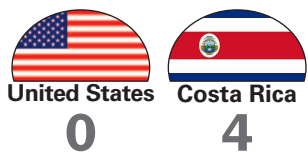


Soccer

Costa Rica routs US as Americans drop to 0-2 in qualifying

By RONALD BLUM
Associated Press



The U.S. in a qualifier since a 5-1 defeat at Mexico in November 1980.

It was the biggest losing shutout margin in a qualifier since the U.S. fell 6-0 at Mexico in 1957.

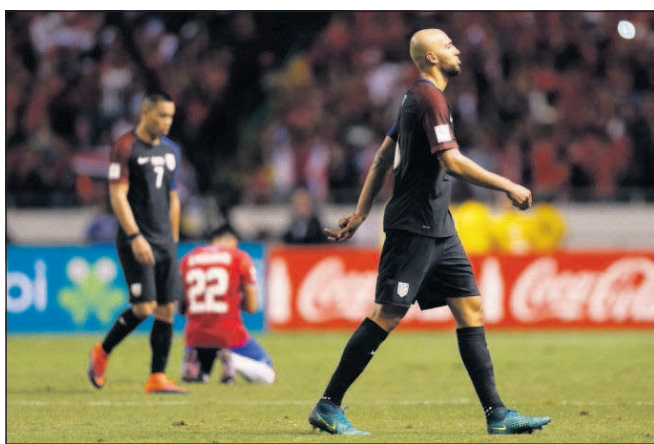
Combined with Friday's 2-1 loss to Mexico at Columbus, Ohio, the U.S. finds itself in a quick deficit in the hexagonal, which resumes in March.

Ticos fans sounded air horns at the end of a match that reignited questioning of coach Jurgen Klinsmann's tactics. The U.S. dropped to 0-9-1 in qualifiers at Costa Rica.

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — The United States put itself in a deep hole in World Cup qualifying with one of its worst performances in decades.

Taking advantage of defensive mistakes, Costa Rica routed the U.S. 4-0 Tuesday night to drop the Americans to 0-2 for the first time in the final round of the North and Central American and Caribbean region.

Johan Venegas scored in the 43rd minute, Cristian Bolanos doubled the lead in the 69th and second-half substitute Joel Campbell beat beleaguered goalkeeper Brad Guzan in the 74th and 77th minutes in the worst margin of defeat for



United States' Alan Gordon leaves the field after losing against Costa Rica 0-4 during a 2018 World Cup qualifying match in San Jose, Costa Rica on Tuesday.

Central defenders John Brooks and Omar Gonzalez, and right back Timmy Chandler had particularly poor games. Brooks and Omar

Gonzalez started in the center of the back line. Geoff Cameron, who usually starts alongside Brooks, missed both qualifiers this month after hyperextending a knee

during Stoke's Premier League match against Hull on Oct. 22.

Costa Rica, which won its opener 2-0 at Trinidad and Tobago, went ahead after a Brooks giveaway. Randall Azofeifa took a short pass from Jose Salvatierra in the center circle and played a long ball into the corner, where Cristian Bolanos ran it down on its third bounce. Gonzalez was slow to close on Bolanos, who crossed for Venegas just outside the 6-yard box. Bolanos beat Brooks to the ball and sent a header across Guzan for his seventh goal in 30 international appearances.

Bolanos scored after a turnover by 18-year-old midfielder Christian Pulisic near midfield. Salvatierra sent a pass down the flank

to Venegas, and his cross found Bolanos in front, with Chandler a step late.

Ronald Matarrita created the final two goals by Campbell. On the last goal, Campbell took the ball over Brooks' right foot as the American defender stabbed to make a play to no avail. He was a step behind all night on the slick, chuncked-up turf.

Right back Timmy Chandler and midfielder Jermaine Jones are suspended for the next qualifier, at home on March 24 against Honduras, because of yellow-card accumulation. Both were cautioned by Mexican referee for fouls against Costa Rica captain Bryan Ruiz, Chandler in the 11th minute and Jones in the 37th.

OREGON: Ducks shot just 33 percent from the field, outrebounded 41-30

Continued from 1B

That led to Ishmail Wainwright's layup from Matt Lecomte's ally-oop pass, and Baylor started to stretch the lead again.

Lecomte had 18 points on 6-of-9 shooting that included four 3-pointers. Jo Lual-Acuil grabbed 14 rebounds and had seven blocked shots for Baylor.

Ennis led Oregon with 16 points, and Boucher finished with 12. Jordan Bell had 11 rebounds.

The Ducks quickly led

3-0 when Boucher hit from long range on the game's first shot, before they then missed six in a row. Motley made his first shot of the season and Manu Lecomte a buzzer-beating 3-pointer, and Baylor never trailed again.

"Didn't play very well, and didn't make plays for each other, so we've got a tremendous amount of work to do," Oregon coach Dana Altman said. "It's difficult (without Brooks), but that's the way it goes. ... There's no doubt he's a good player, but we've got some other good

players that didn't play very well."

BIG PICTURE
Oregon: While the Ducks were able to get past Army in their opener without Brooks, they clearly could have used their standout forward against the Bears, who dominated inside. Oregon struggled shooting at 33 percent (19 of 58) from the field and got outrebounded 41-30. "Dillon's a good rebounder but he's not going to make that difference up," said Altman, who wouldn't say when Brooks might return.

Baylor: The Bears are 4-7 in their last 11 games against top-five teams. Maybe this will get the notice of poll voters. The Bears, picked to finish in the middle of the tough Big 12, haven't been getting any votes so far.

ZONE FACTOR
Asked about the difficulty of facing Baylor's zone defense, Altman responded, "Well, we did pretty good last year, we just didn't do good this year." Oregon beat Baylor 74-67 at home last November.

BIG FACTOR

Baylor's lead was only one midway through the first half when the 7-foot Lual-Acuil blocked a shot and was pumping his arms near midcourt after making a pass to Wendell Mitchell for a layup. Lual-Acuil made the next basket when he posted right under the goal, and got an inbound pass from Lecomte. "I was trying to be a factor somehow," Lual-Acuil said. "I knew my shots weren't falling so I just tried to figure out different way of helping the team."

HE SAID IT

"A lot of times, you play in big games and you play out of character, you're too nervous, you're too excited," Drew said. "We've played against a lot of good Big 12 teams in the top five that have beaten us. And I think we did a good job of staying poised"

UP NEXT
Oregon played the first of five games in nine days. The Ducks are home Thursday night to play Valparaiso, where Drew was previously a head coach — after his father and before his brother.

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