

IIHF World Championship Div.III – Round 2

Round two of the Division III World Ice Hockey Championships in Dunedin pitted NZ's Ice Blacks against Turkey. The game was fast-paced and exciting, but the Ice Blacks came away clear 8 – 2 winners in a dominating performance.

Hayden Argyle set the tone early, scoring only 11 seconds into the game with a booming slapshot. Turkey managed to equalize less than a minute later, but the Ice Blacks ended the first period up 2-1 after Chris Eaden scored on a breakaway by faking a shot and then lifting the puck over the sprawled Turkish goaltender. Eaden's goal was set up by a great pass and play from Dale Harrop who won a key battle for the puck in his own zone and then beat two Turkish players before sliding the puck through traffic to Eaden.

Turkey brought the scores level early in the second period at 2-2, but from then on it was all Ice Blacks as NZ piled on the pressure and the physical pounding they were giving Turkey really started to show. Chris Eaden put the Ice Blacks in the lead again five minutes into the period when he put the puck home after a funny bounce when Dan Nicholls knocked the puck out of the air and walked around a diving defender. Josh Hay then scored for NZ halfway through the period right off the face-off win by Harrop on a great individual effort, and Argyle scored his second of the game when Turkey was a man down by blasting the puck through the goalie's legs. Less than a minute later, Braden Lee found Brett Speirs in the slot on a break and Speirs made no mistake, putting the puck in the top shelf.

“Our offense really clicked in the second period,” said Andreas Kaisser, the Ice Black assistant coach. “Our defensemen, especially, were lethal from the point and had a lot of good shots on Turkey's net.”

The third period continued to be dominated by the Ice Blacks. Josh Hay scored a minute into the period on a nice drive around a Turkish defenseman before burying the puck. Hayden Argyle completed his three-goal hat trick by putting away a rebound with seven minutes remaining- his first three goals as an Ice Black. For his goal-scoring efforts, plus some bone-crunching hits, he was named the Ice Black MVP for the game. Rick Parry made 13 saves in the net for NZ.

“Scoring for NZ is a massive highlight, and to score three goals in one game is unbelievable,” said the normally quiet Argyle. “The team is really playing well and we can't wait to get on the ice against Greece on Monday.” If NZ defeats Greece, they will win the Gold Medal.

The Ice Blacks complete their tournament against Greece on Monday and Ireland on Thursday night. More information can be found at www.nzicehockey.co.nz and www.iceblacks.com.