

Costa Rica Trip – Day 3  
By Head Coach Richard Reece

Well the day has finally come... After a long day of traveling and a day of training and watching a Costa Rica pro league game, it is our first game day! So the day started with a early breakfast of the local food, such as bread, eggs and beans, a little different than waffle house!!! After breakfast we had a brief team meeting and went over the schedule and the plan for that morning's training. We also named the team so the players knew how to prepare themselves for the day and also because we would be working on pattern play in training. So off to the fields, a different location from the previous day; a nice private complex only 15 minutes from the hotel. We started with some ball work then worked a little on how we wanted to play in the back. We wanted to get the ball down and move it around in a patient manner. From there we worked on attacking patterns in the attacking half. The boys looked good especially as the field had more bumps than Washington has mountains. So after a cool down we headed back to the hotel for Lunch, which was again very good. From there the guys had just over an hour to have a quick ice bath and some R & R before we would depart for our game.

We left the hotel at 1:15 to travel to the game and each player was given a team handout on what the staff expected from them and what each player's role was on the field. After that they were handed the play book for set plays, just because they are missing school doesn't mean they get out of studying. The playbook seemed to work as during the game we looked dangerous of every set piece, or it might of been that the keeper for Brujas was like a cat with a table tennis ball. Not sure which, but I will go for the well-crafted play book!!

So to the game, we had opening ceremonies at 2 pm where they played the US and Costa Rican anthems and took photos of the team. Once they finished we moved onto the warm-up and with the warm weather we didn't need to spend too long on this, so we got out and had a dynamic warm up and then the players went through some technical work and then the starters went into a 5 v 5 game. Then what we had all been waiting for the KO... you could sense the nervous energy in the guys as this was the 1st International game for a lot of the team. After a quick team talk, a spirited one and the guys were ready. And sure enough we were ready, we had Brujas on their heels for most of the first half. We had some early looks at goal from some great serves into the box from crosses and free kicks, only to find a very agile little goalkeeper. At the 30-minute mark we served in a corner from the right for Tommy Martin to rise up above all to smash a header home.... GOOOOOOAAAALLLLL.....NOOOO free kick....Agh. The 1st half ended with us searching for that 1st goal and pressing Brujas back with wave after wave of attacks.

The game changed in the 2nd half as Brujas came out flying and made us defend for the first 15 minutes and forced our GK Jason Dodson into making a couple of good saves. Once the guys got there second wind and we evened the game out and it became very open. Both teams were playing some very good soccer. As the game wore on we started to see the effects of the travel and the heat getting to our guys, all of a sudden we had a couple of guys start to cramp up. But we have 18 good players here so we called on the bench and the guys called did not falter and they kept the teams work rate high. Late in the game we had another corner served in and GOOOOOAAAALLLLLLL.....NOO.... saved off the line... you have to be kidding me, I will be going home with grey hair if we keep having this happen. So the game ended 0-0 but a very good 0-0, both teams came here to play and both showed very well. So after the game both teams name a MVP, Jason Dodson was named the Region 4 MVP for the day. Well done Jason and well done boys a great first game.

So back to the hotel for some more ice baths..brrrrrrr. Followed by dinner at 7 with was Rice and Chicken and fish.. The guys are eating well and enjoying the company of Region 3 who dined with us. After Dinner we had a team pool regeneration session at 8:30. The water in the pool was fantastic, warm and the guys loved it... HA HA HA I lie it was freezing, but I was warm in my sweat suit so it's OK. So we had a 15 minute resistance stretch. The boys were then served chocolate milk and sent back to the rooms for some much needed sleep.

We have a early training session tomorrow and I sense the guys can't wait for that next game to come, which is just what we want them to be like. Well that is it for today, a great day on the field and lot of fun and laughs of the field.



Region IV and Brujas



Opening Ceremony