



# Classy Brazil eliminates defending champion

By QIU QUANLIN  
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Two-time champion Ukraine failed to advance to the quarterfinals of the men's soccer competition at the Universiade after losing to Brazil in the last Group B match yesterday.

Ukraine won the 2007 and 2009 Universiade tournaments by beating Italy twice in those finals.

Before the 2-1 loss to Brazil, the European team had defeated Malaysia 2-1 in its Group B opening match but was then beaten by Russia 1-0 on Sunday.

Ukraine midfielder Dmytro Leonov scored a goal in the 15th minute, but Brazil striker Jefferson Berger came on and equalized in the 47th minute.

Berger's solo effort in the 83rd minute sealed the game for Brazil.

After the loss, the players and head coach of Ukraine refused to comment on the game.

"I am sorry," said coach Volodymyr Lozynskyi, looking very upset at the mixed zone as the team left the Shenzhen Stadium.

Brazil has never won a gold medal in men's Universiade soccer, with its best performance being a bronze in 1999 in Spain.

Brazil head coach Sergio Figueiredo said his team has expectations beyond the victory over Ukraine.

"This time in Shenzhen, we will reach the final. We have a chance to win the final," Figueiredo said.

The coach said the suspension of Ukraine midfielder Valerii Blazhko in the 42nd minute had helped Brazil.

"The suspension of the Ukrainian player made our job easier today," he said. "You know, we have one more player on the pitch. But it is our players' determination and skills that helped us to win the game."

The match started an hour after torrential rain at Shenzhen Stadium.

"It was not so good. The pitch was slippery and wet, which exhausted my boys. But the weather conditions suited us more than Ukraine."

Striker Berger, 24, who plays for a professional club in Brazil, also said the team had high expectations.

"The game was tough, but our team played very hard throughout," he said.

The striker also plays for Brazil's super-20 team, but has not been selected for the Olympic team for next year's London Games.

"I think the next match, the quarterfinal, will be fantastic, and we are still confident we can make it to the final," he said.

Berger has so far scored five goals in three appearances for the Brazilians at Universiade.

"I relaxed a lot after I scored the first goal because I knew our team would move into the quarterfinals," he said. "I think there will be more goals in the days ahead."



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China's Yang Yang heads the ball towards the goal in the team's group match against South Korea last night. The clash ended 0-0.

## Luck of the draw

CHINESE TEAM ADVANCES TO QUARTERFINALS AFTER SCORELESS STALEMATE

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SHENZHEN — China didn't score. Good thing it didn't need to.

A scoreless draw with rival South Korea yesterday helped China advance to the men's soccer quarterfinals.

China's best result at a Universiade is a fourth-place finish at the 2001 Beijing event. In front of a huge crowd of home fans at Shenzhen Stadium, China kept pressing forward before halftime, but players from both sides adopted defensive tactics in the second half.

"After knowing of Namibia's 3-0 (vic-

tory) against Columbia, I had to work out a plan to make us safe in the tournament," China's head coach, Jin Zhiyang, said. "That's why my boys played a defensive game in the second half."

Jin said he didn't dwell much on the long-time rivalry with South Korea.

"Now we have realized our first target — to enter the quarterfinals. That was the utmost goal for us during tonight's game," he said. "The soccer competition between China and South Korea is a long-term topic. I don't want to talk about it at this time."

China has not defeated South Korea in major international events like the Asian Cup or Olympic qualifying for more than a decade. China did win, 3-0, in an East Asian tournament last year.

"Not only my boys but the Koreans will be happy for the draw. Both sides have reached their aim to advance from the group competition," Jin said.

Before last night's draw, China drew 1-1 with Namibia in its opening Group A match and defeated Columbia 3-0 on Sunday. South Korea beat Columbia 4-1 and Namibia 2-1 in its previous group matches.

China captain Lu Bing said the draw helped the team conserve energy for its quarterfinal match with Japan.

"Yes, we were playing very defensively," he said. "A draw helped us rise from the group and we wanted to save our energy in such hot conditions to prepare for the next match."



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