

Hockey – Spain v Scotland, World League 2, Semi-final

Spain win by a goal and march on to Final



Two penalty stroke awards gave Spain the two goals that put them through to today's (12th) Final against Poland. Although Scotland took off their keeper with about 10 minutes to go, and scored from a penalty corner, but it was too late in the game and the Scots now play in the 3rd/4th place play-off.

The match was once again preceded by a 50th Cap Award, this time Gordon Shepherd presenting Amy Brodie with flowers to recognise her milestone achievement.

The match started at 100mph with both sides gaining and losing ground in, more or less, equal measure.

The first real opportunity to score came Scotland's way a couple of minutes into the second quarter when a penalty corner, lead immediately to a second, but the Spanish defence were up to the job second time around and got the ball away.

Then, just two minutes later, "Disaster for Scotland!" as the Spanish side were awarded a disputed penalty stroke. Despite the pleas of the Scots' Captain, Kaz Cuthbert, the decision stood and No. 23, Georgina Oliva stepped up. Nikki Cochrane in the Scottish goal anticipated the correct side, but even she wasn't quick enough to stop the ball hitting the back of the net. 1-0 to Spain.

As the quarter progressed, both sides had chance and both defences held firm and cleared.



Penalty corner awards for both sides were also on the menu, with Scotland's Fiona Burnet seeing her shot evade the advancing runners, only to slide past the outside of the post.

Spain had a PC scrambled clear by the Scots' defence early in the second half, but, after weathering another Scottish attack, Spain had their second penalty stroke awarded, this one being, unfortunately, beyond dispute.

Once again, it was Oliva who faced Cochrane and, once again, the ball hit the net – in almost exactly the same place as the other end – with Cochrane only just unable to move fast enough to get anything on the ball. So, five minutes in to the second half, it was 2-0 to Spain.

As the match progressed, the Scots probably had the upper hand and although both sides had PC's awarded and saved – Spain had a goal disallowed from one as the shot at goal was deemed to be dangerous – Scotland had the better open play chances with, at least, three forays along the baseline causing mayhem in the opposition defence.

Then with around 10 minutes to go, Scotland took off their keeper and put on an extra outfield player, Robyn Collins being 'awarded' the dubious task of kicking back – effectively an outfield player with the 'in area' privileges of a keeper and protected, in this case, by an orange bib!!

This gave Scotland the power to really turn up the heat on the Spanish, but, despite their best efforts, they could only persuade the ball into the back of the goal that once when Amy Costello fired the ball into the goal from a late PC. 

Unfortunately, the undoing of Scotland's road to the final was the really 0.3 seconds from time, controversial, PC in the Ukrainian match, but Shepherd's target was a semi-final place with his young squad and they oh, so nearly exceeded that.

Scotland now have to excise the Ukraine result from their

minds for the 3rd/4th place play-off, as they will they face Ukraine. again...

And, if there was any doubt, hockey is indeed a dangerous game as, earlier during the Russia v Ghana match, both of Ghana's keeper ended up in hospital (parents look away now!) – one with a broken jaw and the other with a dislocated shoulder.

Images from the match will [appear here](#) over the next few days as there is a 3rd/4th play-off to settle and a flight home to catch.