

Own Goal Sinks England In Women's World Cup Semis

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — Laura Bassett scored into her own net during second-half stoppage time, giving Japan a 2-1 victory over England in a Women's World Cup semifinal.

The decisive goal Wednesday came when Japan's Nahomi Kawasumi drove up the right side and sent a cross into the middle for Yuki Ogimi. Bassett reached out with her right foot and caught the ball flush, inadvertently sending it toward her net. The ball struck the crossbar and bounced in just before goalkeeper Karen Bardsley could get across.

The defending champions advanced to play the United States

in the championship game at Vancouver on Sunday. It's a rematch of the 2011 championship game in Germany, when Japan won on penalty kicks after a 2-2 draw.

Bassett was inconsolable at the end of the match, lying flat on the ground, her face in the turf. She then needed assistance from teammates and her coach before leaving the field.

It was a torturous finish for the sixth-ranked Lionesses, who have made their deepest run in four World Cup appearances. England had never won an elimination game until this year.

England will remain in Edmonton to play top-ranked Germany in the

third-place match Saturday. Germany lost 2-0 to the United States on Tuesday.

England lost despite controlling much of the second half against the fourth-ranked Japanese. And that was despite what Japan coach Norio Sasaki had said a day earlier, when he suggested his players were "superior."

The teams traded penalty kick goals seven minutes apart in the first half.

Aya Miyama opened the scoring in the 33rd minute by driving the ball into the open left corner while Bardsley guessed the wrong way.

The penalty was set up when Mizuho Sakaguchi's long kick from

Japan's side of the field found Saori Ariyoshi free up the right side. As Ariyoshi got control of the ball, she was pushed from behind by Claire Rafferty.

The Lionesses responded on Fara Williams' penalty kick in the 40th minute. She threaded a shot just inside the left post, barely out of the reach of diving keeper Ayumi Kaihori.

That penalty came off corner kick to the right of the Japan net. Williams' kick into the area bounced between four players before Steph Houghton got control, took a step toward the net and went down when Ogimi appeared to catch the back of Houghton's foot.

England had the Japanese on their heels during a four-minute span of the second half.

Toni Duggan, from just inside the penalty area, had her line-drive kick go off the crossbar in the 62nd minute. A minute later, Ellen White was set up in the middle, and got a shot off that Kaihori punched away.

And in the 66th minute, Jill Scott headed Williams' corner kick just wide of the left post.

The game was played on Canada Day — the nation's 148th birthday — in front of a slow-arriving crowd. The attendance was announced at 31,467 in a stadium that holds

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Baseball | Area Roundup

Yankton Juniors Take Two

Lakers Sweep Past Renner

The Yankton American Legion junior squad swept a pair from the Vermillion VFW Teeners in baseball action on Wednesday afternoon at Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

In the opener, Jakob Larson tossed a three-hit shutout and seven different players had hits in a 10-0 Yankton victory.

Justin Leader went 3-4, and Caid Koletzky and Carter Peterson each had two hits for Yankton. Nathan Hein, Michael Heine, Ben Wold and Larson each had a hit.

Larson struck out three in the six-inning contest.

In the nightcap, Heine went 2-2 with a triple and three RBI, and Isiah Woods had two hits as Yankton held on for a 7-5 victory.

Wold, Chase Vogt and Jackson Somsen each had a hit in the victory.

Trey Bakke picked up the win, allowing three hits and striking out two in five innings of work. Woods pitched the final two innings for the save.

Yankton, 13-14, hosts Tabor on Monday.

Tabor 14, Winner-Colome 4

TABOR — Tabor pounded out 15 hits and scored in six of seven innings to claim a 14-4 victory over Winner-Colome in American Legion baseball action on Tuesday.

Brendan Bares had two doubles and a single, and Chase Kortan had three hits and five runs scored for Tabor. Zach Sutura, Cole Uecker, Carter Mecham and Hunter Young each had two hits in the victory.

Drew Demers and Landon Engel each had two hits for Winner-Colome.

Young picked up the win. Engel took the loss.

Tabor, 5-3, travels to Winner for a rematch with

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Busy Day On The Diamond

Yankton hosted baseball doubleheaders in American Legion junior and VFW Teener action on Wednesday at Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

ABOVE: Yankton Lakers pitcher Kieran Loellman, left, prepares to tag Renner's Jacob Madison as Madison tried to score on a wild pitch during the first game of their VFW Teener baseball doubleheader on Wednesday at Yankton's Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

LEFT: Yankton Junior Legion's Carter Peterson slides into second base safely as Vermillion Teeners' second baseman Carter Larson takes the throw during their baseball doubleheader on Wednesday at Yankton's Bob Tereshinski Stadium at Riverside Field.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Cueto Goes 8 Innings, Reds Beat Twins

CINCINNATI (AP) — Johnny Cueto got a standing ovation from the crowd of 26,459 as he walked off the field after pitching the eighth inning, giving him what could be a final send-off.

The right-hander made his best start yet since returning from a sore elbow, allowing four hits in eight innings, and the Cincinnati Reds beat the Minnesota Twins 2-1 on Wednesday to take their interleague series.

The Reds haven't been able to get a deal with Cueto (5-5), who is in the final year of his contract and well could be traded in July with the Reds out of contention. After winning 20 games last season, Cueto's time in Cincinnati seems to be winding down.

"I don't know," Cueto said, with trainer Tomas Vera translating. "I've just got to keep going out there and pitching and leave everything else in God's hands."

He pitched into the eighth inning for the first time in six starts since he returned from an inflamed right elbow. Cueto struck out eight, walked one and gave up an RBI groundout to Eddie Rosario.

"Sometimes when it looks unrealistic to have a player return, I hope everyone has a chance to step back and enjoy what they're seeing," manager Bryan Price said. "I'm putting the cart before the horse here. I really don't want to do that."

"But I do think we're seeing a really special pitcher right now. And regardless of where he ends up, if it's in Cincinnati or somewhere else, he is a special pitcher to watch."

Aroldis Chapman retired the side in the ninth for his 16th save in 17 chances.

The game started 12 hours after the Twins' 8-5 win on Tuesday night following a long weather delay. Minnesota played several rested back-ups in the quick turnaround, with Torii Hunter among those out of the lineup.

Cincinnati scored on Joey Votto's sacrifice fly off Trevor May (4-7) and catcher Chris

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Study: NBA Diversity Again Leads Pro Sports Leagues

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The NBA again sets the standard for diversity among major professional sports leagues.

According to a report released Wednesday by the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, the NBA received an A-plus grade for racial hiring and B-plus for gender hiring on its annual report card. Its overall grade of A was its seventh in a row.

For the second straight year, more than 35 percent of all professional employees within the NBA league office were people of color, and 40 percent were women. There were also 45 women employed at the vice president level or higher.

Four women also served as presidents or CEOs of NBA teams, the highest total among men's professional sports leagues.

Study author Richard Lapchick praised the NBA for its ongoing commitment to diversity but said there is room to improve.

In senior positions at the team level, women still aren't represented well. Women hold just 82 of the 405 available team vice president jobs, and 196 of 818 total senior administrator positions.

He said elevating women into those high-profile jobs could have a larger impact across an industry that rarely sees women in positions that

directly affect what happens on the court.

"I think when that happens it will sound a signal to fans and others in the league that there are no longer barriers," Lapchick said. "It took a number of years to get women in high level business positions. But there is now an opportunity to show what can they do on the operations level."

"It was encouraging that there are four women CEOs because they have an impact on who is hired as general managers. But four out of 30 is still a small number."

Even with its successes, the NBA is ramping up its diversity initiatives, hiring Oris Stuart as its chief diversity and inclusion officer last month. Stuart is now responsible for overseeing the league's diversity strategies for all NBA properties, including the WNBA and D-League.

Also, in January Commissioner Adam Silver elevated Kathleen Behrens to become the NBA's first president of social responsibility and player programs.

Lapchick predicted there would soon be a diversity-specific officer on every NBA club. The Atlanta Hawks created a similar position last year after racially charged comments by former owner Bruce Levenson and general manager Danny Ferry were revealed.

Wagner's Soukup Joins MMC Baseball

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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The Mount Marty College baseball program has thrived on regional talent in recent years, with the majority of the team's 2015 starting lineup coming from either South Dakota or Nebraska. Head Coach Andy Bernatow has added to that list, signing Wagner grad Drue Soukup to attend MMC and play for the Lancers.

Soukup, a 6-0 pitcher and outfielder, helped Wagner-Avon-Lake Andes to a runner-up finish in the Region 2B baseball tournament earlier this season, batting .314 and posting a 2.47 earned run average while striking out nearly a batter an inning. This summer, he is playing for the Wagner American Legion and Armour amateur baseball teams.

Soukup's journey to MMC began when Bernatow spotted the then 5-8, 140-pound lefty at a tryout camp hosted by San Diego Padres scout Hank Krause.

"I liked the way he ran and his arm action," Bernatow said. "I felt he was going to get taller. Being a college coach, I'm in the business of projecting."

"All indications are that I chose wisely."

Soukup reminded Bernatow of another late-blooming local left-hander, former Yankton and MMC talent Heath Hagge.

"He runs similar, throws similar to Heath," Bernatow said. "I'll take another kid like that, a late bloomer like Heath was. I'm not

going to pass that up."

For Soukup, the small campus was a draw.

"It's down to earth," he said. "It's a smaller school where you can get to know your professors."

Bernatow fit right in with Soukup's impression of MMC.

"Coach Bernatow is down to earth, very genuine," Soukup said. "I thought he would be intimidating, but he's not."

Besides being active on the baseball diamond, Soukup has been involved in National Honor Society, All-State Choir, All School Play, Oral Interpretation, Boys Scouts, FFA, and Culture Club. He has also been recognized as the Knights of Columbus Essay Award winner and CDA Education Contest Award winner at the local and state level and national finalist. He was also the winner of the June Marie Harney Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Performing Arts and Carol Joy Pace Harney Award Outstanding Achievement in the Music Arts. Soukup also volunteered service time for local and church programs.

Soukup, the son of Francis Lynn and Kimberly, plans to major in English and education at MMC. He will receive a MMC Academic Merit Scholarship, a Creative Writing Award and a MMC Choir Award in addition to his baseball scholarship.

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JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Wagner-Avon pitcher Drue Soukup delivers to home plate during the Region 1B championship game against Vermillion in Tabor. Soukup will attend Mount Marty College and play baseball for the Lancers.