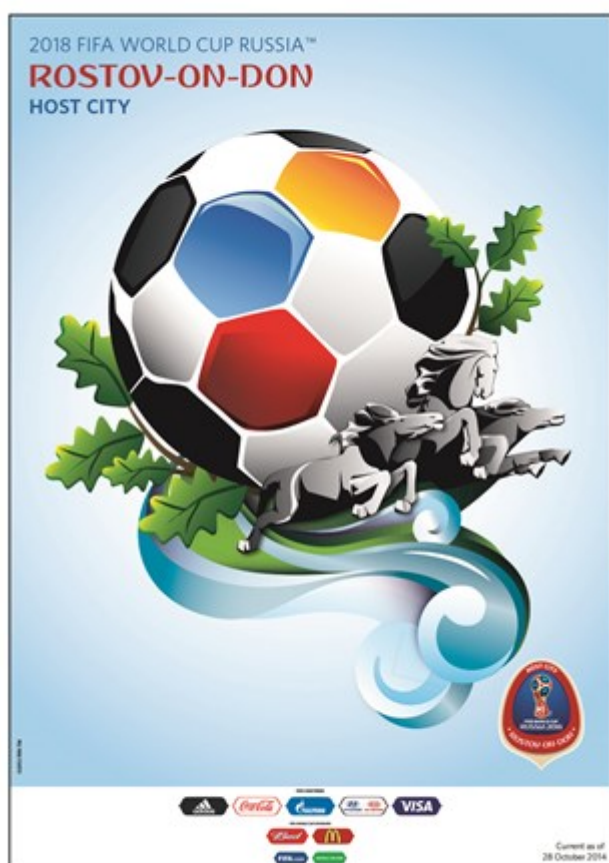


2018 FIFA World Cup Russia – Belgium knock out Japan

Our junior reporter who is usually found in the stand at Fir Park has been glued to the TV in recent days. Here he gives us the rundown on the way that Belgium secured their final 16 place.

Belgium had to come from two goals behind to beat Japan in Rostov-On-Don in Southern Russia. Belgium will play Brazil in the Quarter-Finals.



Japan had just two good chances in the first half, with Osako heading over and Haraguchi having a tame shot spoiled by Thibaut Courtois but the Belgian keeper recovered quickly.

Belgium had great opportunities before the break but De Bruyne, Hazard and Mertens didn't have their shooting boots on. That combined with some excellent Japanese defending kept the score level at 0-0 going in at half time.

Three minutes after the interval Sakai played a long ball up the park, Haraguchi was isolated but stayed calm dragging Vertonghen wide then finishing past Courtois with a well placed shot.



From the kick off Belgium threatened but Hazard could only strike the post.

At 51 minutes another Japan counter-attack lead to Shibasaki having his shot blocked, but the ball fell to Kagawa who brought it down well then laid it off to Inui who scored from 23 yards with a great finish.

18 minutes later and Japan fail to deal with a De Bruyne corner and Vertonghen gets his head on the ball looping a shot over Kawashima and into the net.

5 minutes after that Hazard showed tremendous skill on the left and swung in a great cross that Fellaini headed beyond Kawashima.

With two minutes left of injury time and the score level at 2-2, Osako won a free kick 40 yards from goal. Up stepped veteran substitute Kesukie Honda. He powered the ball into the bottom right and Courtois stretched to make a fine save. From the corner Kompany headed clear, leaving space for De Bruyne to drive up the park and thread through Meunier who crossed in. Nacir Chadli finished with the final kick of the game to send Belgium to the last 8 where they will play Brazil.

Full Time

Belgium 3 – 2 Japan