



LEAGUES CUP 2023: INTER MIAMI CF ADVANCES TO LEAGUES CUP QUARTERFINALS WITH WIN OVER FC DALLAS IN PENALTIES

Inter Miami CF clinched a Leagues Cup quarterfinals berth with a penalty shootout win over FC Dallas on Sunday night, in a match featuring a staggering eight goals in regulation. The thriller was highlighted by Lionel Messi's third consecutive brace, including a stunning 85th minute free kick equalizer, and a goal from second-half substitute Benjamin Cremaschi with his first touch.

Lineup Notes

Drake Callender started in goal; DeAndre Yedlin, Sergii Kryvtsov, Kamal Miller and Jordi Alba lined up in defense; Sergio Busquets, Dixon Arroyo, and Diego Gómez formed the midfield three; Messi and Robert Taylor started on the wings alongside striker Josef Martínez.

Inter Miami's two latest debutants, Alba and Gómez, slotted into the starting XI for the first time on the night after making their first appearances off the bench in the Leagues Cup Round of 32 win over Orlando City.

Match Action

Just six minutes into his first start, Alba connected with Messi, cutting a pass back to the Argentine at the top of the box, where he struck a first-time shot inside the near post for the early 0-1 lead. The move marked the pair's first connection for a goal in Inter Miami colors, one reminiscent of countless signature moments together at FC Barcelona; it was Alba's first assist for the team.

Dallas then turned the tide, netting twice before halftime. First, in the 37th minute, Marco Farfan sent a cross in to Facundo Quignon, who connected with a volley to level the score. Then, in the 45th minute, Jesus Ferreira assisted Bernard Kamungo who scored to take the lead at 2-1 heading into halftime.

The hosts extended their lead in the 63rd minute when a free kick from Alan Velasco found the inside of the far post to make it 3-1.

Inter Miami cut into the deficit just two minutes later when Messi played a through ball towards the endline for Alba, who then played a ball back in front of goal, where substitute Cremaschi connected and struck just moments after coming on to make it 3-2. The goal was Cremaschi's second for the team, while the assist was Alba's second in just his first start and second appearance. A pair of own goals - one for each side - followed, sending the match towards a frantic finish. Then, in the 85th minute, Messi stepped over a free kick from just outside the right corner of the box and curled his shot past the diving keeper and into the top right corner of the net to level the game at four goals apiece. The goal, Messi's seventh in just four matches with Inter Miami and his third consecutive brace, sent the match into a dramatic penalty shootout.

All five Inter Miami takers - Messi, Busquets, Leonardo Campana, Miller and Cremaschi - netted, clinching a 5-4 penalty shootout win, culminating in Cremaschi's heroic finish.

Post-Match Reaction

"In any team the subject of character is important. I think that we had it today. We made a lot of mistakes...but we also showed a sample of the team's character, and that gave us the chance," said head coach Gerardo 'Tata' Martino. "We're really happy with the result and the wins which help us to continue evolving."

LEAGUES CUP 2023: CHICAGO FIRE FC FALL 1-0 AGAINST CLUB AMÉRICA AT SEATGEEK STADIUM

Chicago Fire FC fell 1-0 to Club América on Friday night at SeatGeek Stadium in the Round of 32 of Leagues Cup 2023.

Chicago Fire goalkeeper Chris Brady was tested early on when Club América worked their way into the box in the eighth minute. The Mexican side fired a shot that Brady read through traffic, diving to his left to stop it from going into the lower left corner. Brady had more heroics just before halftime in the 43rd minute when Kevin Álvarez fired a blast from just outside the box that Brady reacted well to save with his legs.

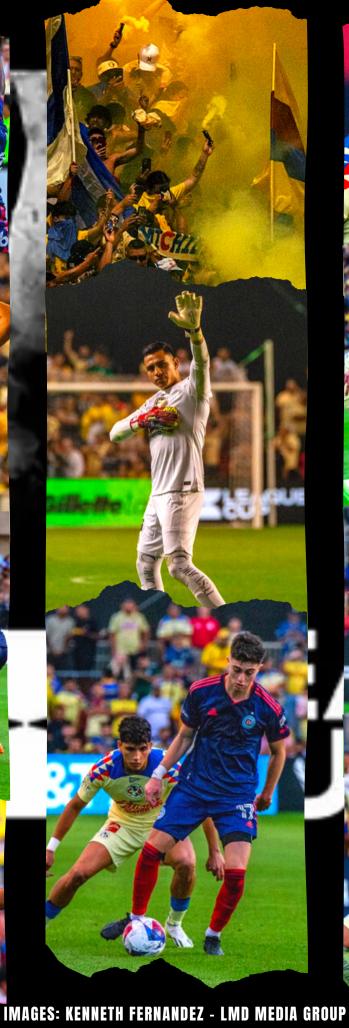
América appeared to have scored in the 35th minute, but Kevin Álvarez's goal was called offside. The teams went into halftime tied at zero, but not without a last-moment effort by the Fire. Xherdan Shaqiri sent a ball across the box where Brian Gutiérrez timed his run, but his headed attempt hit off the crossbar as the referee signaled the end of the first half.

It was Club América who broke through in the 64th minute when the ball was played into the near post, where midfielder Gastón Giménez attempted to redirect the ball out of bounds but instead saw it go into the Fire's own net. Following the goal, Chicago was forced to make a goalkeeper substitution with Spencer Richey stepping into the net for Chris Brady. Club América finished the game with 10 men when Richard Sánchez was sent off with a straight red card in the 90+4th minute.

NEXT MATCH: Chicago will next host Orlando City SC on Aug. 20 at Soldier Field at 7:30 p.m. CT as the Club returns to MLS league play. Join the Fire in honoring our nation's brave military personnel with our upcoming Military Night on Aug. 20. Alongside the action on the field, we'll show our support and appreciation throughout the evening for the incredible sacrifices and dedication of our military community, plus we'll have exciting activities and giveaways for fans to enjoy. The match will be broadcast on Apple TV, streamed on wlsam.com and transmitted locally in Spanish on TUDN 1200 AM.

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CHICAGO FIRE FC



MESSI IN CHICAGO

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