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Daria Makarenko (front) from Russia and a South Korean player fight for the ball in their women's soccer match on Monday. South Korea won 1-0.

# South Koreans feel the heat

## ASIAN GIANT WORRIED ABOUT MEDIOCRE FORM IN GROUP STAGE

By QIU QUANLIN  
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN— They're worried winners.

South Korea's women's soccer team scratched out a 1-0 victory over Russia yesterday in a Group B Universiade match, but coach Choi Duck-woo thought his defending champion looked shaky in doing so.

"We played very hard to win this game," he said. "We did not create many chances to score."

Captain Jung Seol-bin scored the game's only goal in the 82nd minute, booking a seat in the knockout round for the South Koreans.

Choi, though, said he needs his team to mature, and fast.

"Actually, I am worried about the knockout round, given that the current South Korean team consists of many young players," he said.

"There will be stronger teams

like China and Brazil in the next round of competition. So I am really worried about our performance in the days ahead."

South Korea beat South Africa 4-2 in its Group B opening match, then played a 1-1 draw with Mexico on Saturday.

"To be honest, this Universiade squad is not the best team in my country. Most talented players are ... on the national team," he said.

The national team is preparing for next year's Olympic Games, with an Asian zone qualifying match against China scheduled for Sept 1 in Jinan, the capital of Shandong province.

The current South Korean team includes many players from the national under-20 squad, Choi said.

South Korea claimed its first women's soccer Universiade gold by beating Japan, 4-1, in 2009.

It also won bronze in 2001, downing France 4-3.

Unlike Choi, striker Jung Seol-bin said she was confident of a successful title defense.

"Winning the game against Rus-



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South Korean fans cheer their women's team against Russia at the Shenzhen Universiade on Monday.

sia will surely help us move further in this competition. Of course, I am dreaming of the gold medal this time," she said.

Jung, 21, a former member of the South Korea team, now plays for a professional club, Incheon Ini Steel.

Some South Korean fans also saw cause for concern.

"It is a pity that the girls only scored one goal. They are too young," said Chung Woo-young, who came with about 100 fans to cheer for the South Korean side.

"Of course we want to be the champion again. But this time, it will be really hard for the girls," he said.

## Fan finds form as competition hots up

By QIU QUANLIN  
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Fan Zhiqiang hopes to maintain his good form and fitness when China faces its toughest Group A rival, South Korea, tomorrow.

The Chinese striker, 23, has improved since the opening match of the Shenzhen Universiade, scoring two goals in China's 3-0 victory over Colombia on Sunday evening.

The victory helped China move to four points in Group A and put Colombia out of contention for the quarterfinals.

Captain Lu Bin converted a first-half penalty, while Fan scored two lovely solo goals in the second.

"I feel very happy and excited," Fan said. "My performance in tonight's match was beyond my expectations."

"My good form helps me. I didn't feel nervous. I just focused on playing, tried my best and just played the way I like."

Fan, who was banned for two years for alleged involvement in a soccer riot in July 2009, said his passion for the game helped him maintain his fitness.

"Most of my teammates have not played after the ban. But I didn't want to give up," he said.

Fan was included in Beijing Normal University's soccer team in May this year, and is a leader of the Chinese Universiade squad.

"I have learned a lot from the past," he said.

Jin Zhiyang, China's head coach, called for better support for young players like Fan during their college education.

"He is a very talented boy. I am very proud of him. If we pay more attention to football education I believe we will have more players like Fan in the future," Jin said of Fan's fine performances.

With six points in Group A, South Korea has already qualified for the top eight while China now needs only a draw to advance.

"We will do our best to win the game. I am optimistic," Fan said of the upcoming game.

The striker also scored a goal for China in its 1-1 draw with Namibia in its opening Group A match.