

2018

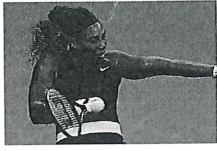
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(Rollo, P., 2018)

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New Zealand beat Canada to bronze at Fifa Under-17 Women's World Cup

Phillip Rollo in Montevideo · 11:23, Dec 02 2018



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Grace Wisnewski (right) and Kelli Brown celebrate Wisnewski's second goal.

An early brace from striker **Grace Wisnewski** has fired New Zealand to a 2-1 win over Canada and third place at the Fifa Under-17 Women's World Cup.

The 16-year-old — whose family made a surprise visit to Uruguay for New Zealand's final two games — gave her team the perfect start to their bronze medal match at Estadio Charrua in Montevideo on Sunday [NZ time].

Not only did she score the fastest goal in tournament history when she netted after 15 seconds, but she then scored one of the wonders for goal of the tournament when she directed a volley past Canada goalkeeper Anna Karpenko 13 minutes later.



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Grace Wisnewski scores her second goal.

Wisnewski's strike partner Maggie Jenkins played a crucial role in both goals, pressing high to win possession off Karpenko to set up the first, then flicking a pass from Amelia Abbott into her team-mate's path for the second.

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"It was an amazing start," coach Leon Birnie said. "To start like that gave the girls real confidence and set the tone for the first half. I thought in the first half and deserved of our 2-0 lead but as we moved into the second half we had to show some typical Kiwi attributes around hanging in there, fighting and showing determination and battle through."

The two goals took Wisnewski's tally to three for the tournament. She came agonisingly close to scoring a hat-trick when she struck the frame of the goal from close-range in the 56th minute.

Canada — who scored all of their goals in the second half of their previous matches — managed to pull one back in the 64th minute when Lara Kazandjian turned Maya Hahn on the edge of the box and let rip with a wicked left-footed shot that beat a diving Anna Leat.

Canada continued to grow as the game wore on, with Caitlin Shaw firing wide just moments later, while Jayde Riviere found herself free on the penalty spot but could only conjure up a timid effort that was scooped up by Leat.

That pressure forced New Zealand deep into their own half for the final 10 minutes. But they were ultimately able to hang on through stoic defending, particularly from centre-back Hannah Mackay-Wright, to secure **New Zealand's best-ever finish at a Fifa tournament.**

"We had an amazing campaign and I think the bronze is the icing on the cake and completes what has been an outstanding tournament for these girls," he said.

"To get a bronze is so special. It's such a humbling moment. The tournament could not have panned out any better for us. But in saying that there's been a lot of hard work behind the scenes that has gone on for two years leading up to this point, so it's great to see that come to fruition."

New Zealand 2 (Grace Wisnewski 1', 13') **Canada 1** (Lara Kazandjian 64'). **HT: 2-0**