



Seattle Sounders FC vs. Sporting Kansas City March 6, 2016 · CenturyLink Field







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CONTENTS

- 3 Matchup
- 4 Storylines
- 6 Sounders Shift Focus to MLS Season
- 10 Sounders FC Signs Forward Oalex Anderson
- 12 Team Rosters
- 15 Posters by the People
- **17** Home Sweet Home
- 20 SEA vs. SKC
- 23 2015 Season Stats











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MATCHOP



Sounders FC begins its eighth MLS season on Sunday evening with a nationally televised tilt against Sporting KC. After reaching the postseason for the seventh consecutive season in 2015 - tied with the LA Galaxy for the longest such streak in MLS - the Rave Green look to jump out to another hot start in league play. Since 2009, Seattle has posted a 5-2-0 record in season openers at CenturyLink Field, including a 1-0 win over Sporting KC on March 8, 2014.

Sunday's contest marks the first competitive match of 2016 for Sporting, who lost to eventual MLS Cup champion Portland Timbers on penalty kicks in a thrilling Knockout Round defeat last postseason. Meanwhile, the host side enters Sunday having already competed in a two-legged Knockout Round series in the 2015-2016 Scotiabank CONCACAF Champions League. Sounders FC fell by an aggregate score of 5-3 to defending champion Club America, including a 2-2 draw at CenturyLink Field on February 23 and a 3-1 loss at Estadio Azteca on March 2.





DID YOU KNOW???

Sunday's match marks the eighth consecutive season Sounders FC begins the season with a contest at CenturyLink Field. Sporting KC will be the first MLS club to play multiple home openers in the Emerald City, returning in 2016 after a 1-0 loss on March 8, 2014.

MATCHDAY STORYLINES

Radio Play-by-Play Commentator Matt Johnson tells you his three storylines to follow in tonight's match vs. Sporting KC

With a new MLS season upon us and Sporting KC coming to town for the opener, Sounders fans have plenty to think about. Let's dive right in!

NEW FORMATION

With two CONCACAF matches under their belt, Sigi Schmid's squad is fine tuning the rhythm and function of the 4-3-3 set up. Despite the departure of Obafemi Martins, Schmid is sticking with the formation that will hopefully allow more possession in the midfield that result in more goals.

General Manager and President of Soccer Garth Lagerwey told me during the preseason that the formation wasn't only good because of the attacking options that the squad possess, but having the strong midfield trio of Andreas Ivanschitz, Ozzie Alonzo and Erik Friberg in the middle of the park to shut down the opposition's attack will be vital to start an immediate counter attack. His point was that having three in the middle instead of 2 in a 4-4-2 would be the perfect set up to give the three up top plenty of chances.

YOUTH OFF THE BENCH

With the departures of many familiar faces, including veterans Andy Rose, Lamar Neagle, Gonzalo Pineda, Marco Pappa, Obafemi Martins and Leo Gonzalez, the stage is set for the youth movement to show Sounders fans that they are ready for the next step in their careers.

Returners Cristian Roldan. Aaron Kovar and Darwin Jones have already seen time in the **CONCACAF** Champions League, and they will surely be ready for the MLS season. These three will be at the center of the youth movement that Schmid will count on moving forward, but it will continue with the likes of Oniel Fisher and Oalex Anderson. Of course the coach will have veterans such as Zach Scott and Nathan Sturgis to lead the youngsters off the bench, which will be vital for a team that has a grueling campaign ahead. Count



newcomers Jordan Morris (age 21) and Joevin Jones (age 24) in this group, and you can see that Lagerwey has gone about his plan to get younger immediately.

RHYTHM OF SEASON

With the CONCACAF Champions League Quarterfinals behind



them, the Sounders can look for a month of March that is schedule friendly. While acknowledging that they are tough opponents that the sounders face in Sporting KC. Real Salt Lake and Vancouver Whitecaps FC, they are in a favorable rhythm that most coaches covet. The Sounders play Sunday vs. Sporting KC, the following Saturday at RSL and then Vancouver the week after. This will allow the coaching staff to work on tactics in a timely fashion, and give the squad some rest while also working on fitness.

With an early bye week in the last week of March before facing Montreal, and only one road trip in the first month of the season, the schedule should help keep the group mentally fresh as the MLS season begins.

STAND

2016 MLS SCHEDULE

3/6	SPORTING KC	
3/12	AT REAL SALT LAKE	JOETV
3/19	VANCOUVER	Q13 FOX
4/2	MONTREAL	Q13 FOX
4/10	AT HOUSTON	ESPN
4/16	PHILADELPHIA	JOETV
4/23	AT COLORADO	Q13 FOX
4/30	COLUMBUS	JOETV
5/7	SAN JOSE	Q13 FOX
5/14	AT FC DALLAS	Q13 FOX
5/21	COLORADO	JOETV
5/28	AT NEW ENGLAND	JOETV
6/1	AT DC UNITED	Q13 FOX
6/19	AT NY RED BULLS	FS1
6/25	NEW YORK CITY FC	ESPN
7/2	AT TORONTO	JOETV
7/9	LA GALAXY	ESPN
7/13	FC DALLAS	Q13 FOX
7/17	AT PORTLAND	Q13 FOX
7/24	AT SPORTING KC	ESPN
7/31	LA GALAXY	ESPN
8/7	AT ORLANDO CITY	FS1
8/14	REAL SALT LAKE	FS1
8/21	PORTLAND	FS1
8/24	AT HOUSTON	JOETV
8/28	AT PORTLAND	ESPN
9/10	AT SAN JOSE	JOETV
9/17	VANCOUVER	JOETV
9/25	AT LA GALAXY	ESPN
	CHICAGO	JOETV
	AT VANCOUVER	FS1
0/12	HOUSTON	JOETV
0/16	AT FC DALLAS	JOETV
0/23	REAL SALT LAKE	JOETV

Sounders Shift Focus to MLS Season

by Will Parchman

At least for this season, the Seattle Sounders' adventure in the Scotiabank CONCACAF Champions League is over.

The Sounders couldn't escape the dreaded MLS Champions League road trip curse in Mexico, succumbing to Club América's devastatingly effective attack in a 3-1 loss that dropped MLS clubs to 2-35-8 all time in competitive matches south of the border. One of those wins, of course, belonged to the Sounders in 2013, but they couldn't replicate their feat at the Estadio Azteca on Wednesday night.

The Sounders entered the second leg even at 2-2 after a scintillating draw at

CenturyLink Field last week, but that left them on unsteady purchase. Due to the away goals rule, América owned the tiebreaker, forcing Seattle to either win the series by a goal-inflated draw or win the game outright.

Ultimately, neither possibility came to fruition.

For now, the Sounders shift their gaze to the MLS season opener on Sunday against Sporting Kansas City at home But on Wednesday, the Sounders were left wondering if they left a result on the field. Here's a look at three things we learned from the match.



The Sounders had three leads in this series and lost all of them

In the first leg in Seattle, the Sounders led the match twice, once at 1-0 and again at 2-1. On both occasions América equaled out the score in lightning fashion, the first return salvo coming within 90 seconds of Seattle's opener just before half. Of course, a large portion of the explanation points directly to América's devastating front duo of Oribe Peralta and Darwin Quintero. who combined for four of the team's five goals in this series.

But that has to be a particular point of frustration for Sounders coach Sigi Schmid and his coaching staff. Three

times-including once on Wednesday-Seattle snagged leads, and each time América flew back with violently effective responses. In the second leg, Seattle snagged a 1-0 lead just before halftime off an Osvaldo Alonso cross that hit Nelson Valdez and then rolled in off the back of an América defender.

A minute later, Quintero bagged the equalizer. Stop me if you've heard this story before.

This isn't necessarily a cause for broader concern. A two-match sample size is far too small a thing to extrapolate into macro issues, and as we've touched on in this space before, América's attack is more robust

> **HIGHLIGHTS: Seattle Sounders FC** at Club America | Scotiabank **CONCACAF** Champions League



JORDAN MORRIS

than any Seattle will face in MLS this season. But that proclivity in this series is certainly something to monitor as the season begins.

Rubens Sambueza runs riot

Every team needs a playmaker, but you don't necessarily expect the primary string-puller to be operating almost entirely out wide. More often than not they tend to dip inside Zone 14-the central region just outside the boxwhere almost all of the most dangerous service from the midfield into the box originates. Whether Seattle didn't expect América's primary playmaker to live outside the fullbacks or just couldn't stop him, Sambueza was an irrepressible force for the entirety of this series.

Incredibly, Sambueza assisted on the first four of América's five goals throughout both legs, meaning his creative instinct essentially would've been good enough to guide América past Seattle on its own. He created more goals than the Sounders scored. He split his service between Peralta and Quintero evenly, and he spent time on both flanks testing both Tyrone Mears and Joevin Jones with varying results. But there's little question the Argentinian had a devastating impact on this series with his vision and pinpoint crosses.

What's more, reports out of Mexico suggested Sambueza dislocated his shoulder over the weekend in a 4-1 loss to Tigres. He wasn't even supposed to play. Whether those reports were inflated or Sambueza simply gritted through the pain, he looked no worse for the wear on Wednesday.

Time to flip the page

Schmid's lineup indicated just how seriously he took this competition,

even as it hung on the precipice of failure following the first leg. With the MLS opener just four days off, he could've sat some of his projected starting lineup on Wednesday and given the kids a go. But he didn't, starting what's expected to be his first choice lineup going forward for a third consecutive match. If you had any doubt Seattle flew south to win the thing. those were dismissed the second the lineups were released.

That said, the lost opportunity here immediately has to flip to the backburner, because there isn't much time to dwell. Seattle will take its flight home and have a short week of prep work for a Sporting KC team that is invariably a tactical stampede. Sporting KC lives on the counter, especially on the road, and they do their best work trampling downfield at breakneck speed. For Seattle to deal with that adequately, they'll have to be fully focused.

Different clubs view the CONCACAF Champions League through different lenses, but there's little question the Sounders gave it their undivided attention. Unfortunately, they ran up against the tournament's defending champions, which perhaps shrouded how well they played at times in an attacking sense. The magnifying glass will now flip to the defense as Seattle attempts to shore up its gaps down the spine in preparation for the coming MLS storm.



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- (4) Tickets to an Orlando theme park



Sounders FC Signs Forward Oalex Anderson



Seattle Sounders FC announced on Tuesday the signing of St. Vincent and the Grenadines international Oalex Anderson. The 20-year-old spent the 2015 season with Sounders FC 2 in the club's inaugural USL campaign, scoring four goals in 16 appearances. Anderson joins fellow forward Andy Craven as the second player to make the jump from S2 to the Sounders FC First Team roster.

"It's exciting to see our development system at work in signing one of our standout S2 players to the First Team," said Sounders FC General Manager & President of Soccer Garth Lagerwey. "Oalex has a lot of potential, which he showed last season, and we're happy to have him join the senior squad ahead of the 2016 MLS season."

Anderson started seven of 16 appearances for Sounders FC 2 during the 2015 USL season after signing on April 11. The speedy striker scored four goals in just 758 minutes, as the Rave Green notched a postseason appearance in their inaugural campaign. Prior to joining Seattle, Anderson scored 12 goals in 18 appearances for Grenades FC in the 2014 season playing in Antigua and Barbuda. Prior to that, he was the top scorer in the NLA Premier League in 2013 while playing with System 3 FC in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Anderson has 20 caps for the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Team since his debut in February of 2014, scoring 10 international goals. He found the net against the U.S. Men's National Team for an opening strike five minutes into the match in a FIFA World Cup Qualifier in November at Busch Stadium in St. Louis, but the Vincy Heat lost the contest 6-1.

Additionally, Sounders FC announced on Tuesday that it has loaned defender Jimmy Ockford to NASL side New York Cosmos, while Homegrown Player Jordan Schweitzer has been waived by the First Team and subsequently added to S2's roster for 2016.

A third-year pro with the Rave Green, Ockford previously spent the 2014 season on loan with the Cosmos, scoring two goals in 10 regular season appearances for the club, adding an additional strike in Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup play.

Schweitzer was signed by Sounders FC on January 7, 2016 after a standout collegiate career at the University of Denver. After being waived by the First Team, the Sounders FC Homegrown Player has been added to S2's 2016 roster.



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No.	Name	Pos.	Height	Weight	Age
1	Tyler Miller	GK	6-4	195	22
2	Clint Dempsey	F	6-1	170	32
3	Brad Evans	M/D	6-1	170	30
4	Tyrone Mears	D	5-11	163	33
-4 5	Jimmy Ockford	D	6-1	185	23
6	Osvaldo Alonso	M	5-11	155	23 30
7	Cristian Roldan	M	5-8	165	20
8	Erik Friberg	M	5-11	154	30
11	Aaron Kovar	M	5-10	155	22
12	Michael Farfan	M	5-19	160	27
13	Jordan Morris	F	6-0	185	21
14	Chad Marshall	D	6-4	190	31
15	Dylan Remick	D	6-0	165	24
16	Nelson Valdez	F	5-10	160	32
17	Darwin Jones	F	5-10	175	23
18	Nathan Sturgis	М	5-10	160	28
20	Zach Scott	D	5-11	175	34
22	Charlie Lyon	GK	6-2	215	22
23	Andreas Ivanschitz	М	6-0	180	32
24	Stefan Frei	GK	6-3	195	29
29	Román Torres	D	6-2	195	29
31	Damion Lowe	D	6-3	175	21
33	Joevin Jones	D	5-11	160	24
39	Oalex Anderson	F	5-8	155	20
80	Victor Mansaray	F	5-0 5-11	180	19
91	Oniel Fisher	M/D	5-9	155	24
91 99	Oniel Fisher Andy Craven	M/D F	5-9 5-11	155 167	24 24
91 99 No.	Oniel Fisher Andy Craven	M/D F Pos.	5-9 5-11 Height	155 167 Weight	24 24 Age
91 99 No. 1	Oniel Fisher Andy Craven Name Jon Kempin	M/D F Pos. GK	5-9 5-11 Height 6-1	155 167 Weight 170	24 24 Age 22
91 99 No. 1 2	Oniel Fisher Andy Craven Name Jon Kempin Erik Palmer-Brown	M/D F Pos. GK D	5-9 5-11 Height 6-1 6-1	155 167 Weight 170 175	24 24 Age 22 18
91 99 No. 1 2 3	Oniel Fisher Andy Craven Name Jon Kempin Erik Palmer-Brown Ike Opara	M/D F Pos. GK D D	5-9 5-11 Height 6-1 6-1 6-2	155 167 Weight 170 175 180	24 24 Age 22 18 27
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5-10

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37

93

Daniel Salloi

Sori Mustivar

Jacob Peterson







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POSTERS BY THE PEOPLE

Posters by the People is back for the 2016 season! Sounders FC is calling for artists and designers to share their passion for art, soccer culture and the city of Seattle by creating a commemorative matchday poster. Learn more about the program, view deadlines and submit your design HERE!

Our opening matchday poster was designed by Ryan 'Henry' Ward, a Seattle based artist who specializes in large scale murals. Henry has a large body of gallery canvas work and has painted over 200 murals all over the world. His studio is an old warehouse in the industrial district of Ballard, where the Puget Sound intersects with the fresh water lakes that interlace the city. He paints freely out of his imagination and also takes commissioned requests. You can view some of his work at_ryanhenryward.com.

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SOUNDE

HOME SWEET HOME

For the eighth consecutive season, Sounders FC will open regular season action on the Xbox Pitch at CenturyLink Field. Historically, the home field advantage has yielded good results for the Rave Green, having posted a 5-2-0 record and a 12-2 goal differential. The host club has never allowed more than one goal in a season opener and has recorded four shutouts.

DATE	OPPONENT	RESULT
3/02/09	New York	W, 3-0
3/25/10	Philadelphia	W, 2-0
3/15/11	LA Galaxy	L, 0-1
3/17/12	Toronto FC	W, 3-1
3/02/13	Montreal	L, 0-1
3/08/14	Sporting KC	W, 1-0
3/08/15	New England	W, 3-0
3/06/16	Sporting KC	????

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SEA vs. SKC

Sounders FC is 7-2-3 all-time against Sporting, including a 3-1-2 record on the Xbox Pitch at CenturyLink Field. Sporting delivered Sounders FC its first-ever loss in MLS in April 2009 before going winless in the next nine matches. Last season, the two sides played to a scoreless draw in May, a 1-0 SKC win in June and a 1-1 draw in September. Sunday's match is the first of two contests between the clubs in 2016, with the second date coming July 24 at Sporting Park.

The all-time series between Seattle and Kansas City has historically been low-scoring and close. On six occasions, Seattle has scored in the 90th minute or later and all 12 meetings have been decided by one goal or fewer. Eleven of the 12 meetings have had three combined goals or fewer.





ALL-TIME SOUNDERS FC vs. SPORTING KANSAS CITY

DATE

RESULT

04/11/2009 SEA 0 vs. KC 1 10/17/2009 SEA 3 at KC 2 04/17/2010 SEA 1 vs. KC * 10/09/2010 SEA 2 at KC 1 05/21/2011 SEA 1 vs. KC 0* 08/06/2011 SEA 2 at KC 1* 06/20/2012 SEA 1 vs. KC 1

DATE

05/08/2013 SEA 1 at KC 0* 03/08/2014 SEA 1 vs. KC 0* 05/23/2015 SEA 0 vs. KC 0 06/06/2015 SEA 0 at KC 1 09/27/2015 SEA 1 at KC 1

RESULT

*featured a game-winning goal in second half stoppage time



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SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC 2015 MLS REGULAR SEASON STATISTICS

UNF	POS	Player	GP	GS	MIN	G	A	SHT	SOG	FC/FS	OFF	CK	C/E
9	F	Obafemi Martins	21	20	1805	15	6	42	28	18/48	11	1	2/0
2	F	Clint Dempsey	20	20	1742	10	10	61	27	18/39	5	0	1/0
19	F	Chad Barrett	18	9	715	5	0	18	8	9/4	7	0	1/0
27	Μ	Lamar Neagle	31	23	2028	4	2	40	20	29/20	19	4	2/0
10	Μ	Marco Pappa	20	17	1468	3	6	37	15	17/38	2	49	2/0
4	D	Tyrone Mears	33	33	2960	1	3	7	3	29/12	1	8	3/0
3	Μ	Brad Evans	28	27	2345	1	2	9	4	23/23	0	0	4/0
8	Μ	Gonzalo Pineda	28	21	1845	1	2	11	1	24/22	0	27	5/1
18	Μ	Thomás	11	7	547	1	1	9	6	8/16	4	7	1/0
16	F	Nelson Valdez	7	5	413	1	1	5	1	8/15	3	0	0/0
12	D	Leo Gonzalez	16	8	712	1	1	3	2	16/7	0	0	1/0
23	Μ	Andreas Ivanschitz	6	5	439	1	1	5	2	4/10	1	15	1/0
5	Μ	Andy Rose	25	17	1612	0	3	17	7	14/13	2	0	4/0
28	Μ	Erik Friberg	13	11	949	0	2	3	1	21/10	0	22	3/0
7	М	Cristian Roldan	22	11	1114	0	1	12	4	13/14	3	9	1/0
29	D	Román Torres	4	4	315	0	1	2	2	4/4	0	0	0/0
24	GK	Stefan Frei	31	31	2744	0	0	0	0	1/4	0	0	1/0
14	D	Chad Marshall	29	28	2529	0	0	10	3	29/28	3	0	2/0
6	М	Osvaldo Alonso	22	21	1857	0	0	8	1	45/44	0	0	7/0
15	D	Dylan Remick	19	18	1607	0	0	2	0	15/9	0	0	1/0
20	D	Zach Scott	20	15	1480	0	0	9	4	14/7	1	0	4/0
91	D	Oniel Fisher	11	9	844	0	0	6	1	15/9	2	0	4/0
42	М	Micheal Azira	11	8	727	0	0	6	0	15/4	0	0	2/0
1	GK	Troy Perkins	4	3	316	0	0	0	0	0/0	0	0	0/0
11	Μ	Aaron Kovar	6	2	201	0	0	1	1	1/3	0	3	0/0
17	F	Darwin Jones	9	0	107	0	0	6	2	1/0	2	0	0/0
21	D	Jimmy Ockford	1	1	90	0	0	0	0	0/0	0	0	0/0
99	F	Andy Craven	3	0	67	0	0	2	1	2/1	0	0	1/0
80	F	Victor Mansaray	3	0	28	0	0	0	0	1/0	0	0	0/0
13	D	Andres Correa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0	0	0	0/0
31	D	Damion Lowe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0	0	0	0/0
22	GK	Charlie Lyon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0	0	0	0/0
		Team totals	34	34	3060	44	42	331	144	396/425	67	145	53/1
		Opponent totals	34	34	3060	36	35	464	159	425/396	33	162	59/5

GP-games played; GS-games started; MIN-minutes; G-goals; A-assists; P-points; SHT-shots; SOG-shots on goal; FC/FS-fouls committed/fouls suffered; CK-corner kicks; OFF-offsides; C/E-cautions/ejections

GAME-WINNING GOALS: Clint Dempsey (4), Chad Barrett (2), Lamar Neagle (2), Obafemi Martins (2), Marco Pappa (2), Tyrone Mears (1), Brad Evans (1), Andreas Ivanschitz (1) GAME-WINNING ASSISTS: Clint Dempsey (4), Obafemi

Martins (2), Marco Pappa (1), Tyrone Mears (1), Brad Evans (1), Lamar Neagle (1)

PENALTY KICK GOALS/ATTEMPTS: Clint Dempsey 1-1, Brad Evans 1-1, Obafemi Martins 0-1

SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC INDIVIDUAL GOALKEEPING

UNF	POS	GOALKEEPER	GP	GS	MIN	SHTS	SV	GA	GAA	PG	PA	W-L-T	SO
24	GK	Stefan Frei	31	31	2744	144	111	34	1.08	2	3	14-10-6	10
1	GK	Troy Perkins	4	3	316	15	12	3	0.85	0	0	1-3-0	0
22	GK	Charlie Lyon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0-0-0	0
		Team totals	34	34	3060	159	123	36	1.06	2	3	15-13-6	11
		Opponent totals	34	34	3060	144	99	44	1.29	2	3	13-15-6	11

GP-games played;GS-goals scored;MIN-minutes;SHTS-shots;SV-saves;GA-goals allowed;GAA-goals against avg.;PG-penalty goals; PA-penalty attempts;W/L/T-wins/losses.ties;S0-shutouts



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