality in Australia to never say die. My players came to the field with a great mentality and equalised in that aspect. I think all the players in my team have talent and potential, and if they play more football and more competitions they can reach a higher level, and be on the level of DPR Korea and Japan."

Gary van Egmond: Head Coach, Australia

"In regards to today, I think the occasion was probably too much for our girls. I think they overthought it a bit, and we probably left it to the last game to give our worst performance. We have to work with our

development pathway to produce better technical players and players with better understanding. In the first half we struggled to string two passes together, and when you play the game we want to play - which is based on keeping the ball - this becomes a big issue. I'm extremely proud of the girls' effort throughout the tournament, but today was too big a step, and I'd really like to congratulate China on their win."

AFTER FINAL

Futoshi Ikeda: Head Coach, Japan

"I congratulate my players, they played very hard. At half time I told the players I wanted them to continue what they were doing and be confident going into the second half. DPR Korea are strong and they have many great players. We will be prepared for the World Cup. The players didn't mind that we were playing against DPR Korea - the only thing that mattered was to win the game and to win the tournament. We became champions of Asia, so the players now have an experience of a great success.

Thomas Gerstner: Head Coach, DPR Korea

"First, congratulations to Japan. They played a nice final. Nice passing and nice ball control and they had - most of the time - the match control. One shot, one goal, one is a winner, one a loser. We weren't bad. The girls fought all the time. In added time we were close to scoring and we would have been back in business, but we didn't score. After the match we can say what happened and talk about the ifs. Yes, we had some injuries and we could find many excuses if we want to, but we don't need to. We have two players going to the hospital who cannot walk, but this is football, sometimes it happens. When we get back we will check what we will do in the next week and the team will meet and train in November and December after some rest. This we will discuss when we get to Pyongyang."



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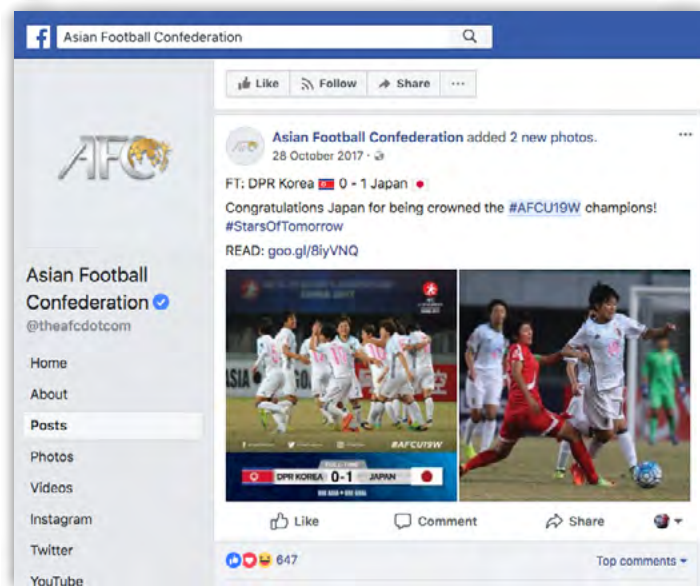
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impressions

WEIBO

174,000
impressions

WEB

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