

BUDDHA'S BLOG

Hey everyone,

This is the fourth instalment of Buddha's Blog.

The tournament has finally begun with a few upset results along the way. In pool B there was a major upset on the first day of the tournament with England beating Aussie 3-2. Aussie had 12 penalty corners and could only convert one of them from a scrappy rebound where in contrast England scored 2 from 3 corners.

I believe the teams with a high success rate on corners will do really well at this tournament.

The first game of the tournament was a predicted win for Spain 4-2 over South Africa and a 4-1 win for India over Pakistan in the match of the day.

This game was one of the best spectacles of Hockey I have ever seen. Not so much for the Hockey itself but for the occasion. In sport there are few rivalries that can match an Indian vs. Pakistan game. NZ vs. Aussie would be a close 2nd, but it still wouldn't match the passion that this match provided as one of the first games of the World Cup and to be in India made it even more special.

Some of the players were too over zealous with one Indian getting suspended for 3 games for smacking a Pakistani player in the head and a Pakistani player got suspended for cheating, as he used non-regulation defending gloves on a corner.

The stadium can hold an estimated 16,000 people and had probably around 14,000 for this match. It was hands down the loudest sporting game I have ever been to and I have been to Soccer matches in Europe with 60,000+ people.

Every time an Indian player defeated a Pakistani or anyone of the Indians crossed the 25 metre line then a unanimous roar went up from the boisterous crowd. So you can imagine what it was like when India scored in every one of their 4 goals.

If you copy the link below into a URL then you will see a video that Phil Burrows uploaded onto youtube of India scoring a goal.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZCDqgYmxvw>

On to our pool (POOL A), we started things off against Canada in a tough first up match. Canada are always really tough to play especially first up in a major tournament as they play a very conservative, aggressive and somewhat negative style of Hockey. They followed 2 of our best players (Phil & Ryan) around the park like a bad smell for the full 70 minutes.



START OF THE MATCH NZ vs. CANADA

We started off extremely poorly with Canada getting an opportunist goal inside the first 30 seconds of the match. We scored against the run of play from a Phil Burrows intercept to set up Pee Wee Bhana to get our World Cup campaign under way.

Again we were a bit slow to react to a Canada long ball and they were quick to capitalise on some poor defence. Canada took a 2-1 lead into half time.



THE LEAD UP TO CANADA'S 2ND GOAL

Half-time came as a bit of a wake up call to us as we were down 2-1 and we really needed to push hard to try and get the 3pts out of this game. We started to apply a lot more pressure on Canada at the back and they gave away a lot of possession mainly through poorly directed overheads.

From this we were able to earn a corner where Andy Hayward did the German corner where you place the ball 90 degrees to your left and someone flicks the ball at the corner. It worked to perfection with Nick Hagar Haig sliding the ball past the keeper.

It took us right up until the last 5 minutes before we could get the winner. Ryan Scratcher Archibald absolutely smoked the ball high into the roof of the net past the keeper.



CANADA'S AGGRESSIVE TACTICS ON HAGAR

We took a lot out of this game in terms of where we need to be to get better results. We need to again start better, control the ball for longer periods of time and work collectively on attack to create clear cut chances.

We play the Netherlands tomorrow who beat Argentina 3-0 from 3 from 3 Taeke Takaema drag-flicks. The other game in our pool was played between Germany and Korea in a 2 all draw.

Both of the pools are below which I will update with each new Blog.

Cheers Shea

Men - Pool A							
Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
 Netherlands	1	1	0	0	3	0	3
 New Zealand	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
 Germany	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
 Korea	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
 Canada	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
 Argentina	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Men - Pool B							
Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
 India	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
 Spain	1	1	0	0	4	2	3
 England	1	1	0	0	3	2	3
 Australia	1	0	0	1	2	3	0
 South Africa	1	0	0	1	2	4	0
 Pakistan	1	0	0	1	1	4	0