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Olympic Hockey Qualifier Women, Manukau, Auckland

Match 16

Tuesday 23 March 2004

Great Britain 1 - 0 Ukraine

Anna Bennett

FG 53m

Match Summary

Despite the brilliance of Ukraine captain Tetyana Kobzenko, Great Britain squeezed past Ukraine to remain in third position in Pool A, but within striking distance of the top two teams entering the final preliminary day's play. The Ukrainian captain produced the most breath taking individual display of the tournament to keep her side in the match until fulltime and divert attention away from the importance of the result for Great Britain. So dominant was Kobzenko that the crowd applauded every pass she made and every player she eliminated towards the end of match as Ukraine found the energy to mount a final desperate assault. Once again, Ukraine played with determination and resolve but couldn't score the goal that would have given it a deserved point. They will now play Russia on Saturday for the wooden spoon, but given a fraction more luck and poise in front of the net, would have been pushing the top teams for the automatic qualifying spot.

Great Britain needs to defeat Ireland tomorrow that hope either New Zealand or Germany suffers a multiple-goal loss in their clash to sneak into the automatic qualifying positions.

Quotes

"It was a very unconvincing performance. We've been there before with teams like Ukraine. Like New Zealand the other day you have to be patient with these teams. We talked about being patient and passing the ball. We needed to be composed and consistent for 50-60 minutes and before wearing them down. We did our best to keep Ukraine in the tournament. We will forget this game and have to lift our performance against Ireland."

On Kobzenko: "She is absolutely world class. She is the heart and soul of the Ukraine team."

Tricia Heberle, GBR Coach

"I am very happy with the way we played. GB has a higher level and is more experienced. We are still a young team and have many things to learn.

There has been a huge improvement and the skills gap has reduced. We are playing better. If we had 18 players the results would have been different. Two players who couldn't come are two of the best but had personal reasons for not coming and we have financial problems. There are only two hockey fields in the country and one was only opened last year. There are only six hockey clubs in the country."

Tetyana Zhuk, UKR Coach

Stats

0 from 5	Penalty corners	0 from 2
0 from 0	Penalty strokes	0 from 0
1 from 5	Field goal shots	0 from 2

Penalty cards

Nil Nil

Next match

v NZL
Wednesday 24 March – 7pm

v RUS
Saturday 27 March – 9am