

## Winter Universiade - Ice hockey under way as Granada prepares for opening ceremony

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Ice hockey, generic

In the first match of the men's group stage of the 2015 Winter Universiade ice hockey competition, Kazakhstan edged [Japan](#) 3-2 in a tight Group C encounter at the Palacios de Deportes.

After a goalless first period, Japan went ahead in the second period through Makuru Furuhashi before Renat Safin equalised. Kazakhstan took the lead late in the second period through German Nesterov before conceding with just over five minutes of the third and final period after Hikaru Satoh found the net. But Ilya Kovzalov pounced to secure the win with just over a minute left on the clock.

There were no surprises in the second game of the tournament, which saw Canada trounce Korea 11-1 in Group B before Russia also kept to the script with an imposing 5-1 win over [Sweden](#) in Group B, thanks to goals from Eduard Gimatov (2), Ivan Petrakov, Oleg Lee and Artem Fedorov.

"Nikita Cherepanov and Ruslan Rafikov were our best players although I don't want to talk about single players, since everybody played very well," said Russian coach Viacheslav Uvaev.

Sweden remained stoic in defeat. "We're very satisfied with this result since winning this game was not our main objective," said Stefan Bergqvist, author of Sweden's only goal in the 28th minute to make the score 3-1.

On Wednesday, the Czech Republic beat [Slovakia](#) 6-3 in Group A ahead of the China's opening match against hosts Spain in Group A, which takes place in the evening after the 6 p.m. opening ceremony.

During the opening ceremony, the flame of the Universiade will arrive at the Congress and Exhibition Centre of Granada after completing its journey from Slovakia, and the cauldron will be lit. In anticipation of the second phase of the games - which features the remaining 42 of 68 medal events - the official Universiade flag has already been hoisted in the Puerta Real central district of Granada.

In a brief speech before raising the flag, FISU President Claude-Louis Gallien praised everyone who is taking part in the games - be they students, volunteers or staff. "People have worked very hard and it will be great," he promised. Uggi, the games' official mascot, was also present as the University of Granada's orchestra filled the air with music, including the FISU and Granada city anthems.

"We had very good success in Slovakia and I'm sure now this will be a very, very good Universiade [in Granada]," said Gallien. "If the students are happy then I am happy."

Also getting under way on Wednesday after the opening ceremony is the women's preliminary round of the Ice Hockey competition, with Canada facing Kazakhstan at the Mulhacen Pavilion.

A full programme on Thursday will feature the first medal events in the second phase of the Winter Universiade in Granada, including the finals of the men's Free Skating (figure skating), women's Super-G (alpine skiing) and men's and women's Moguls (freestyle skiing).

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