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PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS FOR USA WORLD CUP CHAMPIONS
WASHINGTON, DC
July 19, 1999

Ack.: VP; First Lady; Mrs. Gore; Members of Congress; Julie Foudy & Carla Overbeck (team captains); Stephanie Howell (DC Scores player); Marla Messing (President of the Women's World Cup); Donna de Varona (Chair of the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee).

Before we begin, please join me in a moment of silent reflection and prayer – for John Kennedy, Jr., for his wife Carolyn and her sister Lauren, and for their families.

[moment of silent reflection]

I'd like to talk for just a moment about something that I talk about with some frequency – and that's the idea of Americans coming together, across all the lines that divide, to celebrate our common values, our shared joy and pride. And even, as we've seen in recent days, our shared sadness. Americans from all walks of life are coming together in deep concern for the Kennedy and Bessette families. I know that's something on the minds of all Americans.

It's times like this, I think, that we really stop to recognize that we are a national family – united at once in sorrow and in joy. We have an unbounded capacity to come together to honor the things we value most.

This is one of those moments. Today, despite our sadness, we are gathered here to celebrate a triumph. And it makes me so proud to welcome the Women's World Cup Champions to the White House. And that's the first time any President has ever gotten to say that.

What a whirlwind this has been for all of you – from that winning goal in Pasadena to the White House in a little more than a week, and pausing to be celebrated just about everywhere in-between. Your team is America's team, your triumph is America's triumph, and I am thrilled to have you here.

Now, I know that every member of the American family is proud of every member of this team. What makes us so proud is the way you have worked together to lift each other up, and lifted us all up as a result. And as skilled as each of you is in your own right, what you have accomplished together is greater than any individual achievement.

Still, as someone who got to watch you play at the Rose Bowl, as someone who sat so far on the edge of his seat I almost leaned out of that sky box, I'm not going to forget those moments that showcased your individual skills:

The moment Kristine Lilly headed away what would've been a game-winning goal in overtime.

The sight of Michelle Akers charging up and down that field, relentlessly, until she collapsed from the sheer exhaustion of her efforts.

The perfectly-timed leap Brianne Scurry made to the left to block China's third penalty kick.

And, of course, Brandi Chastain perfect shot -- right into the top right corner of the goal -- to win the World Cup. I can't remember a more exciting moment in sports.

This team has taught America a lot -- not just about a game at which you excel, and which is becoming more and more popular as a result, but also about courage, about perseverance, and about the simple power of self-confidence. It's no wonder there are so many girls, like Stephanie Howell, following your lead. Over half-a-million girls and young women, like my own daughter, have begun playing soccer in the eight years since you won the first World Cup in 1991. And thanks to you, America's passion for women's soccer, and women's sports in general, is only growing.

Let me tell you why I think that's important. It's because, as you've shown, the real test of your mettle isn't just whether you win. It's whether you get on the field, or the court, or the track, and compete. And in the case of women athletes, particularly, seizing the opportunity to compete is often the greatest victory of all. A new generation of young women are watching you. . . learning from you. They're developing better skills, and dreaming loftier dreams.

Congratulations again for all you've accomplished. And thank you for sweeping us up into this victory for you, for all young women, and for all Americans. Thank you and God bless you.

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Women's World Cup

Championship Game Info:

- Game won 5-4 on penalty kicks after a 0-0 tie through regulation and two overtime periods.

- Key Contributions / Moments:

① 1) The relentless play of midfielder **Michelle Akers** on both offense and defense. Her effort, especially her skill with her head, was key to the United States attack. Michelle was forced to leave the game due to heat exhaustion and a concussion. She is the oldest member of the team and also suffers from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

2) In the 10th minute of sudden death overtime, China's Fan Yunjie headed the ball off a corner kick past United States goalie Brianna Scurry. This would have been a certain goal except for the fact that **Kristine Lilly** rotated to her proper position at the far post and headed the ball away.

? GOALS ? 3) The United States made its first four penalty kicks with ease. **Carla Overbeck, Joy Fawcett, Kristine Lilly, and Mia Hamm** all connected successfully.

② 4) On the third Chinese penalty kick, United States goalie **Brianna Scurry** charged left and blocked Liu Ying's attempt.

③ 5) With all eyes on her, **Brandi Chastain** put the fifth penalty in the top right corner of the goal and then proceeded to rip off her shirt as the celebration began.

Facts on Interest

90,185 people attended Saturday's game at the Rose Bowl; this was the largest crowd ever for a women's sporting event.

- The attendance for the entire World Cup, held at eight different sites, was 650,000
- ABC estimates that 40 million viewers watched the game, making it the most-watched soccer game on US network television.
- Between 1990 and 1997, 100,000 girls began playing soccer.

Additional People to Mention:

- **Mia Hamm**

The most famous of all female soccer players, kids across the country wear her #9 jersey. She has been on the US National team for 11 years, is the all-time scoring leader in international soccer, and has won two World Cups and an Olympic Gold Medal. She is married to Christiaan Corry, a Marine Corp pilot, who sat with President Clinton at the championship game.

- **Carla Overbeck**

She is the captain of the US National Team. Carla is one of two members of the National Team (along with **Joy Fawcett**) to have a child. They are referred to as "soccer moms."

- **Tony DiCicco**

Tony is the coach of the National Team. He has led the Americans to third place at the '95 World Cup, gold medals at the Atlanta Olympics and the Goodwill Games, and this year's World Cup Championship. Ironically, he is the father of four boys.

Aren't soccer moms

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Before I begin, I want to talk for a moment about something that, actually, I talk about with some frequency -- and that's the idea of One America, of Americans coming together across all the lines that divide to celebrate our common values, our shared joy and pride. And even, as we've seen in recent days, our shared sadness. Americans from all walks of life have come together in [mourning the loss of/ deep concern for the disappearance of] John Kennedy, Jr., his wife Carolyn, and her sister, Lauren. I know that's something on the minds of all Americans, even as we gather to celebrate your vitality and your accomplishments.

It's times like this, I think, that we really stop to recognize that we are One America, united at once in sorrow and in joy -- making us very much like a national family. We have an unbounded capacity to come together to honor the things we value most.

Now, I know that every member of the American family is proud of every member of this team. What makes us so proud is the way you have worked together to lift each other up, and lifted us all up as a result. And as skilled as each of you is in your own right, what you have accomplished together is greater than any individual achievement.

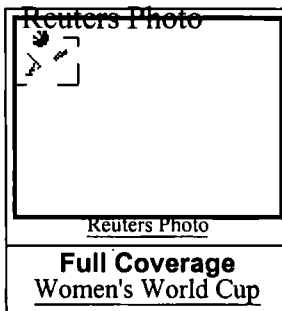
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U.S. Wins Women's World Cup On Penalty Kicks



PASADENA, Calif. (Reuters) - The United States won its second Women's World Cup title Saturday, defeating China 5-4 in a penalty shootout after the two sides battled through 90 minutes of regulation and 30 minutes of tension-filled extra time in sweltering heat without scoring a goal.

Brandi Chastain converted the final U.S. kick, putting her shot into the upper right corner of the Chinese goal, to send her teammates and a sold out crowd of more than 90,000 at the Rose Bowl into a frenzy.

"I felt very confident. My team trusted me and I was just waiting for the chance to just step up there and take it," Chastain said of the historic kick. "I thought, 'Oh my God.' This is the greatest moment of my life on the soccer field."

Chastain's chance became the potential game-winner after U.S. goalkeeper Briana Scurry had stopped a shot by China's Liu Ying. After making the huge save, Scurry ran out of her net pumping her fists as if she knew her side had it won. She turned out to be right.

"I read the kick pretty well, she hit it pretty hard, but I don't think she placed it that well. I know I just had to make the save," Scurry said.

Carla Overbeck, Joy Fawcett, Kristine Lilly and Mia Hamm all made good on their opportunities for the United States, which also beat China in the 1996 Olympic gold medal game and won the inaugural Women's World Cup in China in 1991.

Xie Huilin, Qiu Haiyan, Zhang Ouying and Sun Wen all beat Scurry with their penalty kicks.

"Getting to penalty kicks was no easy task and Briana came up big and all five (shots) were made and that's the sign of a champion," said delighted and relieved U.S. coach Tony DiCicco.

"This is a team that just fought and fought and fought. There were so many things they had to overcome to win this tournament, most of all an outstanding China team."

Added DiCicco: "America should be very proud of them, they're quite a group of young ladies."

This marked the second time in five years that a World Cup final at the Rose Bowl was decided by penalty kicks after a scoreless draw. In 1994 in the men's World Cup championship match, Brazil captured its fourth World Cup by outlasting Italy in penalty kicks.

Earlier Saturday, Brazil's women's team captured third place by beating 1995 champions Norway 5-4 in a penalty shootout after a 0-0 draw. That match included no extra time, going directly to the shootout.

after 90 minutes.

In contrast to the men's game, much of the tournament had featured displays of offensive firepower with China crushing Norway 5-0 in the semifinals.

But the final was a tense defensive struggle for 120 minutes with a dearth of solid scoring chances as each team managed to keep the opposing stars -- notably Hamm of the U.S. and China's Sun Wen -- under wraps.

The Americans were physically stronger and coped better than many had expected with the speedy Chinese attack.

"We tried to concentrate on defense early and then we started to counterattack," China coach Ma Yuanan said. "We are really disappointed."

The Americans overcame a huge loss when their most outstanding player of the tournament, midfielder Michelle Akers, was forced to leave with heat exhaustion and a head injury she suffered during a goalmouth collision late in regulation. That left the U.S. without her expertise for extra time and without one of its best penalty kickers for the shootout.

Akers had given the U.S. its best scoring chance in the 12th minute when she tried to surprise the Chinese goalkeeper with a long 40-yard blast. But Goa Hong jumped and caught the ball before letting it drop harmlessly to the ground.

The Chinese took advantage of Akers's absence, appearing to get stronger as extra time went on as they attacked with more energy than they had for the entire match.

They nearly spoiled the party for the crowd which included President Clinton 10 minutes into extra time when Fan Yunjie fired goal-bound header that was knocked out of harm's way just in time by Lilly to save the day.

"Kristine really did her job," Chastain said. "That was the spot she had to be in. She was where she should be at that time. That's the bottom line."

Said Lilly: "I wasn't scared. I wasn't thinking. I'm glad I was there. If I wasn't it would have been a goal."

The U.S. coach paid tribute to both sides after the Americans and Chinese played their hearts out.

"In my mind there's two champions here," DiCicco said.

Earlier Stories

- [U.S. Wins Women's World Cup](#) (July 10)
- [U.S., China Vie For Women's World Cup](#) (July 10)
- [Women's Soccer-15 Minutes Of Fame Or Breakthrough?](#) (July 9)
- [US Women's Soccer Team Center Of Sports Spotlight](#) (July 8)
- [U.S. Blanks Brazil In Women's World Cup Semi-Final](#) (July 4)

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Yahoo! News**AP Headlines**

Saturday July 10 6:44 PM ET

U.S. Wins World Cup Against China



AP Photo

Full Coverage
Women's World
Cup

By BARRY WILNER AP Sports Writer

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) - They captured America and now they've conquered the world.

The U.S. team, celebrated in a way no women's sports team ever has been recognized, won the World Cup on Saturday, beating China 5-4 on penalties kicks after a 0-0 tie.

With a festive gathering of 90,185 that included President Clinton cheering their every move, the Americans capped the most successful women's sporting event ever with their second championship in the most dramatic and exhausting manner.

Brandi Chastain sent a punishing left-footed penalty kick high into the net to win it as the Rose Bowl crowd erupted in cheers that resounded off the San Gabriel Mountains. She then ripped off her jersey in celebration and was mobbed by her jubilant teammates.

To deafening chants of U-S-A, U-S-A, the players leaped about with whatever energy they had left.

A storm of confetti littered the field as goalkeeper Briana Scurry ran over to the stands to slap hands with some fans, then got down on both knees and saluted the crowd, which was chanting "Scurry, Scurry."

Both teams stood hand-in-hand for photos after sharing one of the most intense experiences in sports - a shootout to decide the most prestigious prize in soccer, a World Cup crown.

China shot first in the shootout and Xie Huilin hit the left corner of the net. Co-captain Carla Overbeck matched the goal to a huge roar from the crowd.

Haiyan Qui barely got the ball past the outstretched hands of a diving Scurry, and Joy Fawcett made no mistake with her shot for 2-2.

Ying Liu's shot was in the middle of the net and Scurry dived left to get her hands on it and send it wide. Kristine Lilly almost nonchalantly put hers in.

Ouying Zhang beat Scurry, but Mia Hamm scored. That brought Sun Wen, the tournament's leading scorer, to the spot with the crowd in a frenzy. Sun put her shot to the left of Scurry for 4-4.

Then came Chastain, who was cut from the national squad in 1994 and missed the last World Cup. But

she fought her way back onto the team and was the biggest of several stars on Saturday.

Earlier Stories

- [U.S. Women Play China for Title](#) (July 10)
- [Women's World Cup Making History](#) (July 10)
- [Soccer: Rockin' With Team USA](#) (July 9)

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