



Speedy Batista proves to be shining light

By QIU QUANLIN
CHINA DAILY

SHENZHEN — Despite failing to win the Women's World Cup in Germany a month ago, Brazilian striker Daniele Batista has high expectations at the Shenzhen Universiade.

The striker, 28, from Brazilian club Vasco da Gama, has so far scored three goals at the Shenzhen Universiade, helping make the South American team the one to beat in Group C, which also includes Japan, France and Estonia.

"I feel very good here. All we want to do here is win each game and become the champion of the competition," she said.

Brazil's assistant coach, Edson Silva, said the striker's fitness had helped the team record consecutive group wins.

"She is so fast. She has made a lot of goals in the past and we deserved to win today because of her excellent performance," he said.

The striker, who began playing in the national team at the age of 18, was also included in the team for the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup, at which Japan emerged champion.

Batista had scored three goals in 12 appearances for the Brazilian team before the Shenzhen Universiade. She also scored Brazil's first goal in the opening group match against France on Thursday.

"For me, it makes no difference playing at the Universiade or the World Cup or the Olympics," she said.

Batista said younger players in the squad would benefit from the competition at the Universiade.

"I believe in women's football. We also have excellent skills and play hard to win each game," she said of the top-flight women's international competition.



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Brazil's Daniele Batista in action in the match against Japan on Saturday.



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Adriana Costa of Brazil (yellow) tries to break the Japanese defense in their opening group match of the 26th Universiade on Saturday. Brazil won 3-1.

Brazilians looking good for title run after second win

TOUGH SCHEDULE THE ONLY MAJOR HURDLE FOR TALENTED FRONTRUNNER

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SHENZHEN — Brazil's second win in the women's soccer competition on Saturday has made the South American team a leading candidate for the championship at the Shenzhen Universiade.

The 3-1 victory against Japan, its second in Group C at the Bao'an Stadium, which saw a record crowd of more than 32,000 spectators, helped boost the young Brazilian players, said assistant coach Edson Silva.

"We won the game because we have better technique and we played faster. We have been preparing for the Universiade very hard," he said.

Brazil won the Universiade women's titles in 2001 and 2005. The South Americans only managed third place by beating Ire-

land 2-1 in the playoff for bronze in 2007.

"After the victory over Japan we are confident about advancing to the knockout stages," Silva said.

Japanese defender Momoko Sayama opened the scoring after just three minutes.

But Brazilian striker Daniele Batista punished the Japanese with a penalty in the 21st minute and, two minutes later, her solo effort secured another goal for Brazil. Midfielder Thais Guedas struck the third goal.

"We wanted to win this match so we did everything we could to achieve that. We made full use of all the time on the clock," Brazilian defender Rozeane Sueza said.

Substitute Adriana Oliveira said: "We were amazing. Japan is a strong team but we were too amazing. We won today because

we are in union. We had great teamwork."

The current Brazilian team has five Olympic players and some national team players like Batista, who has so far scored three goals for Brazil at the Universiade.

"All of our players play for professional clubs back in Brazil. That's why we are stronger than other teams," the assistant coach said.

Silva attributed Brazil's win to the fundamental development of the game in the country.

"You can see that American children will be given a basketball. But in Brazil they will be given a football when they are young. That's why our football is stronger," he said.

However, the competition schedule may affect the Brazilian's future performances, Silva said.

"I am afraid. The time is too

short to rest our players. I will be putting ice, ice, ice on all the girls' legs because I am very afraid of their condition. They won't be ready," he said.

"The competition in the next round of the Universiade will be very hard. For us, the next team is always the toughest."

After the loss to Brazil, Japan, which has twice reached the Universiade women's soccer final — in 2003 and 2009 — but was beaten both times by three-goal margins, will face France in its last group match on Monday.

"We need to improve before our next match against France. We lost point today because Brazil is very strong and we made so many mistakes." Momoko Sayama of Japan said.

Japan beat Estonia in its first Group C match on Thursday.