

Olympic Hockey Qualifier Women, Manukau, Auckland

Match 1
Friday 19 March 2004

Japan 6 - 1 Russia

Tomoni Komori	FG 8m	Marina Chegurdaeva	PC 38m
Sakae Morimoto	FG 30m		
	FG 52m		
Kaori Chiba	FG 34m		
Rika Komazawa	FG 48m		
Naoko Saito	FG 53m		

Match Summary

A dominant Japan had little trouble in their first match of the tournament, with superior skills and a number of Russian defensive turnovers contributing to the heavy scoreline. Japan's assured play and Russian mistakes in the first half allowed them to build a heavy lead as they controlled the match tempo, possession and field position. Although Japan struggled to find their fluency for most of the second 35 minutes, they cruised to a confidence-boosting first win with a hat trick of quick goals midway through the half.

Russia's willingness to stack players behind the ball made it difficult to counter attack and allowed the Japanese defence time to align their structure. Most of Russia's scoring chances came via penalty corners and with only one successfully converted, they were unable to put scoreboard pressure on Japan in the second half.

Quotes

"The physical condition of our players is very high and that gave us confidence. We expected to win today, but not by such a large margin. On the type of pitch: "The turf is very different to the pitches in JPN. We are still getting used to it."

On USA (next game): "They are a very fit team with high stamina. We will have to work very hard. Also, we will need to play very well in our midfield and allow no intercepts if we are to win the game."

Zenjiro Yasuda, JPN Manager

"We came here with high expectations. We are very disappointed with this match. Our main task (in the tournament) is to qualify (for the Olympics). This is the main objective and task number one. Where we finish in the tournament is secondary to actually making the Olympics."

On ESP (next game): "We will try our best to win. We will always do this. The Spanish team is the best team in our pool, so we will need to improve our defence."

Leonid Penchuk, RUS Manager

Stats

0 from 3	Penalty corners	1 from 5
0 from 0	Penalty strokes	0 from 0
6 from 14	Field goal shots	0 from 3

Penalty cards

Nil Nil

Next match

v USA
Saturday 20 March – 12pm

v Spain
Saturday 20 March – 5pm