

Pereira's team finishes lower than ranking

From page 4.

Pakistan the front of 15,000 to 20,000 screaming people. Some people were taking my picture and asking for my autograph. It was unreal."

While Pereira enjoyed the festivities surrounding the games, what would have made his stay more enjoyable was a better performance by Canada.

It entered the games as the world's eighth-ranked team, but finished 10th.

What hurt Canada's chances, he pointed out, were a couple of games that ended in draws. In particular, he noted the opening game against Pakistan was one that Canada should have won, but ended in a 2-2 stalemate. In that contest Pereira scored Canada's first goal and in games following he delivered two more.

The big turning point came in Canada's second game against Germany. Nursing a slim 1-0 lead with eight minutes left, Canada saw its advantage disappear when Germany tallied twice to take the game.

"A win is worth three points and you get one for a tie," he cited. "If we had won that game we would have been first in our pool. Losing to Germany changed our strategy because we had to play more aggressive."

Facing Holland in its third outing, Canada suffered a 4-2 loss and followed with ties against Great Britain 1-1 and Malaysia 2-2. Canada then edged Poland 3-2 and finished the tournament with a 3-0 loss to Spain.

As for his future, Pereira will continue to play with the national team and take part in the next World Cup qualifier in June.

Having one Olympics under his belt, he would like to be a part of the next one.

Whitchurch-Stouffville's Pearce hurt by conditions

John Pearce is looking to the future after a disappointing showing in Sydney.

The 40-year-old Whitchurch-Stouffville equestrian failed to make the final round in the individual Show Jumping competition.

Pearce helped the Canadian team to a ninth-place overall finish in the Nation's Cup medal event, a big



JOHN PEARCE: Equestrian and horse battled wet weather and unfamiliar surface.

improvement on Canada's 16th place showing at the 1996 games.

A combination of wet weather and an unfamiliar ground surface conspired to hold back Pearce and his mount Jamco's Vagabond, a 15-year-old Dutch Warmblood.

"It was tough. The weather was bad every day we jumped," said Pearce, who noted some riders and their mounts were better able to adjust to the condi-

tions than others. "Vagabond never got onto the footing from the start."

Pearce said he wasn't the only rider to have difficulty with the sloppy conditions. "A lot of great riders didn't even make the cut."

As for the controversy involving Schomberg jumper Eric Lamaze, who was banned from the Olympics after testing positive for cocaine, Pearce thought it worked against the Canadian team.

—With files from Bruce Stapley

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