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CEREALS



















## Chicago Fire Soccer Club Falls 4-2 to Seattle Sounders FC

The Chicago Fire Soccer Club suffered its first home defeat of the season on Saturday afternoon, falling 4-2 to Seattle Sounders FC at SeatGeek Stadium. Defender Raheem Edwards and forward Fabian Herbers each scored in the match, tallying their first goals of the season.

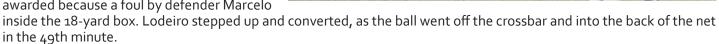
For the Men in Red -- who finished the match with more shots (25-10), shots on target (12-7) and controlled possession (52-48) — this is the first loss against Sounders FC in league play since Sept. 28, 2016.

Despite winning the first half possession battle (also 52-48), the Fire (o-2-1, 1 point) entered the halftime break down 2-0 following two early goals from Sounders FC (3-0-0, 9 points). Seattle managed to take the lead in the 8th minute of play when midfielder Jordan Morris played a cross into the box, finding midfielder Víctor Rodríguez for a close-range finish. The visitors doubled its lead in the 15th minute of play when midfielder Nicolás Lodeiro played a dangerous ball behind the Fire backline for Morris, who was able to convert from just outside the six-yard box.

Responding to the early goals from Sounders FC, the Fire created a dangerous scoring chance through midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger midway through the first half. Running onto Schweinsteiger's pass, midfielder CJ Sapong calmly headed the ball down into the path of forward Nemanja Nikolić, who had his strike saved by goalkeeper Stefan Frei in the 23rd minute (WATCH).

Ten minutes later, the Fire created another close chance to find its opening goal of the game after an extended spell of possession. Following a crafty combination play on the edge of the 18-yard box, the ball found its way to midfielder Djordje Mihailović, who forced another difficult save from Frei with his strike from outside the box. Sapong reacted quickly to pounce on the rebound from Mihailović's attempt, heading his effort on target, but Frei managed to recover and make a second consecutive save.

Seattle extended its lead four minutes into the second half after a penalty kick was awarded because a foul by defender Marcelo





The Men in Red were able to pull a goal back in the 57th minute when defender Raheem Edwards scored his first goal of the season. The goal stemmed from a well-placed cross from Sapong, finding Edwards in a dangerous area just outside the six-yard box. Edwards connected with Sapong's cross and directed a strong header into the back of the net (WATCH). With the assist, Sapong has played a part in three of the Fire's four goals this season.

Continuing to press Sounders FC deep inside their own half, the Fire created another difficult save from Frei when midfielder Dax McCarty hit a bouncing volley from distance, forcing Frei to nervously push the ball wide in the 75th minute. Shortly after McCarty's chance, the Fire scored its second goal of the game when Herbers, who entered the match in the second half, converted a second chance from the right side of the box in the 84th minute (WATCH).

With the Fire pressing forward in search of an equalizer, Sounders FC found the fourth goal against the run of play in the 88th minute when forward Raúl Ruidíaz scored on a counter attack.

The Fire's next league match will take place on Saturday, March 30 at SeatGeek Stadium against the New York Red Bulls. Beginning at 12:00 p.m. CT, the match against the Red Bulls will be broadcast live on ESPN+ and transmitted locally on Univision Radio WRTO AM 1200.



### Chicago Fire Soccer Club continued...

#### Match notes:

The Fire finished the match with more shots (25-10), shots on target (12-7) and possession (52-48 percent) than Sounders FC. Saturday's match marked the Fire's second consecutive home game of the 2019 MLS regular season. Defender Raheem Edwards recorded his first goal of the season and second career goal for the Fire. Midfielder CJ Sapong tallied his first assist of the season on Edwards' goal.



With the assist, Sapong has played a part in three of the Fire's four goals this season.

Midfielder Przemysław Frankowski also recorded an assist on Edwards' goal, marking his second straight match with an assist.

Box Score:

Chicago Fire 2:4 Seattle Sounders FC

Attendance: 10,032

Scoring Summary:

SEA – Rodríguez (1) (Morris, Ruidaz) 8' SEA – Morris (3) (Lodeiro) 15' SEA – Lodeiro (1) (Penalty Kick) 49'

CHI – Edwards (1) (Sapong, Frankowski) 56' CHI – Herbers (1) 84' SEA – Ruidíaz (3) (Smith) 88'

Misconduct Summary:

CHI – Edwards (Caution) 64' SEA – Roldan (Caution) 77' CHI – Herbers (Caution) 90'+2'

Chicago Fire: Ousted; Campos (Bronico 46'), Marcelo, Kappelhof, Hasler (Edwards 35'); McCarty ©, Schweinsteiger, Frankowski, Mihailović, Sapong; Nikolić (Herbers 71')

Subs not used: Sánchez, Lillard, Martinez, Moreno

Shots: 25 Shots on goal: 12 Fouls Committed: 16 Fouls Suffered: 10 Offsides: 0 Corners: 3

Seattle Sounders FC: Frei; Leerdam, Kim, Marshall, Smith; Svensson, Roldan, Morris (Shipp 86'), Lodeiro © (Torres 72'), Rodríguez (Tolo 90'), Ruidíaz

Subs not used: Meredith, Delem, Bwana, Roldan

Shots: 10 Shots on goal: 7 Fouls Committed: 10 Fouls Suffered: 16 Offsides: 3 Corners: 3

Referee: Joseph Dickerson

Assistant Referees: Frank Anderson, Eric Boria

VAR: Kevin Stott

CREDIT: CHICAGO FIRE SOCCER CLUB



















## FC Cincinnati wins for 1st time in MLS, beating Timbers

Allan Cruz and Mathieu Deplagne scored two minutes apart in the second half and expansion FC Cincinnati won for the first time in MLS, topping the 10-man Portland Timbers 3-0 on Sunday in its home debut.

Kendall Waston scored FC Cincy's first home goal in the MLS in the 15th minute by heading home Leonardo Bertone's free kick in front of a sold-out crowd of 32,250 at Nippert Stadium, including MLS Commissioner Don Garber.

Cruz scored on a back-heel shot in the 61st, settling a deflected shot and rolling it inside the far post. Two minutes later, Deplagne finished off a busy sequence in the box with a redirection.

FC Cincy goalkeeper Spencer Richey denied a point-blank shot by Dairon Asprilla at the back post on a corner kick. Portland defender Larrys Mabiala received yellow cards in first-half stoppage time and the 70th for the Timbers (0-2-1).

Cincinnati striker Fanendo Adi, who spent fourplus years in a star role with Portland before being traded in July, shared greetings with his old teammates in the lineup line before the game.

FC Cincy (1-1-1) got its first point last week, rallying for a 1-1 draw against defending MLS Cup champion Atlanta United.







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## Wayne Rooney secures first MLS hat trick to open 2019 D.C. United account

Wayne Rooney opened his 2019 goal scoring account for D.C. United at Audi Field in Week 3, pouncing for his first MLS hat trick against visiting Real Salt Lake.

Rooney scored his first two goals in a span of seven minutes. In the 34th minute he converted a penalty kick awarded following Video Review, which determined Marcelo Silva had stepped on the leg of Rooney's teammate, Paul Arriola, inside the penalty area.

Then he chipped charging goalkeeper Nick Rimando with two touches after Leonardo Jara dispossessed RSL's Aaron Herrera in his own half and sent the Englishman a perfect diagonal ball to split the defense.

Rooney followed that with a third in the 65th minute on a feed from Junior Moreno following some exceptional D.C. interplay down the left.

In his second season with the Black-and-Red,

Rooney entered Saturday with a single assist in 2019. In 20 appearances after his summer arrival last year, he became D.C.'s leading goal scorer with 12, and added seven assists.



CREDIT: MLS SOCCER Ian Quillen Contributor

### Atlanta United 1, Philadelphia Union 1

Brenden Aaronson put the Philadelphia Union ahead shortly after halftime in his MLS debut, but Ezequiel Barco equalized moments after coming on as a substitute to help Atlanta United salvage a 1-1 draw on Sunday at Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

Starting in place of the suspended Marco Fabian, the 18-year-old Aaronson's 47th-minute strike was enough to earn Philadelphia their first point of 2019 after consecutive losses to open the season.

Meanwhile, the defending MLS Cup champions are also sputtering out of the gate with only two points, both earned at home, while having balanced league play with Concacaf Champions League commitments.

#### Goals

47' - PHI - Brenden Aaronson 70' - ATL - Ezequiel Barco

### Three Things

THE BIG PICTURE: It looked better for a stretch after Barco's introduction, but the final third is still a major struggle for Atlanta, whose first effort on target Sunday came in the 64th minute. Perhaps some time off will help. Having played six matches in 18 days between domestic and continental competition, those Five Stripes not being called into international duty have 13 days to wait for their next league fixture.

Embedded video

MOMENT OF THE MATCH: It wasn't the prettiest of goals, appearing to take a deflection on its way past wrong-footed goalkeeper Brad Guzan, but Aaronson will surely remember this moment — and the deafening silence in the stadium that followed — for the rest of his life.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Aaronson, graded on a bit of a curve. He may not have had the most quality on display on Sunday, but he excelled in what was arguably the most difficult task: Handle the midfield string-pulling in your MLS debut for a team that desperately needed a result. Oh, and you're facing the defending champs in one of the league's most hostile away environments.





## MLS Miami team plans to play 2 years at the site of Lockhart Stadium in Fort Lauderdale

The Major League Soccer team awarded to Miami says it will start play in 2020 at the site of Lockhart Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.

Inter Miami said Thursday it will privately fund the design, development and construction of a complex there that includes an 18,000-seat stadium and training facility.

The team says it will spend its first two seasons in Fort Lauderdale until its planned Freedom Park opens in Miami. The 25,000-seat venue has been proposed for the site of city-owned Melreese Country Club, near Miami International Airport.

The Lockhart site will be used for training, Miami's team in the lower-tier United Soccer League and academy teams. The current Lockhart Stadium opened in 1959 and was the home of more than a half-dozen soccer teams, including the North American Soccer League's Fort Lauderdale Strikers from 1977-83 and MLS's Miami Fusion from its launch in 1998 until the team was eliminated by the league after the 2001 season.



Former England captain David Beckham and Jorge Mas are among Inter Miami's owners.

**CREDIT: Associated Press** 

### David Beckham Discusses Bringing Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo to MLS

Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham has refused to rule out making a move for Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo but acknowledged both are still playing at a level well above that of MLS.

Beckham spoke to reporters about the search for players for his new club, which will debut in MLS in 2020. Per Reuters

(for ESPN FC) he touched on the two stars and the possibility of landing them at this time:

"Everyone has their wish list -- everyone does! But if you look at the way Leo and Cristiano are still playing, even at what you might think is the later stage of their careers, I don't see it ending for them.

"They're playing at such a high level that it's hard to see them leaving the clubs they are at. But we will see. You never know what can happen in football."

Ronaldo and Messi are 34 and 31, respectively, but are still widely considered among the best players in the world.

Beckham became MLS' biggest overseas star when he joined L.A. Galaxy in 2007, handing the league a massive profile boost. Top stars from Europe have since found success in North

America, with Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Wayne Rooney making the switch last year.

Beckham is expected to try to add stars of at least similar caliber, knowing full well expansion teams can find success in MLS almost instantly. Atlanta United made their debut in 2017 and won the title a year later.

Beckham also discussed his old club Manchester United and their success under caretaker manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. He wants his old team-mate to get the job on a permanent basis:

"He's just brought the players together -- and the players have responded in the right way, the way the fans had hoped. It's just nice to see Ole do so well. It's not down to me to decide. But look at the fans. They've loved all the time he has been the manager so far. They want that to continue.

"Ole has just come in. He gains that respect from the players because he had done it. He'd been there on the biggest stage and won, he's been successful."

Solskjaer and Beckham were team-mates during the glory days under Sir Alex Ferguson.



Orlando City SC 1, Montreal Impact 3

The Montreal Impact rode a first-half flurry and late insurance goal to emerge with a 3-1 win at Orlando City SC on Saturday evening. Ignacio Piatti scored a brace and turnovers by Orlando took their toll, as the Lions remain winless early into James O'Connor's first full season in charge.

The ball got rolling in the 14th minute, when Samuel Piette sprung a through ball for Saphir Taider. The Algerian midfielder cut a cross back for winger Orji Okwonkwo, who finished to the far post for his first goal in MLS.

The 1-o lead doubled immediately after the ensuing kick off, as Orlando center back Shane O'Neill mis-hit a back pass into the path of Maximiliano Urruti. He was fouled as he rounded Lions' goalkeeper Brian Rowe, only for Piatti to smash into the open net.

Piatti then made it 3-0 in the 80th minute, as Harry Novillo played Piatti in after another Orlando turnover. The Argentine made no mistake after some patience in the 18-yard box.

Despite the first-half sucker punch, Orlando had its chances and could have found a result if not for some wayward finishing from Dom Dwyer. The veteran striker hit over in the 7th minute after some creativity from Nani; he headed right into Evan Bush's hands in the 35th minute; and blasted a breakaway over the net in the 58th minute.

Dwyer finally found his breakthrough in the 91st minute, as he tapped into an open net after some inventive play from rookie forward Santiago Patino. It was too little too late, though.

Montreal center back Zakaria Diallo was shown a straight red card in the 96th minute. The French center back put his hands to the face of Dwyer, and head referee Timothy Ford wasted no time in making his decision.

The scoreline could have been more lopsided if not for Rowe's play in goal. He made a career-high eight saves.

#### Goals

14' – MTL – Orji Okwonkwo 15' – MTL – Ignacio Piatti 80' – MTL – Ignacio Piatti 91' - ORL - Dom Dwyer

### Three Things

THE BIG PICTURE: With his two strikes, Ignacio Piatti now has 10 goals and one assist through 10 career games vs. Orlando. The result also gives Montreal its second away win in three matches before an early bye week. As for Orlando,

MOMENT OF THE MATCH: Allowing an early goal at home is tough enough, but the manner in which Orlando conceded the second was an absolute gut punch. Shane O'Neill botched his back pass, and Ignacio Piatti made no mistake on the second opportunity. The goal was, in a word, deflating.

self-inflicted errors were the name of the game as they allowed multiple goals at home for the second straight match.

MAN OF THE MATCH: While Piatti bagged a brace, Orji Okwonkwo, on loan from Serie A club Bologna, was extremely influential until being subbed out in the 74th minute. The Nigerian winger's goal served as the game-winner and he attempted a team-high seven shots. His direct play also led to some heated moments with Lions' left back Danilo Acosta.





# Last ones standing: Sporting carry the MLS torch into Champions League Semifinals

Among Major League Soccer's five representatives in the 2019 Scotiabank Concacaf Champions League, Sporting Kansas City are the last ones standing.

That much was confirmed Thursday night when Manager Peter Vermes' men secured a pulsating 3-0 win over Panamanian side Independiente at drizzly Children's Mercy Park, overturning a 2-1 deficit to claim a 4-2 aggregate victory in the Champions League Quarterfinals.



The semifinal field of North America's premier club tournament is now set, and Sporting find themselves in the company of three Liga MX outfits that brushed aside MLS opponents in the quarterfinal stage.

Those three are Mexican heavyweights Santos Laguna, Tigres UANL and Sporting's opponent in next month's two-legged semifinals: three-time Champions League winner CF Monterrey.

Thursday's triumph was colossal for Sporting on multiple fronts. First and foremost, the club has reached the Champions League semis for the first time during the competition's modern era, which

began in 2008. Secondly, the team is now assured at least \$200,000 in prize money, as Concacaf awards \$500,000 to the tournament winner, \$300,000 to the runners-up and \$200,000 each to the sides that finish third and fourth.

Thirdly, and perhaps most prominently on the national soccer scene, Sporting are now carriers of the MLS torch. The fact that an MLS club has never won a modern-era Champions League is well documented, as is the fact that Mexican teams have won all 11 titles since 2008.

In order for MLS to overcome the heavy burden of history, Sporting will have to defeat two more foes from south of the border. Vermes' side have already done so once, hammering Toluca 5-0 on aggregate in the Round of 16, but Monterrey, Santos and Tigres have all appeared far superior in quality.

Single-game tickets for the second leg of the Concacaf Champions League Semifinals between Sporting and Monterrey at Children's Mercy Park are now on sale at SeatGeek.com. The game will take place between April 9-11, and tickets are included in Sporting Kansas City Season Ticket Member packages.

Sporting will visit Monterrey for the first leg at Estadio BBVA Bancomer between April 2-4 before hosting the Mexican side in the decisive return fixture the following week. Concacaf will announce exact dates, kickoff times, streaming and broadcast details for both semifinal matches in the near term.

CREDIT: MLS SOCCER Phil West Contributor



### New York City FC 2, Los Angeles Football Club 2

Carlos Vela scored his second and third goals of the season, twice bringing LAFC level from a goal behind in a 2-2 draw against New York City FC on Sunday afternoon at Yankee Stadium.

Vela's finish after Latif Blessing's service just before halftime made it 1-1 going into the break. Then Vela converted cooly from the penalty spot after Blessing induced Ben Sweat into a foul in the area 14 minutes from full time. He might have also added an assist if not for some better finishing early on by his teammates.

For NYCFC, offseason Designated Player signing Alexandru Mitrita opened his MLS account with an exceptional 39th-

minute effort, and Alex Ring put New York in front again when he smashed in Sweat's dragged back cross in the 62nd.

#### Goals

39' - NYC - Alexandru Mitrita 43' - LAFC - Carlos Vela 62' - NYC - Alex Ring 76' - LAFC - Carlos Vela (PK)

### Three Things

**THE BIG PICTURE**: This should feel like a point gained for LAFC, which was playing at noon local time in one of the league's tougher and more unique road environs, and two points lost for NYCFC, who have drawn their first three matches this season despite never trailing in 2019.

**MOMENT OF THE MATCH**: Aesthetically speaking, Mitrita's first MLS goal was worth waiting for, as the Romanian freed himself

from three defenders before unleashing a ferocious strike that gave Tyler Miller little chance.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Vela's performance wasn't quite as sparkling as his sensational Player of the Week-worthy effort in a 4-1 victory over the Portland Timbers. But with honorable mention to Blessing, he was still the main reason the visitors headed back to the West Coast with something to show for their travels.



### **Toronto FC 3, New England Revolution 2**

Sparked by Jozy Altidore's season debut, Toronto FC earned a 3-2 home win on Sunday night over the New England Revolution.

Altidore subbed in for Jordan Hamilton in the 68th minute, then found the game-winner in the 80th when he blasted



home a cross from Justin Morrow across the goalmouth. The US men's national team striker broke what seemed destined for a 2-2 draw

The strike also quieted a star showing from Revs' midfielder Carles Gil. The Spaniard and Designated Player scored on a penalty kick in the 9th minute, then drew New England level in the 52nd minute via a deflected shot.

As the game flowed back and forth, Toronto found a quick response to Gil's first goal via US U-20 international Ayo Akinola. In the 14th minute, the forward finished off a mazy run with a curled finish inside the far post for his first-ever MLS goal.

Toronto had a lead going into halftime, as Hamilton cushioned home a cross from Jay Chapman in the 45th minute. There was a suspicion of offsides on Chapman, but head referee Ted Unkel let the decision stand after input from the video assistant referee.

#### Goals

9' – NE – Carles Gil (PK) 14' – TFC – Ayo Akinola 45' – TFC – Jordan Hamilton 52' – NE – Carles Gil 80' – TFC – Jozy Altidore | WATCH

### Three Things

THE BIG PICTURE: After starting last season with a 1-4 record, the 2017 MLS Cup champions are off to a roaring start. TFC have now won back-to-back league games, a feat they accomplished once during all of 2018.

MOMENT OF THE MATCH: Jordan Hamilton's goal and the controversial decision from head referee Ted Unkel are bound to be discussed all week. It gave Toronto a 2-1 lead on the stroke of halftime and left the Revs irate.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Jozy Altidore made quite the introduction after an injury-ravaged 2018 season. He bagged his 61st regular-season goal in MLS and gave Toronto all three points for the second straight match.

CREDIT: MLS SOCCER Ian Quillen Contributor



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