

LA GALAXY

Sunday, October 6, 2013



Match Presented by  Degree ^{men}

GAMEDAY PROGRAM

CHIVAS USA



Presented by  HERBALIFE

THE TEAMS



MATCH STATS LA GALAXY

	ON	OFF
SUB 1:		
SUB 2:		
SUB 3:		

YELLOW:

RED:

GOALSCORERS:

MATCH STATS CHIVAS USA

	ON	OFF
SUB 1:		
SUB 2:		
SUB 3:		

YELLOW:

RED:

GOALSCORERS:

MATCH RESULT

HT SCORE:

FT SCORE:

NOTES:

2012 MLS CUP CHAMPIONS



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LA GALAXY

Head Coach: Bruce Arena

#	Player	Pos.
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Carlo Cudicini	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Todd Dunivant	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Omar Gonzalez	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Sean Franklin	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Pablo Mastroeni	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Robbie Keane	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Marcelo Sarvas	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Landon Donovan	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Colin Clark	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Brian Rowe	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Robbie Rogers	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Laurent Courtis	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Hector Jimenez	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Bryan Gaul	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Jaime Penedo	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Juninho	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 20	A.J. DeLaGarza	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Tommy Meyer	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Leonardo	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Brian Perk	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Rafael Garcia	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Michael Stephens	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Charlie Rugg	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Kofi Opare	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 29	Gyasi Zardes	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Chandler Hoffman	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 32	Jack McBean	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 33	Jose Villarreal	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 34	Kenney Walker	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 35	Greg Cochrane	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 36	Oscar Sorto	D

CHIVAS USA

Head Coach: Jose Luis Real

#	Player	Pos.
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Dan Kennedy	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Bobby Burling	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Mario de Luna	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Carlos Bocanegra	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Carlos Borja	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Jose Rivera	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Tristan Bowen	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Edgar Mejia	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Julio Morales	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Erick Torres	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Gabriel Farfan	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Marky Delgado	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Josue Soto	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Bryan de la Fuente	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Eric Avila	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Caleb Calvert	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Jaime Frias	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Jorge Villafana	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 20	Carlos Alvarez	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Carlo Chueca	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Daniel Antunez	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Patrick McLain	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Steve Purdy	D
<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Matthew Fondy	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Jose Correa	F
<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Tim Melia	GK
<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Oswaldo Minda	M
<input type="checkbox"/> 31	Marvin Iraheta	M



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2000

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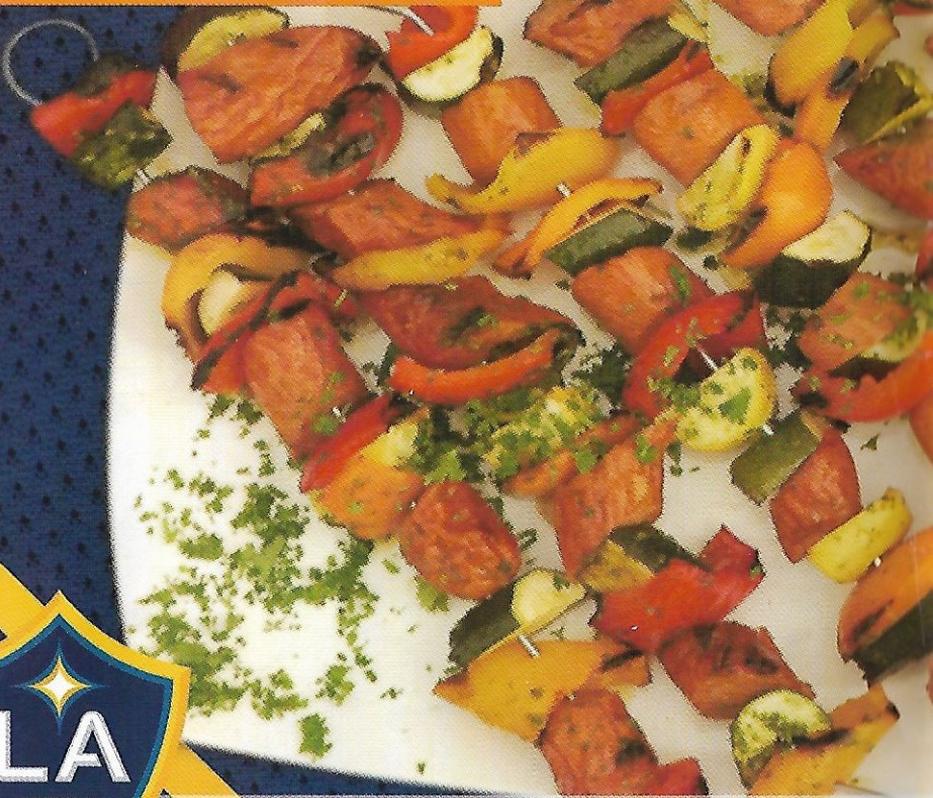
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2013 SCHEDULE



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LA GALAXY 2013 SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	TIME/RESULT	TV/GOALSCORERS
SUNDAY	MARCH 3	VS. CHICAGO FIRE	4-0 W	MAGEE (3), KEANE
THURSDAY	MARCH 7	AT HEREDIANO	0-0 T	--
2012-13 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE - QUARTERFINAL - FIRST LEG				
WEDNESDAY	MARCH 13	VS. HEREDIANO	4-1 W	GONZALEZ, VILLARREAL, KEANE, MCBEAN
2012-13 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE - QUARTERFINAL - SECOND LEG				
SUNDAY	MARCH 17	VS. CHIVAS USA	1-1 T	MCBEAN
SATURDAY	MARCH 23	VS. COLORADO RAPIDS	1-0 W	MAGEE
SATURDAY	MARCH 30	AT TORONTO FC	2-2 T	MAGEE, VILLARREAL
WEDNESDAY	APRIL 3	VS. MONTERREY	1-2 L	DELAGARZA
2012-13 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SEMIFINALS - FIRST LEG				
WEDNESDAY	APRIL 10	AT MONTERREY	0-1 L	--
2012-13 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SEMIFINALS - SECOND LEG				
SATURDAY	APRIL 13	AT FC DALLAS	0-1 L	--
SATURDAY	APRIL 20	VS. SPORTING KANSAS CITY	2-0 W	SARVAS, DONOVAN
SATURDAY	APRIL 27	AT REAL SALT LAKE	2-0 W	MAGEE, RUGG
SUNDAY	MAY 5	VS. HOUSTON DYNAMO	0-1 L	--
SATURDAY	MAY 11	AT VANCOUVER WHITECAPS FC	1-3 L	ZARDES
WEDNESDAY	MAY 15	AT PHILADELPHIA UNION	4-1 W	KEANE, JIMENEZ, DONOVAN
SUNDAY	MAY 19	AT NEW YORK RED BULLS	0-1 L	--
SUNDAY	MAY 26	VS. SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC	4-0 W	FRANKLIN, KEANE (3)
WEDNESDAY	MAY 29	AT CAROLINA RAILHAWKS	0-2 L	--
2013 LAMAR HUNT U.S. OPEN CUP THIRD ROUND				
SUNDAY	JUNE 2	AT NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION	0-5 L	--
SATURDAY	JUNE 8	AT REAL SALT LAKE	1-3 L	DONOVAN
WEDNESDAY	JUNE 19	VS. PORTLAND TIMBERS	0-0 T	--
SUNDAY	JUNE 23	AT CHIVAS USA	1-0 W	ZARDES
SATURDAY	JUNE 29	AT SAN JOSE EARTHQUAKES	2-3 L	SARVAS, JIMENEZ
THURSDAY	JULY 4	VS. COLUMBUS CREW	2-1 W	KEANE (2)
SUNDAY	JULY 7	VS. FC DALLAS	2-0 W	SARVAS, JIMENEZ
SATURDAY	JULY 13	AT PORTLAND TIMBERS	1-2 L	SARVAS
SATURDAY	JULY 20	VS. VANCOUVER WHITECAPS FC	2-1 W	VILLARREAL, ZARDES
SATURDAY	JULY 27	AT COLORADO RAPIDS	0-2 L	--
THURSDAY	AUGUST 1	VS. REAL MADRID	1-3 L	VILLARREAL
2013 GUINNESS INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONS CUP - UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX STADIUM				
SATURDAY	AUGUST 3	VS. JUVENTUS	3-1 W	GONZALEZ, DONOVAN, KEANE
2013 GUINNESS INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONS CUP - DODGER STADIUM				
TUESDAY	AUGUST 6	VS. AC MILAN	0-2 L	--
2013 GUINNESS INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONS CUP - SUN LIFE STADIUM				
SUNDAY	AUGUST 11	AT FC DALLAS	3-3 T	DONOVAN (3)
SATURDAY	AUGUST 17	VS. REAL SALT LAKE	4-2 W	KEANE (3), GONZALEZ
TUESDAY	AUGUST 20	VS. CARTAGINES	2-0 W	KEANE (2)
2013-2014 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE - GROUP B				
SATURDAY	AUGUST 24	AT VANCOUVER WHITECAPS FC	1-0 W	DONOVAN
SATURDAY	AUGUST 31	VS. SAN JOSE EARTHQUAKES	3-0 W	DONOVAN, KEANE (2)
SATURDAY	SEPTEMBER 7	VS. COLORADO RAPIDS	0-1 L	--
SUNDAY	SEPTEMBER 15	AT D.C. UNITED	2-2 T	KEANE, STEPHENS
WEDNESDAY	SEPTEMBER 18	VS. ISIDRO METAPAN	1-0 W	COURTOIS
2013-2014 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE - GROUP B				
SATURDAY	SEPTEMBER 21	VS. SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC	7:30 P.M.	NBC SPORTS NETWORK
WEDNESDAY	SEPTEMBER 25	AT CARTAGINES	7 P.M.	--
2013-2014 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE - GROUP B				
SUNDAY	SEPTEMBER 29	AT PORTLAND TIMBERS	12:30 P.M.	NBC
SUNDAY	OCTOBER 6	VS. CHIVAS USA	2 P.M.	TWCS/UNIMAS
WEDNESDAY	OCTOBER 16	VS. MONTREAL IMPACT	7:30 P.M.	TWCS/TWCD
SUNDAY	OCTOBER 20	VS. SAN JOSE EARTHQUAKES	6 P.M.	ESPN/ESPN DEPORTES
THURSDAY	OCTOBER 24	AT ISIDRO METAPAN	7 P.M.	--
2013-2014 CONCACAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE - GROUP B				
SUNDAY	OCTOBER 27	AT SEATTLE SOUNDERS FC	6 P.M.	ESPN/ESPN DEPORTES

■ HOME GAME



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Carlo **CUDICINI**



Todd **DUNIVANT**



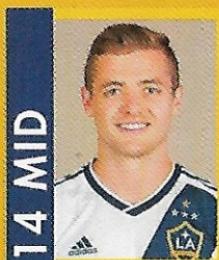
Omar **GONZALEZ**



Sean **FRANKLIN**



Colin **CLARK**



Robbie **ROGERS**



Brian **ROWE**



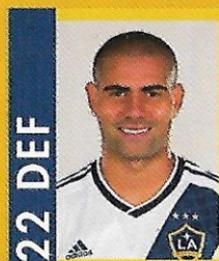
Laurent **COURTOIS**



A.J. **DELAGARZA**



Tommy **MEYER**



LEONARDO



Brian **PERK**



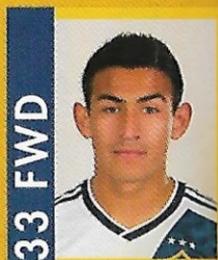
Gyasi **ZARDES**



Chandler **HOFFMAN**

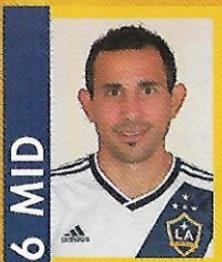


Jack **MCBEAN**



Jose **VILLARREAL**

2013 LA GALAXY ROSTER



6 MID

Pablo **MASTROENI**



7 FWD

Robbie **KEANE**



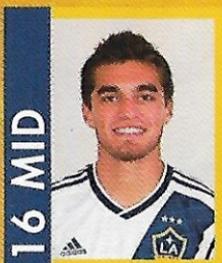
8 MID

Marcelo **SARVAS**



10 FWD

Landon **DONOVAN**



16 MID

Hector **JIMENEZ**



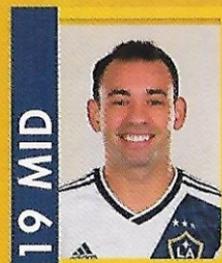
17 DEF

Bryan **GAUL**



18 GK

Jaime **PENEDO**



19 MID

JUNINHO



25 MID

Rafael **GARCIA**



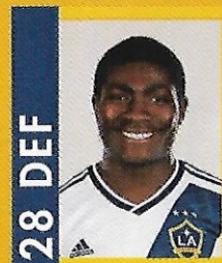
26 MID

Michael **STEPHENS**



27 FWD

Charlie **RUGG**



28 DEF

Kofi **OPARE**



34 MID

Kenney **WALKER**



35 MID

Greg **COCHRANE**



36 DEF

Oscar **SORTO**



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Meet Jaime "Superman" Penedo

From Panama to LA

By Jaime Cárdenas

Jaime Penedo has been playing soccer since he was 5. And for as long as he can remember, he's always been a goalkeeper.

Through elementary school, middle school and high school, he was always the goalie. ("Something about stopping goals," he said. "I just love making saves.") When he was 17, that's when his soccer career began to blossom.

"I played in an international tournament with [Panama's] U-17 National Team and began to draw attention from scouts," Penedo said. "That's when I realized I could play professionally and have a career."

Penedo, 31, signed with the Galaxy in August. The adjustment period was small as he made his MLS debut in a 4-2 win over then-first place Real Salt Lake just two weeks after signing with the club. The games did not get any easier for the Panamanian, who helped the club blank Costa Rican-side Cartagines in CONCACAF Champions League and Vancouver Whitecaps FC and the San Jose Earthquakes in MLS.

The 1-0 win against Vancouver on August 24 was his breakout game. In the 82nd minute, with LA up a goal on the Whitecaps, Penedo came out of nowhere to deny Jordan Harvey of an open net goal to preserve a Galaxy victory. The save has been





viewed more than 100,000 times on YouTube and was voted MLSoccer.com's Save of the Week. Landon Donovan hailed his teammate as "Superman."

"It seemed like he just came out of nowhere, kind of like Superman, and extended his arm and made an unbelievable save," Donovan said immediately after the game about the play. "I've played a lot of soccer games in my life, and when I see a play like that, I can't remember a time where a goal didn't occur [in that situation]."

Penedo said he can't really explain the save. He says that he is just wired that way.

"The only way I can compare is this way," Penedo said, "I have a [micro] chip in my brain that tells me that I can make every save. I never quit on a play. Scorers have a similar chip, except their chip tells them they can score."

Prior to joining the Galaxy, Penedo spent time in Italy, Spain, Guatemala and Panama, where he began his professional career at age 22 with Plaza Amador, one of Panama's oldest clubs. Two years later, he completed a move to Arabe Unido and promptly made an impact, guiding the Panamanian side to both the 2004 Apertura and Clausura tournaments.

Things were looking up for Penedo. After leading Panama to the 2005 CONCACAF Gold Cup final, their first ever appearance in the championship game, Penedo was named the tournament's top goalkeeper and soon after made the jump to Europe.

The 6-foot-1, 185-pound Penedo spent 2005-2007 in Italy and Spain with Cagliari and Osasuna B. While the opportunity to experience soccer in the Old World was good, playing time was hard to come by, so in 2007 he signed with Club Municipal, one of the most popular clubs in Guatemala.

He was an instant hit in Guatemala, becoming a fan favorite while winning four league titles in seven years. This summer, he caught the eye of the Galaxy coaching staff with another strong performance in Gold Cup as he once again helped Panama reach the final and was also named the tournament's top goalkeeper for a second time.

It would be easy to say that 2013 has been a good year for Penedo—Gold Cup success, move to MLS and Superman-like save—but the year has the potential to be great depending on how things play out in October—when the Galaxy close out the regular season and Panama closes out the final round of the CONCACAF World Cup Qualifiers with games in Mexico and at home against the United States.

"I have two dreams, to advance to the World Cup and to win an MLS Cup championship," said Penedo. "Those are the things that motivate me and make me work hard every day. If I can somehow help my teams accomplish both things, then this would certainly be a tremendous year."

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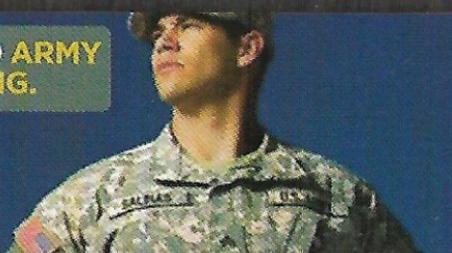
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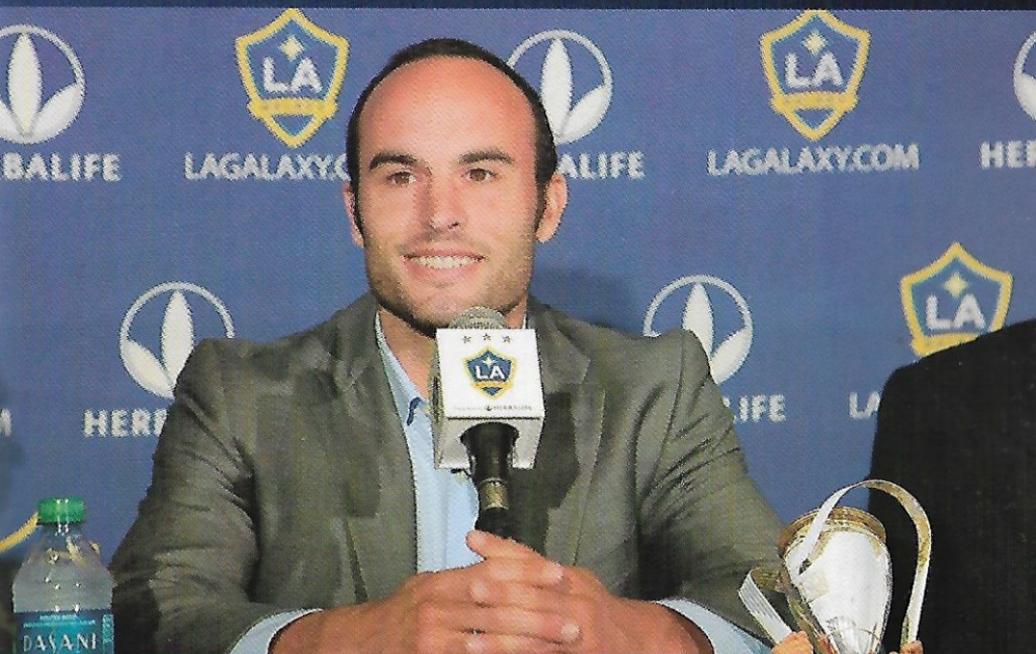


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SECURING THE GALAXY FUTURE

By Adam Serrano

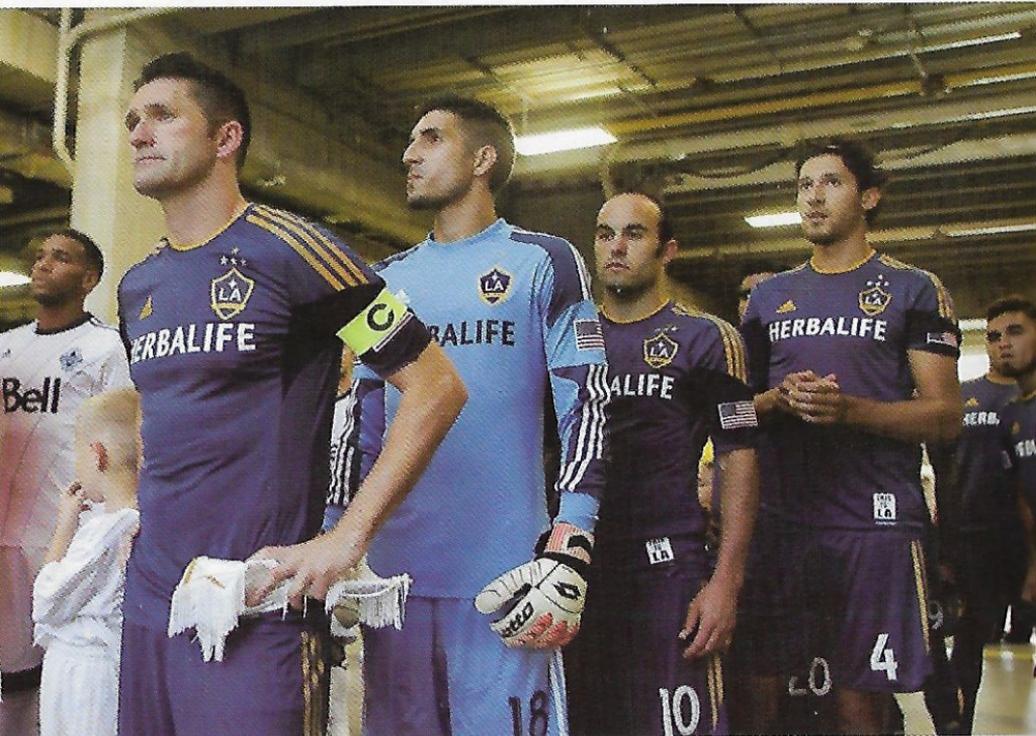


Times are changing in MLS.

In years past, teams would opt to sign high-profiled foreign players—mostly on the older side of 30—to help them win games, but a pair of LA Galaxy Designated Player signings this summer may have helped signal a seismic shift in American soccer.

In August, the Galaxy locked up the services of Landon Donovan and Omar Gonzalez to multi-year Designated Player contracts that will keep them playing together at StubHub Center for several years to come. Each is a valuable asset to LA's attempts to capture a third-consecutive MLS Cup, but while both players are profoundly in different stages of their careers, the effect of keeping them is a meaningful one.





For Donovan, the deal will likely keep him with the Galaxy until the end of his career. After already bringing three MLS Cup trophies to the club, the 31-year-old will have the opportunity to add even more accolades to his storied resume. When it's all said and done, Donovan could break the league's all-time scoring record and all-time assists record in a Galaxy shirt.

Meanwhile for Gonzalez, the deal keeps him with the Galaxy despite the interest from clubs across Europe and Mexico, who were eager to sign the former MLS Defender of the Year and 2012 MLS Cup MVP. With the 24-year-old desperate to qualify for the U.S. National Team for the 2014 World Cup, the Galaxy offer him a time to play consistently at a high level as he seeks to hone his game with the hopes of playing in Brazil next year.

These deals come on the heels of even more movement across MLS as established U.S. internationals like San Jose Earthquakes defender Clarence Goodson and Seattle Sounders FC forward Clint Dempsey have returned from foreign shores to their domestic league. Add in the support of U.S. boss Jurgen Klinsmann, who has steadily begun composing his team primarily

of MLS talent, and this may be the wave of the future.

Years ago, Donovan was considered an outlier for choosing his domestic league over the foreign shores, but at long last this appears to be changing.

What impact does this have on American soccer?

Well, for the Galaxy, it means that they'll have two of their most valuable players—along with forward Robbie Keane, who signed a contract earlier this year—for the long haul. This should keep LA competitive for years to come and give them plenty of chances for domestic and continental success, the most profound effect could be the one that it has on young American players.

No longer will a player have to turn to Europe or Latin America to have a fruitful and lucrative soccer career. Players can remain in the United States and see their hard work rewarded by clubs in MLS.

Ultimately, however, these deals will be judged by the way that Donovan and Gonzalez perform on the field. But their lasting effect could be a meaningful one on U.S. soccer forever.



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The Long Road Back

By Jaime Cárdenas

Leonardo is back.

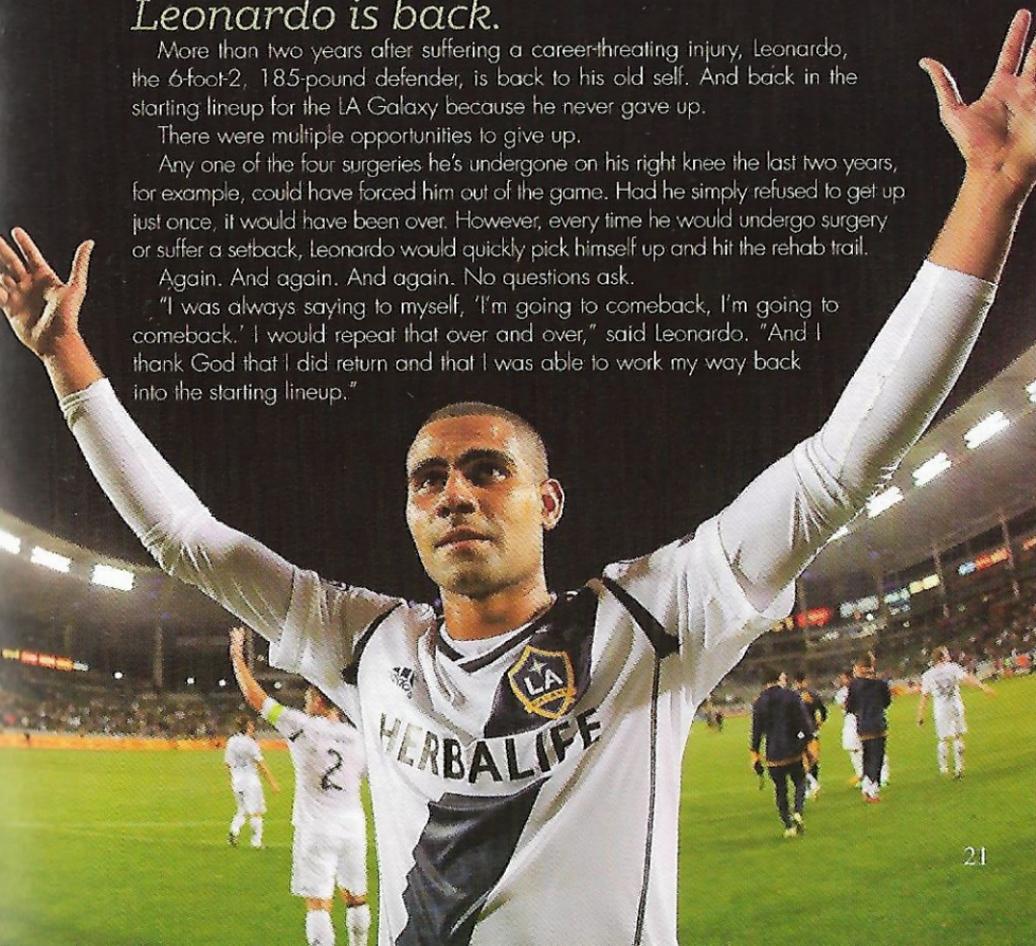
More than two years after suffering a career-threatening injury, Leonardo, the 6-foot-2, 185-pound defender, is back to his old self. And back in the starting lineup for the LA Galaxy because he never gave up.

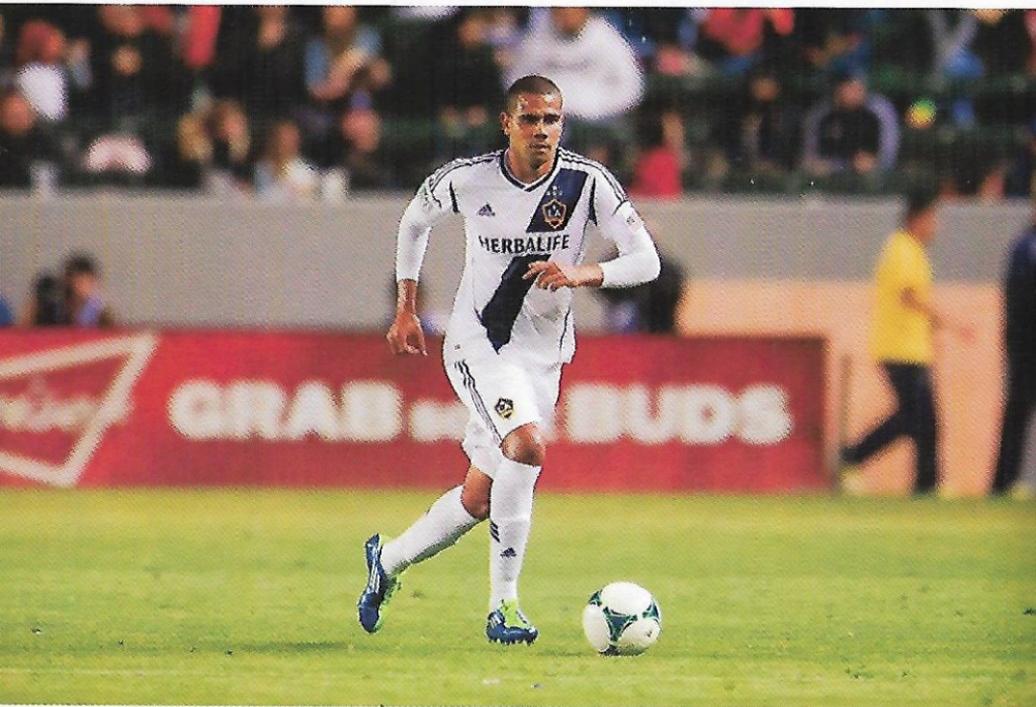
There were multiple opportunities to give up.

Any one of the four surgeries he's undergone on his right knee the last two years, for example, could have forced him out of the game. Had he simply refused to get up just once, it would have been over. However, every time he would undergo surgery or suffer a setback, Leonardo would quickly pick himself up and hit the rehab trail.

Again. And again. And again. No questions ask.

"I was always saying to myself, 'I'm going to comeback, I'm going to comeback.' I would repeat that over and over," said Leonardo. "And I thank God that I did return and that I was able to work my way back into the starting lineup."





It didn't happen overnight. His story is a true testament to faith and perseverance. "There are no guarantees, of course. The hard part is not getting to the top, or coming back from an injury, but rather staying up top. I have to work hard every day to stay in the starting [lineup]."

This season, the Brazilian is enjoying a career year. Statistically, he's already hit career highs for appearances, games started and minutes played.

Heading into the final month of the regular season, Leonardo has started the last six regular season games alongside Omar Gonzalez (helping LA gain 11 of 15 points available during that stretch) and is on pace to see playoff action for the first time since joining the Galaxy back in 2010.

"He just continues to get better," said LA Galaxy Head Coach Bruce Arena about Leonardo's comeback. "We knew it was going to take time, he had a few minor setbacks this year, but he is headed in the right direction."

Arena has praised in the past Leonardo's work ethic. And as a result of that, Associated Head Coach Dave Sarachan said, "Now the true player that we felt we knew [before the injury in Chicago] is starting to emerge."

Like any professional athlete who is forced to sit out a large stretch of games, being away from the field has given Leonardo some perspective. He now sees the game in a different way, having learned Arena's defensive scheme by watching it from a far, but more importantly he now has a different outlook on life.

"When things are going bad, we like to ask ourselves, 'Why? Why me?' We ask God that a lot," he said. "But we don't know why we are going through that. But maybe we are going through hardship for a reason, maybe God is preparing us for good things in the future. So we have to have faith and trust God that he has a plan for us."

The last two years have not been easy, but, he says, his trust in God is paying off. And all the hard work he's put in to return to the starting lineup makes his comeback that much more enjoyable. That doesn't mean Leonardo no longer has any pending business.

"I would like to play in an MLS Cup final," he said. "If that's meant to happen, that's meant to happen. But I would like to help this team—on the field, of course—win another championship."



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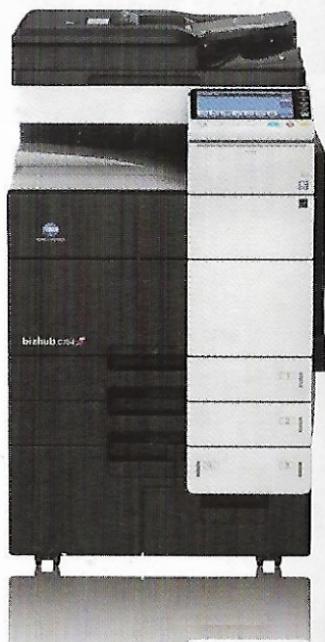
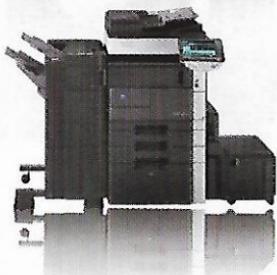


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ACADEMY

ACADEMY UPDATE

Academy Q&A with Malcolm Jones

Malcolm Jones has spent plenty of time with the U.S. National Team set up. The 16-year-old defender has represented his country at the Under-14, Under-15 and Under-17 levels and recently participated in the U-18 Men's National Team Combine at Nike's headquarters in Oregon, a camp designed to discover and build the core of the U-18 squad that will compete together at the next U-20 FIFA World Cup in 2015. The Chino Hills-native shifts his focus now from National Team duty to the Galaxy U-18's as the Academy team gears up to start the 2013-14. U.S. Soccer Development Academy season. Jones, who recently saw 22-minutes of action in LA's Reserve League match against the Colorado Rapids, brings his quickness and pace down the flanks from Chivas USA's academy and will aim to help the Galaxy win their first ever U-18 National Championship.

Q: WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THE GALAXY ACADEMY U-18 SQUAD THIS SEASON?

A: "I think we can expect a lot of good things from the U-18's, there's a lot of talented players here. It takes time to merge together but I think we're really starting to gel nicely now and we (hope we) can go far in playoffs and Finals Week and win a championship."

Q: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE REPRESENTING THIS CLUB'S ACADEMY?



A: "It means a lot. It's a lot different, a lot better over here. Not taking anything away from Chivas but it's a lot more organized here, a lot more stability and that's one of the main reasons I came over and I really like that a lot. It just means a lot that they really look out for us, Pete

[Vagenas] is out here, Jovan [Kirovski], they're always out here at our trainings, inviting us to reserve trainings and things like that. I just feel like they're giving us an opportunity that I never really got at Chivas."

Q: WHAT'S IT LIKE HAVING SEVEN FORMER MLS PLAYERS ON THE ACADEMY'S COACHING STAFF?

A: "It's awesome. All these guys have great experiences and they share those experiences with us, it's really special. It's nice to know that they got to where you want to be so you can take everything they say, knowing they've been there, and just listen and take it knowing that's where you want to be someday."

Q: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE GALAXY NURTURING AND RETAINING THEIR TOP LOCAL TALENT AND, IN TURN, SIGNING THEM TO PROFESSIONAL CONTRACTS LIKE, JACK MCBEAN, OSCAR SORTO, JOSE VILLARREAL AND GYASI ZARDES?

A: "It tells you they really put a lot of emphasis on their Academy, which is a good thing. The

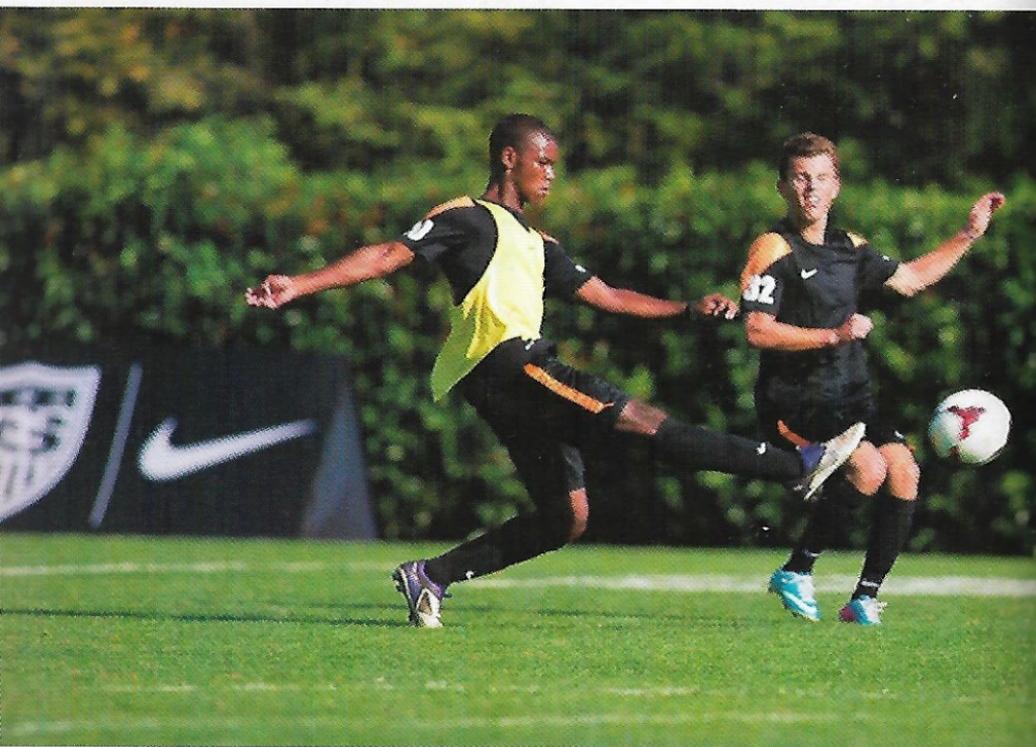
coaches are bringing us up and training us and preparing us well for the future. So it's really a good thing and it's really nice to see that so maybe one day, it could be you."

Q: WHAT WAS IT LIKE SEEING ACTION IN THE RESERVE LEAGUE MATCH AGAINST COLORADO?

A: "It was great. I was a little nervous at first but after the first five minutes I settled down. The guys are really reassuring; they gave me a lot of support. Coach [Curt Onalfo] told me just do my thing and be confident and it really helped out, made me reassured in myself. It was just a really great experience."

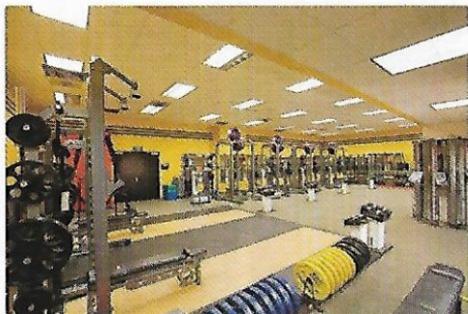
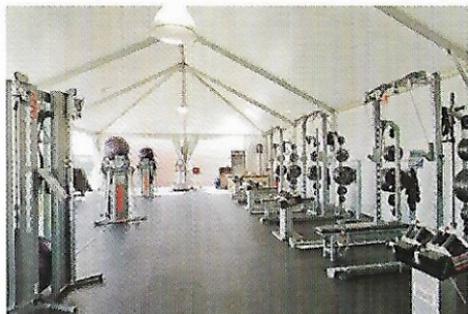
Q: HAVE YOU HAD THE CHANCE TO SPEAK WITH LA GALAXY HEAD COACH BRUCE ARENA YET?

A: "He said 'Hi' to us a few times and thanked us for coming out to the reserve training, which was really cool. I didn't expect him to be there and then I saw him, it was crazy, I was a little star struck."





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The Quest for

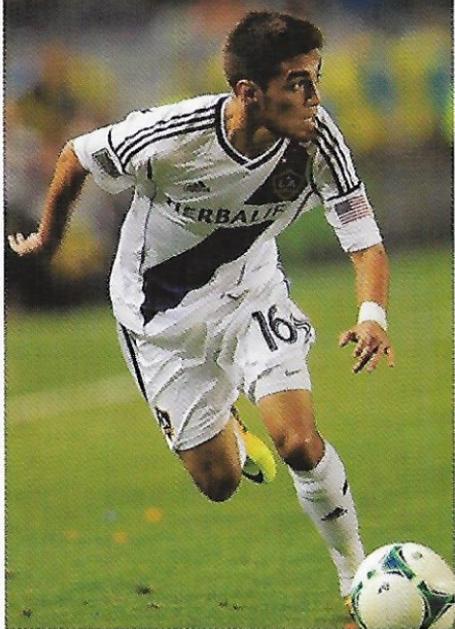
By Will Strome

Defending a title is one thing, and it's everything but an easy task, but to capture back-to-back-to-back championships in MLS is an unprecedented feat that has never been conquered.

The LA Galaxy, having lifted the Philip F. Anschutz Trophy in 2011 and again in 2012, are currently deep into a playoff push that features eight Western Conference teams within striking distance of one another. All are battling for only five playoff spots and it's one of the most hotly contested finishes in league history.

If LA can survive the playoff gauntlet, they'll be gearing up for the rare opportunity to potentially become the league's first dynasty to complete the MLS Cup three-peat. An accomplishment that slipped through the fingertips of DC United and the Houston Dynamo, the only previous twotime defending Cup champs to fail in pursuit of a third.

During the inaugural season of MLS back in 1996, DC United dominated the early stages of the league. Led by current Galaxy head coach Bruce Arena, United battled through the playoffs to face the Galaxy in the inaugural MLS Cup at Foxboro Stadium. With the likes of Mauricio Cienfuegos and Cobi Jones leading



the team LA took an early 2-0 lead in the game, but United stormed back on the waterlogged pitch and equalized in the 82nd minute, sending the first ever final into sudden death overtime. It took all of four minutes for Eddie Pope to head home the winner and elevate United into ecstasy.

The following season in 1997 was all United and the team had the chance to defend their title in a downpour against the Colorado Rapids inside DC's RFK Stadium. United leaped out to a 2-0 lead with goals from club legend Jaime Moreno and Tony Sanneh and never looked back. Colorado grabbed a late goal but it wasn't enough as DC raised their second cup in as many seasons and became the first club to set their sights on the improbable three-peat.

In 1998, after a stellar regular season, United cruised past the Miami Fusion and Columbus Crew en route to a championship showdown at the Rose Bowl against the Chicago Fire, an expansion team in their first season of existence. The stage was set for Arena's United but Bob Bradley's Chicago stole the show with a pair of first half goals from Jerzy Podbrozny and Diego Gutierrez and stunned D.C. with a 2-0 Cup victory.

It took nearly a decade for another team to follow in the footsteps of United and successfully defend the title. Houston, after moving from San Jose in 2005, reached the finals during their first season of inception and knocked off Chivas USA

and Colorado before facing an experienced New England Revolution squad in the 2006 MLS Cup.

The final in Frisco, Texas, featured a goalless stalemate that inevitably led to extra time where Taylor Twellman put the Revs up 1-0 in the 112th minute and seemingly sealed what would have been New England's first Cup. However, it took a single minute for Bring Ching to resurrect the Dynamo with a header from Brian Mullan to send the match to penalty kicks for the first time in MLS Cup history. After both sides exchanged scores twice, Dwayne De Rosario put Houston up 3-2 before Pat Noonan sailed his shot above the crossbar for the Revs. After the Dynamo's Brad Davis' shot was saved, Twellman scored to make it three-apiece. That set the stage for Ching and Houston goalkeeper Pat Onstad. After Ching scored to make it 4-3, Onstad stopped Jay Heaps's shot and solidified the Dynamo's dramatic first Cup victory.

The following season in 2007 featured a rematch of the '06 final with Houston and New England squaring off inside RFK Stadium. For the second straight final, Twellman put the Revs up 1-0 before Joseph Ngwenya and De Rosario hit back with second half scores to complete Houston's title defense.

In 2008, in only their third season in Houston, the Dynamo were gunning for the coveted three-peat before crashing out in the opening round of the playoffs to the New York Red Bulls, 4-1 on aggregate.

Now, it's the Galaxy's turn.

Like last year, if LA wins the Cup they'll have done it the hard way. In 2012, the team started their title defense in the Western Conference cellar before storming up the league and eventually hoisting the ultimate prize. This season, after another slow start, the team has once again surged towards the top of the table in pursuit of MLS Cup glory and league immortality for a MLS-best fifth time in their 18-year history and the monumental three-peat.

If the Galaxy can indeed grab the triumphant back-to-back-to-back honor, they'll join the ranks of the Los Angeles Lakers, Montreal Canadiens and New York Yankees as one of the few North American sporting giants to rightfully claim themselves as a three-in-a-row dynasty.

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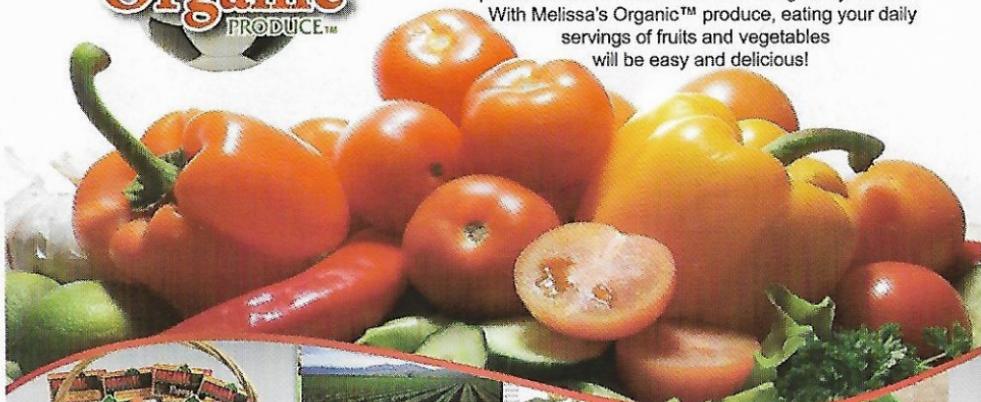
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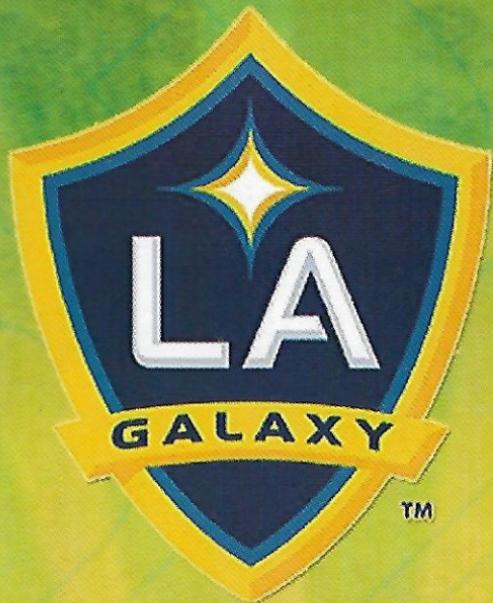
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Take one look at the LA Galaxy's roster and you can see that they have the talent to compete for MLS Cup and also succeed in the CONCACAF Champions League. But in always unpredictable competitions, a team can't use their first choice squad in every match, meaning that they'll need to rely on their entire roster.

Now as the club looks to advance to the CONCACAF Champions League Quarterfinals for a third straight season and attempt to successfully win MLS Cup for a third consecutive time, their depth will be tested again. Yes, the Galaxy boast talent across the field with the likes of Landon Donovan, Omar Gonzalez, Robbie Keane, Jaime Penedo and others, but if LA is going to advance in both competitions, their reserves must step up to the plate.

This means LA head coach Bruce Arena must provide playing time to some of the club's young stalwarts like Hector Jimenez, Tommy Meyer, Kofi Opare, Jack McBean, Michael Stephens, and Jose Villarreal. But it isn't enough just to play them, once the youngsters get a chance, they'll have to succeed and show that they can handle the responsibility. The only way to prove that they

can handle this is by contributing—be it with a goal, an assist or a timely tackle in the final third.

This approach is not new one for LA as they heavily leaned on the reserve squad during the 2012-13 CCL group stage, this move was first met with skepticism, but turned out to be a rousing success. While predominantly using a roster made up of young players and little used veterans, the Galaxy went undefeated in group play with a 2-0-1 record since making the switch. This switch turned out to be a turning point in the club's MLS campaign as well as it afforded players like Donovan, Gonzalez and Keane as well as other starters like Todd Dunivant, Juninho and Mike Magee some much needed rest as they approached the MLS Cup Playoffs.

If the Galaxy can achieve this balance by spreading the minutes around across the roster—and avoid any injuries or suspensions—expect them not only to qualify for the CCL quarterfinals, but also be in prime position to defend their MLS Cup title for a second time.

Adam Serrano is the LA Galaxy Insider. Read his blog at LAGalaxy.com/insider and contact him at LAGalaxyInsider@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter and Instagram: @LAGalaxyInsider



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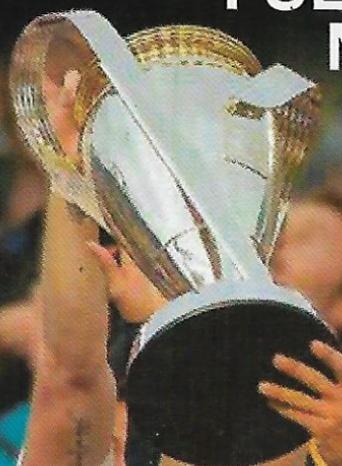
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