

Thailand scores first World Cup goal in loss to Sweden

By Rob Harris
The Associated Press

NICE, France — A couple of seconds elapsed before a disbelieving Kanjana Sungngoen raised her arms in celebration.

It really happened.
Thailand had finally scored at the Women’s World Cup.
By the time Sungngoen found the net against Sweden in the first minute of stoppage time, Thailand was already trailing 0-4.

But simply scoring was a triumph after Thailand’s humiliating 0-13 opening loss to the United States. Coaches embraced on the bench and Thai flags were raised in the stands on the French Riviera.

They were still beaming after the final whistle, even after Elin Rubensson scored with the final kick of the game from the penalty spot to seal a 5-1 victory for Sweden, which advanced to the Round of 16 with a game to spare.

“Everyone was very happy that we at least scored one,” Kanjana said through a translator. “The whole team is very glad.”

Even if it was only a consolation goal and the team remained at the bottom of Group F.

“It was a difficult goal and playing a great team like Sweden, it meant so much,” Thailand coach Nuengrutai Srathongvian said through a translator. “It meant that all of our preparation paid off. We had a lot of chances today. This one goal made us laugh, made us smile, and makes us happy.”

Even Sweden goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl, through the



disappointment of not keeping a clean sheet, could see what scoring meant to the Thais.

“We are all human,” Lindahl said, “and having had that defeat they had against the U.S., and now scoring their goal, you can feel some empathy for them.”

It helped that her teammates had already scored four

GOAL GRATITUDE. Thailand’s Kanjana Sungngoen (#21, left) celebrates after scoring her side’s first goal during the Women’s World Cup Group F soccer match between Sweden and Thailand at Stade de Nice in Nice, France. “Everyone was very happy that we at least scored one,” Kanjana said through a translator. “The whole team is very glad.” (AP Photo/Claude Paris)

times by the time Sungngoen got on the end of a high ball on the right flank and cut in before beating Lindahl at her near post.

The first of the five Swedish scorers netted in the sixth minute in Nice, with Linda Sembrant heading past Waraporn Boonsing.

The Thai goalkeeper did manage to palm away Anna Anvegard’s shot in the 19th minute but she couldn’t recover the ball to prevent Kosovare Asllani scoring. Boonsing couldn’t stop the 41st-minute strike from Fridolina Rolfö curling into the top corner.

Just like in the game against the United States, it was 0-3 at halftime. Unlike in Paris, Thailand didn’t concede another four times in the opening 11 minutes of the second half.

In fact, it took Sweden until the 81st minute to find the net again through Lina Hurtig’s header before being beaten by Thailand on the counterattack.

So when the final whistle blew, the Thai squad was able to bow to its fans. Some pride had been restored.

“Our defeat in the [U.S.] game was massive,” Srathongvian said. “We were disappointed, but scoring one today we made some success. We still need to develop and we need to improve and make it better. We need to get as close to other super teams. We need to play better so we can enjoy it more.”

Japan out of Women’s World Cup after stoppage-time PK

By Rob Harris
The Associated Press

RENNES, France — Tears were still flowing from Saki Kumagai’s eyes more than 30 minutes later.

With victorious Dutch rivals passing her on the way out of the stadium, Japan’s captain seemed to find solace in speaking about the penalty long after it cost her team a place in the quarterfinals of the Women’s World Cup.

With the game entering the 90th minute locked at 1-1, Kumagai’s outstretched left arm blocked the shot Vivianne Miedema had aimed into the right side of the net.

“It hit my hand for sure,” Kumagai said. “It’s difficult to accept, but it’s also sad. I know that is football.”

Referee Melissa Borjas pointed to the penalty spot and Lieke Martens netted her second goal of the game in the 90th minute to seal a 2-1 victory that sent the Netherlands into the quarterfinals for the first time.

“We have made history,” Martens said. “I’m not usually taking the penalties but I felt really good this game. I asked Sherida Spitse if I could take it and she gave it directly to me and I felt quite relaxed about it.”

It was journey’s end for Japan, which won the 2011 tournament and was the runner-up four years later.

The strength of the second-half display counted for nothing.

As befitting a meeting of the Asian and European champions, the game produced some of the slickest action of the World Cup. A backheel flick set up Martens to send the Dutch in front in the 17th minute and Yui Hasegawa equalized in the 43rd to complete a slick passing move.

But the post, crossbar, and goalkeeper Sari van Veenendaal thwarted Japan’s pursuit of a winning goal.

“I think we lacked the clinical edge,” Japan coach Asako Takakura said. “We have to accept the result, we’re defeated, we’re very disappointed and for all the players I feel very sorry for them and frustrated.”

With the last Asian team eliminated, the Women’s World Cup had a record seven European teams in the quarterfinals.

Martens flicked in the opener after evading her marker to meet



DRAMATIC DEFEAT. Japan’s Saki Kumagai kicks the ball away from Vivianne Miedema of the Netherlands during the Women’s World Cup Round of 16 soccer match at Roazhon Park in Rennes, France. The Netherlands defeated Japan, 2-1. (AP Photo/Francois Mori)

a corner and send the ball through the legs of Yuika Sugawawa into the net.

Sugasawa had a quick chance to tie, only to hit the post. But Japan did equalize by completing an intricate move.

Hina Sugita squared across the penalty area to Yuika Sugawawa, who passed back to Mana Iwabuchi on the edge of the penalty area. After holding off Jackie Groenen on the turn, Iwabuchi slipped the ball through to Hasegawa, who was free to delicately dink a shot over Van Veenendaal into the corner of the net.

It was some way to make the most of a first shot on target for a team that failed to score in two of its three group stage games.

Van Veenendaal came to the rescue of the Dutch in the second half by denying Emi Nakajima as Japan chased the winner.

“Japan is a world class team and you saw that today,” Miedema said. “In the second half you can see they have loads of quality on the pitch.”

Australia eliminated in penalty-kick shootout

By Daniella Matar
The Associated Press

NICE, France — Goalkeeper Ingrid Hjelmseth proved to be a shootout hero once again as Norway beat Australia on penalties to advance to the quarterfinals of the Women’s World Cup.

Hjelmseth saved Emily Gielnik’s kick and Ingrid Engen, who is playing in her first World Cup, hit the decisive penalty as Norway won the shootout 4-1 after the match finished in a 1-1 draw.

Australia captain Sam Kerr, who was frustrated by Norway most of the night despite several opportunities, fired her penalty shot high and wide.

“It was a great win,” Hjelmseth said. “I

was just focusing and picking a side when they put the ball down. I was just telling myself, ‘OK, I will go to the right,’ and then I took a chance and it was good for us, it was the right side.”

Hjelmseth saved two penalties in her last shootout — the semifinal of the 2013 European Championship.

“That was a good one,” she said. “I think when you’re a goalie you can only be a hero so it’s just about picking a side and just finding the right timing to go so you don’t get the VAR [Video Assistant Referee] stuff.”

The shootout came after a game during which neither team had a clear advantage, though Norway succeeded in keeping Australia’s Kerr from being much of a

factor. Kerr had a goal ruled out in the second half after offside was called. Australia also had two penalties denied on video review in normal time.

The game went to extra time after Australia’s Elise Kellond-Knight scored from a corner to make it a 1-1 game in the 83rd minute.

Forward Isabell Herlovsen put Norway up 1-0 with a goal in the 31st.

Australia had to play the final 16 minutes of extra time at a numerical disadvantage after defender Alanna Kennedy was sent off on a red card for hauling down Norway forward Lisa-Marie Utland. Norway peppered Australia’s goal but was repeatedly denied by goalkeeper

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Women’s World Cup France 2019

Knockout rounds:

Round of 16

June 22

Germany 3, Nigeria 0
Norway 1, Australia 1
(Norway win on PKs, 4-1)

June 23

England 3, Cameroon 0
France 2, Brazil 1
(France win after extra time)

June 24

Spain 1, USA 2
Sweden 1, Canada 0

June 25

Italy 2, China PR 0
Netherlands 2, Japan 1

Quarterfinals

June 27

Norway 0, England 3

June 28

France 1, USA 2

June 29

Italy 0, Netherlands 2
Germany 1, Sweden 2

Semifinals

July 2, noon
England vs. USA

July 3, noon
Netherlands vs. Sweden

Third place

July 6, 8:00am

Championship

July 7, 8:00am