

Defending champion Japan advancing to WWC knockout round

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Group A with a single point.

Thailand's first-ever World Cup got off to a rough start in Group B, suffering a 0-4 loss to Norway. In its second match, however, the team overcame an early one-goal deficit to Côte d'Ivoire to earn a 3-2 win. Thailand is currently in third place with three points. It faces powerhouse Germany, which has four points and a +10 goal differential, on Monday, June 15.

Group D features 2014 AFC Women's Asian Cup runner-up Australia as well as Nigeria, Sweden, and the United States. Australia faced the U.S. in its opening match, which the Matildas lost 1-3. The team battled Nigeria in their second game and prevailed, scoring two unanswered goals. The squad next takes on Sweden, on Tuesday, June 16, looking to add to its three points.

Korea Republic is competing with Brazil, Spain, and Costa Rica in Group E. In the first match, the Taeguk Ladies lost 0-2 to Brazil. Over the weekend, the team settled for a 2-2 draw with Costa Rica after allowing the equalizing goal in the 89th minute. On Wednesday, June 17, South Korea meets Spain, who are in a similar, must-win situation, having earned only one point each in two games played.

Rounding out the 24 teams are Colombia, England, France, and Mexico, which comprise Group F. Colombia leads the group with four points, but England and France are just one point behind heading into the last round of group play.

When the group stage of the tournament concludes, the top two teams in each of the six groups automatically advance to the knockout round. Four additional teams, based on total points and goal differential, will also



SUPERFANS. Team Japan is in Group C with Cameroon, Ecuador, and Switzerland. The Nadeshiko have experienced great fan support already in the tournament, with nearly 26,000 attending the Switzerland match held at BC Place. Japan plays Ecuador on Tuesday, June 16 before heading to the Round of 16 knockout stage. (AR Photos/Jan Landis)

make it to the Round of 16, with games held June 20 to 23.

Following two rest days, quarterfinal matches take place June 26 and 27. The four teams left standing then move to the semifinals, which are held June 30 in Montreal and July 1 in Edmonton.

The squads that lose in the semifinal will play for third place on Saturday, July 4 in Edmonton. The winners of the two semifinal matches travel to BC Place to play the championship match on Sunday, July 5.

Soccer fans are out in numbers supporting the teams. When Japan faced Switzerland at BC Place, nearly 26,000

were in the crowd. At Winnipeg Stadium, where the U.S. played Australia and Sweden, attendance was 31,148 and 32,716, respectively. The sellout crowd of 53,058 at Commonwealth Stadium for the opening match between Canada and China PR was the largest for a national team sporting event in Canada. During Canada's draw against New Zealand, 35,544 die-hard fans endured a heavy downpour and a 30-minute weather delay just after kickoff.

To learn more, or to view the full schedule of matches, visit <www.fifa.com/womensworldcup>.

New Godzilla video game steers clear of nuclear references

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"It will be the first Japanese Godzilla after 3.11," he said, using the widely used term for the Fukushima disaster.

Decommissioning the Fukushima reactors is expected to take about half a century, and scientists are only starting to examine what state the melted cores might be in.

He doesn't blame people wanting to avoid controversy in a game, which could crimp sales, but he marvels at the courage of the first Godzilla film that wasn't afraid to take a stand on nuclear weapons, barely a decade after the end of World War II and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"The appeal of Godzilla can't be easily explained in words. It's not just about being scary and strong. It's also about its ambience, its shape, its beauty, like being in awe of a samurai castle," Izawa said.

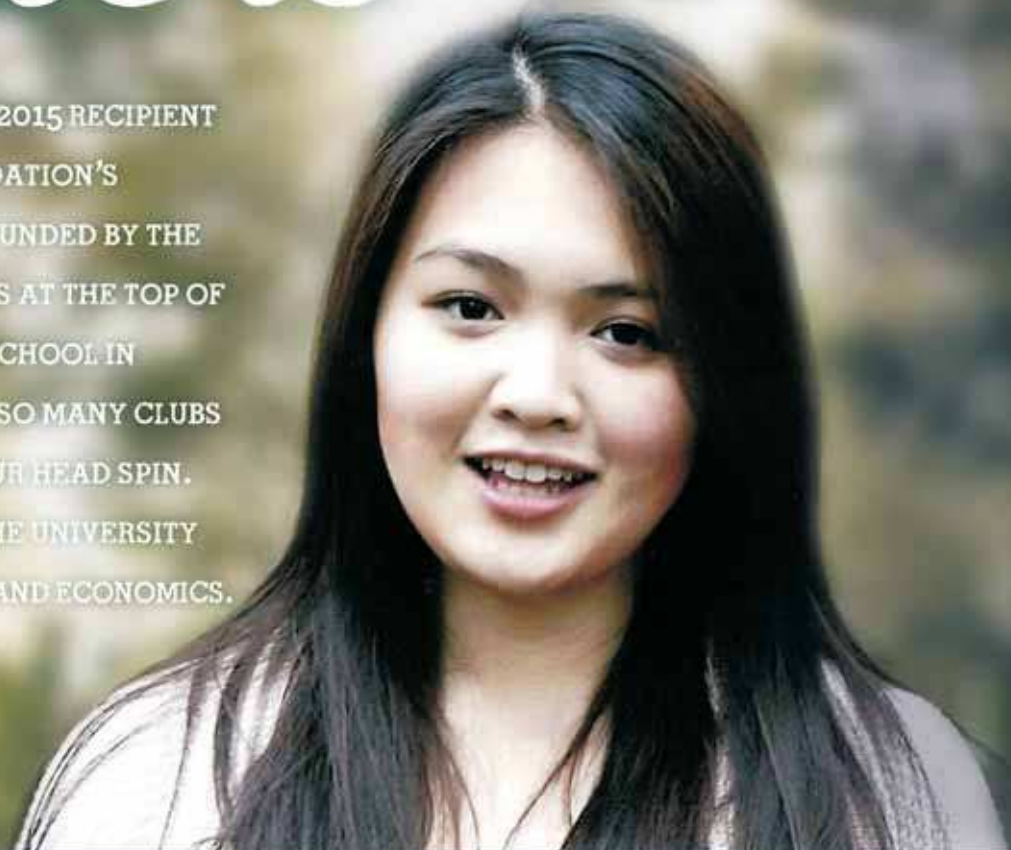
Fujita is confident the game will be a hit with fans.

"This is a game, made by people who love Godzilla, in which the love for Godzilla has gone wild. I know people who love Godzilla will feel that love," he said.

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