

Under 20 World Championships - Greece August/September 2011

Report from Devon Card 02 September

South Africa u20's were seeded into the pool of "death" with Serbia, USA, Spain and Mexico, and we had the difficult task of facing the strong and powerful Serbians in our 1st game.

We honestly went into the game with great confidence and determination to pull off a decent result, but unfortunately we were silenced very quickly by the speed, agility and ball control of the Serbs.

Physically we were able to hold our own man for man but the fact that these guys have been playing together for 2 years and going on 6 week preparation tours really showed in the water.

GAME 8: 14:00 - Group D, SERBIA 20 - SOUTH AFRICA 3

Quarters: (5-0, 7-0, 3-2, 5-1)

Three players from the formidable Serbian team scored 4 goals each and two others scored 3 apiece to lead their squad in a rout of South Africa. Seven different Serbian players connected with the goal while only three South Africans were able to muster one goal each in this Group D match.

EXTRA PLAYER GOALS:

SRB: 4 of 7 (57%)

RSA: 0 of 6 (0%)

PENALTY SHOT GOALS:

SRB - SAPONDIC, Aleska - 1

RSA - WALKER, Nicholas - 1

SERBIA: 20 GOALS - MATKOVIC, Nemanda; MATOVIC, Marko; *UBOVIC, Nemanda; MILICIC, Milos - 1; DEDOVIC, Nikola - 3; RASOVIC, Strahihja - 4; SAPONDIC, Aleska - 3; YUKSANOVIC, Srdan - 4; ESKERT, Nikola - 1; MILICEVIC Mihajlo; MANDIC, Dujan - 4; RISTICEVIC, Dimitride; MITROVIC, Vodislav. *Team Captain

COACH: STAHOJEVIC, Dejan

SOUTH AFRICA: 3 GOALS - MONTGOMERY, Gareth; CARD, DEVON; BOHATA, Wesley - 1; MALAN Matthew; RODDA, Nicholas; CAMPBELL, Shaun; WALKER, Nicholas - 1; *MOSTERT, Jason; NAIDOO, William; SPENCER, Mark - 1; BAKER, Christopher; DU PLESSIS, David DAVID; BROWN, Wesley. *Team Captain

COACH: WOODS, Duncan

REFEREES: Paulo RAMOS (POR), Victor SALNICHENKO (KAZ)

As you can see, our major problem was our man up, 0 from 6 is just unacceptable and is an area that needs a lot of work.

Our 2nd game didn't get any easier against the USA. Not as strong as the Serbians, but a very fit, fast and well drilled team. The team was determined to put in a better performance, and we really did in the first chukka. The score at the end of the first was 4-1 and we were unlucky with a few shots hitting the post. Unfortunately the Americans picked up their game and started countering us from every position and more and more goals were leaked.

GAME 13: 16:00, Group D, SOUTH AFRICA 2 - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 20

Quarters: (1-4, 0-5, 1-6, 0-5)

The USA rebounded from their loss to Spain on the first day by drubbing South Africa by a wide margin. Ten different American players found a way to slip the ball past the South African goalie. The USA converted half of their extra man opportunities into goals. Bret BONNANI and team captain Josh SAMUELS scored their penalty shots. The USA finds themselves behind Serbia and Spain in Group D standings.

SOUTH AFRICA: 2 GOALS - MONTGOMERY, Gareth; MALAN Matthew; ; ; CARD, DEVON; BOHATA, Wesley; RODDA, Nicholas; CAMPBELL, Shaun; WALKER, Nicholas; *MOSTERT, Jason - 1; NAIDOO, William; SPENCER, Mark; BAKER, Christopher; DU PLESSIS, David - 1; BROWN, Wesley - 1. *Team Captain
COACH: WOODS, Duncan

USA: 20 GOALS - SIBLEY, Jon; BONANNI, Bret - 3; RASCON, Nicholas - 1; SMITH, Collin - 2; RUDOLPH, Paul - 2; WENDT Christopher - 1; HAMBY, Spencer - 3; *SAMUELS, Josh - 2; WHERRY, Alex - 1; BOWEN, Alex - 3; PARSONS Justin.
*Team Captain
COACH: LYNN, Robert

EXTRA PLAYER GOALS:

RSA: 0 of 1 (0%)

USA: 7 of 14 (50%)

PENALTY SHOT GOALS:

USA: BONANNI, Bret - 1

USA: SAMUELS, Josh - 1

REFEREES: Mario BIANCHI (ITA), Mansour SANEI (IRI)

Unfortunately in this game, the refs were really being harsh towards us with giving us no chuck outs which is almost unheard of in a game of water polo. But this is no excuse. From this game our counter defence was shown up and really something that is a major weakness!

Our next game was against a very skilful Spanish side who have finished top of our pool. With a vital game against Mexico coming up, we went into the game with a very defensive mentality and sought out to conserve some of our energy, and also very keen to not allow them to reach 20 goals, and we did achieve this. In patches of the game we showed great defensive spells, but even so, still leaked 17 goals.

GAME 19: 12:30, Group D, SPAIN 17 - REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA 1

Quarters: (4-1, 6-0, 4-0, 3-0)

Spain's team captain Gemar CARRILIO would strike first but South Africa's Nicholas WALKER tied the game at 1-1 at 5:43 in the first period. Walker and his South African teammates would not land another goal in the rest of the game taking a 17-1 licking from the Spanish. CARRILIO and Gerard REIXACH BOIX each scored 4 goals in Spain's 17-1 victory over South Africa. Spain, Serbia and the USA each have 4 points in Group D standings.

SPAIN: 17 GOALS - TEBAR CRIADO, Diego; CABANAS PEGADO, Victor - 1; DE LERA CALERO, Ruben - 2; *CARRILIO GEMAR - 4, Oscar; CARABI GASOL, Adria - 1; SANCHEZ, Carlos; GUTIERREZ SANTIAGO, Victor; FERNANDEZ CERDA, Victor; REIXACH BOIX, Gerard - 4; BUSTOS SANCHEZ, Jose Javier - 1; LARUMBE GONFAUS, Marc - 1; MONPEAT PORTANA, Joshua - 1; ESTELA XUCLA, Marti.

*Team Captain

COACH: COLET, Joaquin

SOUTH AFRICA: 1 GOAL - MONTGOMERY, Gareth; CARD, DEVON; BOHATA, Wesley; MALAN Matthew; RODDA, Nicholas; CAMPBELL, Shaun; WALKER, Nicholas - 1; *MOSTERT, Jason; NAIDOO, William; SPENCER, Mark; BAKER, Christopher; DU PLESSIS, David DAVID; BROWN, Wesley. *Team Captain
COACH: WOODS, Duncan

EXTRA PLAYER GOALS:

ESP: *CARRILIO GEMAR, Oscar - 1

PENALTY SHOT GOALS:

ESP: 5 of 12 (42%)

RSA: 0 of 0 (0%)

REFEREES: Mansour SANEI (IRI), Aleksandar ADZIC (MNE)

Once again a decent start, but our fitness and lack of time in the water together is a real issue that needs to be sorted.

Looking at these last 3 games we need to understand that these teams have been playing professional waterpolo for the last 2 years and being payed to do so. All of these teams went on tours leading up to this tournament and played in excess of 50

+ international matches already. I am not here to make excuses but just remind everyone of the reality of the situation. Our tournament really began when we took on Mexico.

With a break day before the game against Mexico, we were really well rested and excited to play some competitive, but at the same time, weary of them as their results against the other teams in our pool were ALOT better than ours.

GAME 40: 14:00, Group D, MEXICO 9 - REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA 9

Quarters: (2-2, 2-2, 1-3, 4-2)

Cesar ORTIZ and Anvar IBARRA would put Mexico up 2-0 in the first quarter before South African's David DU PLESSIS would fire back two of his own in the last minutes of the period to even the score at two each. Devon CARD of South African would deliver his own one-two punch early in the second quarter, but Mexico retaliated with two goals to send the teams off tied at four for the halftime break. Mexico's Armando GILBERT would score his team's only goal in the third quarter while three different South African players would find the net successfully to end the quarter with a two goal advantage. At 6:28 in the final quarter GILBERT would bring his Mexican team within a goal. Less than a minute later his teammate Juan BISCAINO would tie the game at 7's. South Africa's CARD would be called upon to put his team ahead by one with the delivery of his third goal of the game. Anvar IBARRA of Mexico was confident that his two goals in the final period would bring his team it's first victory. With 11 seconds remaining in the game CARD would land his third goal of the game to tie the match at 9's. South Africa was also without a win in the preliminary rounds. The evenly matched teams ended with identical records, 0 wins, three losses and a tie.

MEXICO: 9 GOALS - BECERRIL, Francisco; ORTIZ, Cesar; *ALAVOS, Antonio - 1; CERRANO, Jesus - 1; BISCAINO, Juan 2; JUAREZ, Eric; IBARRA, Anvar - 3; CALVA, Himbler; CARBALLO, Pablo; MORALES, Ivan; GILBERT, Armando - 2; ORTIZ, Ivan; ALILA, Isac. *Team Captain
COACH: BIART, Pedro.

SOUTH AFRICA: 9 GOALS - MONTGOMERY, Gareth; CARD, Devon - 3; BOHATA, Wesley; MALAN Matthew; RODDA, Nicholas; CAMPBELL, Shaun; WALKER, Nicholas - 1; *MOSTERT, Jason - 1; NAIDOO, William; SPENCER, Mark 1; BAKER, Christopher; DU PLESSIS, David - 1; BROWN, Wesley - 2. *Team Captain
COACH: WOODS, Duncan.

PENALTY SHOT GOALS:
RSA: CARD, Devon - 1

EXTRA PLAYER GOALS:

MEX: 4 of 10 (40%)

RSA: 2 of 8 (25%)

REFEREES: Denis DANELON (BRA), Monier FARID (EGY)

Unfortunately we just couldn't hang on to our lead going into the last chukka. I feel with a bit more experience with these kind of close games we would of done it, but it just shows that we have the ability to play good decent polo (Mexico's score against Serbia was 11- 5) and even though we now went through bottom of the pool we were still pleased and stoked with the result.

Due to our position we were drawn against a strong polo nation, Canada first up in the playoff rounds. This is a professional team who get payed to play the game and went on a 6 week tour of Europe before the tournament.

GAME 41: 09:30, QUALIFICATION ROUND, CANADA 10 - SOUTH AFRICA 9

Quarters: (5-1, 0-4, 3-2, 1-3))

Canada jumped out to a five goal lead early in the game and it wasn't until Mark SPENSER drilled one into the net that South Africa would be on the scoreboard. Aware of the deep hole that they had dug for themselves, four different South African players found the net in the second quarter and evened the score at 5's just 17 seconds before the horn signalling the end of the half. In the third period Luca GASIC scored the next two goals giving the Maple Leafs a sorely needed rally. SPENSER would again deliver a key goal for the Springboks and teammate Christopher BAKER would nail the tie breaker at 3:46. At 1:27 David DU PLESSIS would put the South African team back in the lead at the end of the third period. In the fourth quarter Canadian team captain Dusan RADOJCIC scored his only goal of the game tying the score at 8's. Devon CARD took more than a minute to get in position before drilling the go-ahead goal for his African team. At 4:49 Canada's Ryan SIMONYIK tied the game for the fourth time. The winning goal for Canada was delivered by Colin JAMIESON at 2:42. Tomorrow Canada will face the winner of the next match between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. South Africa will play the loser of that match.

CANADA: 10 GOALS - RADENOVIC, Milan; JAMIESON, Colin - 2; FISHER, Robbie; GOW-LEACH, Nicholas; TANGUAY-RIOUX, Lambert; BLAIR, Michael; TASCHEREAU, Alec - 2; SIMONYIK, Ryan - 1; *RADOJCIC, Dusan - 1; GASIC, Luca - 2; GUTOVIC, Ogi - 1; MITROVIC, Nikola - 1; KLINO, Aner. *Team Captain
COACH: PARILLO, Brian.

SOUTH AFRICA: 9 GOALS - MONTGOMERY, Gareth; CARD, Devon - 2; BOHATA, Wesley; MALAN Matthew; RODDA, Nicholas; CAMPBELL, Shaun; WALKER,

Nicholas - 1; *MOSTERT, Jason; NAIDOO, William; SPENCER, Mark - 3; BAKER, Christopher - 1; DU PLESSIS, David - 2; BROWN, Wesley. *Team Captain
COACH: WOODS, Duncan.

PENALTY SHOT GOALS:

RSA: WALKER, Nicholas

EXTRA PLAYER GOALS:

CAN: 5 of 10 (50%)

RSA: 3 of 7 (43%)

REFEREES: Noel HARROD (AUS), Cem FILIKSAC (TUR)

Even though we went down, I feel that this was our best game of the tournament. Against a really decent Canadian side we put in a really good performance and fought for all our worth to try and pull off an upset and we nearly did. Once again, going into the last chukka with a slender lead, we just couldn't hold on as our nerves got the better of us. But the boys have taken much needed confidence out of the game as we head towards our final 2 games of the tournament. If we can win these 2 games we will finish 17th out of 20. Although we were aiming for a top 16 finish, if we grab 17th spot, with some of our close results we will come home with our heads held up high!