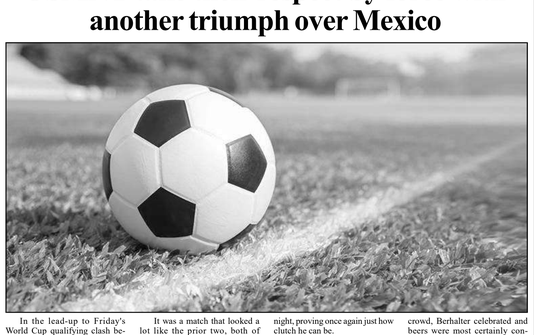
Dos a Cero again! Pulisic, McKennie and USMNT take their respect by force with another triumph over Mexico



In the lead-up to Friday's World Cup qualifying clash between the United States men's national team and Mexico, much of the talk had been about respect.

Mexico goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa formally cast himself as this rivalry's latest villain, saying that when the USMNT looked in the mirror, it wished it could see Mexico's success, trophies and regular World Cup berths.

Well, it was Ochoa left staring blankly on Friday night as two of American soccer's superstars took respect from El Tri by force on yet another historic night in this ever-evolving matchup. Christian Pulisic and Weston McKennie found the net and celebrated pointedly in a 2-0 win that vaulted the U.S. ahead of its chief rival in the CONCACAF table.

How Sassuolo are challenging Juventus & Milan for Women's Champions League football

"We talked about how we thought they didn't give us enough respect and we had to go out and earn it," USMNT boss Gregg Berhalter said. "I think we went out and earned it."

The victory was anything but straightforward. Things in this rivalry rarely are, to be fair, and for much of the game, it looked like these two teams wouldn't be separated within 90 minutes for the third time this year.

It was a match that looked a lot like the prior two, both of which also went the way of the Stars and Stripes. It was cagey, it was tense, it was fierce. Mexico was largely on the ball, the U.S. was content to counter and every half-chance felt titanic. The U.S. generated more of those chances and remained generally on the front foot aside from a few very good saves from Zack Steffen.

And it was the U.S. that took its chances eventually, with its superstar, Pulisic, changing the game with just one touch.

Heading into the qualifier, Pulisic faced fitness questions as he returned from an ankle injury. Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel warned Berhalter and the U.S.: don't overwork our star.

Pulisic didn't need his ankle to ignite the Cincy crowd, and he didn't need a full 90 minutes to put in a superstar performance. Coming off the bench in the second half as the USMNT's game-changing sub, Pulisic flicked on a header from a Timothy Weah cross past Ochoa to give the U.S. a lead just five minutes after he entered the pitch.

It was a superstar moment from a superstar player. Pulisic truly began his legacy in this rivalry with his late goal in the Nations League final over the summer. He furthered it on Friday night, proving once again just how clutch he can be.

"When we bought in Christian it gave the team a boost," said Berhalter, "and it also, I think, put some fear into Mexico because they know his quality."

Joining him on the scoresheet was a player that has endured his share of criticism in recent months, McKennie, who is now well and truly back. Suspended just a few months ago for violating team rules, McKennie was the USMNT's all-action man on Friday: tackling, fighting, brawling and ultimately scoring to seal that famous Dos a Cero scoreline.

The USMNT will be without McKennie for their clash with Jamaica next week. He'll serve a yellow card suspension after earning a caution for a second-half melee that was the highlight of the game until the goals started flowing. He'll be joined by center back Miles Robinson, who was sent off late after earning two yellow cards of his own. And so the U.S. will be without two key players in Jamaica as the second half of World Cup qualifying begins.

Right now, though, the team won't care much about those absences because this was a night for celebrating. From the moment the final whistle blew, the party began in Cincinnati. McKennie, Pulisic and Co. danced with the crowd, Berhalter celebrated and beers were most certainly consumed by American fans all over the country.

Because on this night, the U.S. beat Mexico for the third time in a calendar year, the first time that has happened since 1937.

The road to Qatar isn't complete just yet, even as the U.S. sits atop the qualifying table. But Berhalter can feel very good about how his men stack up as they head toward the home stretch.

The World Cup qualifying cycle is only halfway complete, but this night felt like a defining moment. Games against Mexico are the measuring stick and, for the third time this year, the USMNT proved they can measure up.

They say respect is earned, but sometimes it has to be taken by force. Pulisic, McKennie and the USMNT did just that on Friday night. "It's just to send a message," said winger Tim Weah. "I think it's a new era now. Before the gaming, Mexico was talking a lot of smack and beating them shuts them up.

"We have to continue to win games and continue to beat them. That's the only way we're gonna earn their respect and then the world's respect, but I think we're on a great path right now. The future is bright." Goal

Chris Eubank Jr is entering the 'dragon's den' to face Liam Williams with a sold out crowd expected in Cardiff

Eubank Jr risks his world title ambitions in a middleweight grudge fight against Williams, who will receive red-hot home support at the Motorpoint Arena in Cardiff on December 11, live on Sky Sports.

Promoter Ben Shalom has revealed the huge public interest in Eubank Jr vs Williams, telling Sky Sports: "Full credit must go to both fighters for taking on such a big fight. "Eubank is going into the dragon's den here to face Williams on his home soil in Wales and the atmosphere in the Motorpoint Arena in Cardiff is going to be unbelievable.

"The bitterness between the fighters, the rivalry between England and Wales, the location, the fighters' styles - this has got all the ingredients to be an all-time classic.

"We said this was the domestic fight of the year, and as soon as tickets went on sale at midday, it was clear the British public agreed with us.

"Thousands of tickets were sold in the first hour - the first thousand were sold in just five minutes - this will be a sold-out arena on December 11 in Cardiff."

Eubank says a hostile reception will just add more motivation for him to defeat Williams in an explosive encounter.

"I'm no stranger to going into the lion's den," he told Sky Sports. "I've been booed into arenas many times before.

"It doesn't affect me. If anything, it makes me fight harder, if the crowd is against me.

"Not to say that I'm hoping they are. I hope that I receive a warm welcome.

"But either way, I'm going to go in there and get the job done."

But Williams is more determined than ever to deliver an emphatic victory in front of his Welsh fans.

"It's going to be super-exciting for me, for everyone else in Wales," said Williams.

"I'll probably sell that place out on my own, even if it wasn't Eubank. It's going to be a crazy night. I'm going to get a mad entrance and people are going to be rooting for me big time.

"He's rough and tough, he's very fit. He's always in fantastic shape. I think he's going to come and try and make it a dogfight.

"I'm happy with that, let's go."

T20 World Cup: How Pakistan fans were left stunned in Dubai

Dubai, United Arab Emirates – With a perfect record in the group stages – five wins out of five – Pakistan seemed destined to reach its third T20 World Cup final.

It lost to India in the final of the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2007 but won the following edition in 2009.

On Thursday, Fakhar Zaman's late hitting and a measured innings by Mohammad Rizwan took Pakistan to a respectable total.

In reply, Australia stuttered at regular intervals after losing captain Aaron Finch without scoring in the first over.

It needed 68 runs off the last six overs and Pakistan had one foot in the final already.

The fans in green were planning their arrival at the stadium for Sunday's final while the heavily outnumbered Australian fans were planning an early exit.

However, a late onslaught led by wicketkeeper-batter Matthew Wade, including three sixes off Shaheen Afridi, dashed Pakistan's hopes and took Australia into the final where it will take on New Zealand in Dubai on Sunday.

The vociferous crowd, with just a handful of Australian supporters, was left stunned after having enjoyed a dominant Pakistan show for the better part of the evening.

As the flurry of sixes was witnessed off Wade's bat in the penultimate over of the match, some made an early exit while those left in the stands were left wondering what just hit them.

This was Pakistan's first T20 loss in the United Arab Emirates since November 2015 and Australia chose just the right time to send that record tumbling.

Aljazeera

NASCAR rumors: Dodge's potential return amplified by NASCAR president Steve Phelps' comments

With only three original equipment manufacturers competing in stock car racing since 2013, NASCAR has had to take life as it comes in regards to the cars raced in their top three series. What they're trying to do with the Next Gen car is grab life by the horns and entice new automakers into the sport -- one of which has had a long-standing on again, off again relationship with NASCAR.

During his state of the sport address on Nov. 5, NASCAR president Steve Phelps directly acknowledged rumors that Dodge was looking at a potential return to the sport amid the introduction of the Next Gen car in 2022. Dodge has been floated among a number of prospective OEMs that may enter NASCAR in the Next Gen era, particularly given its history in the sport and its status as an American auto maker.

Here's what Phelps said:

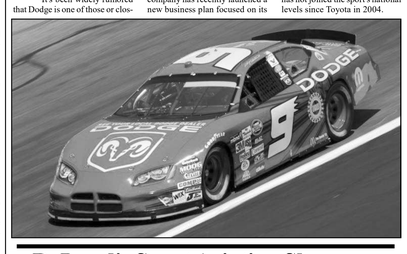
"It's been widely rumored that Dodge is one of those or closest. I won't confirm or deny that. It is important. We've made no bones about the fact that we want to have a new OEM in our sport. I think we got delayed with the pandemic. With that said, we are an attractive place I believe for OEMs to come into the sport. Now is an important opportunity for them to do that because of the Next Gen car.

I also believe the fact that the sport is growing and has a relevance that it hasn't had in decades is causing some real interest from other OEMs. Nothing to report at this particular point. It is important, I would suggest things are progressing or I would say that things are progressing. When we have something to announce, we will." According to a report by Gary Gastelu of Fox News, a spokesman for Dodge had no comment on Phelps' remarks. It should be noted, however, that the company has recently launched a new business plan focused on its V8 engines and racing parts business.

After furthering its brand's notoriety through NASCAR in the 1960s, with cars such as the Dodge Charger and Dodge Daytona excelling on the sport's biggest and fastest tracks, Dodge returned to the NASCAR Cup Series in 2001 for an 11-year stint in the sport.

Although Dodge enjoyed on-track success during that period, it eventually left NASCAR after the 2012 season. Team Penske left the automaker for Ford and was unable to align itself with another top team for the introduction of the Gen 6 car in 2013.

Dodge exited NASCAR on a high note, as it won the 2012 Cup Series championship with Brad Keselowski. Chevrolet, Ford, and Toyota are currently the only three OEMs competing in NASCAR. An entirely new OEM has not joined the sport's national levels since Toyota in 2004.



DeLand's Sport Aviation Showcase takes flight Thursday after coronavirus clipped event's wings in 2020

DELAND — The annual Sport Aviation Showcase takes off Thursday, and the organizer is expecting a fairly full flight.

Attendance for the three-day event will likely be between 7,500-10,000 people, said Jana Filip, the event's administrator.

As of Tuesday, the showcase was down by only about 10 vendors; it usually has between 100 and 110.

Filip said the event was given the green light just 60 days earlier.

"It's been a hustle since then, but it's come together very well," Filip said Tuesday during an interview at the showcase site.

Last year the coronavirus pandemic grounded what would've been the 5th annual showcase.

"I think COVID just has changed the way everybody lives their lives," Filip said.

While the state's COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to trend downward, event attendees are encouraged to wear masks when social distancing isn't feasible.

Filip also said fewer chairs have been set up at the tables and inside speaker tents.

"We're really lucky that we are as much of an outside show as we are," Filip said.

With the event taking off on Veterans Day, the showcase's opening ceremony at 9:30 a.m. Thursday will include a tribute to veterans, who may attend for free that day.

This year's showcase also will have a military display, Filip said.

A patriotic flying tricycle by Evolution Trikes soars through the sky. The Zephyrhills-based company will have an outdoor exhibit at this year's Sport Aviation Showcase in DeLand.

Daily activities on the ground and in the sky

Each day of the showcase includes demonstration flights, showcase flights with live commentary and short take-off and landing demonstrations.

"It really shows what the aircraft is capable of because when you're flying backcountry or you're landing on the side of a river, you need to be able to stop fairly quickly," Filip said.

There are also educational forums, which are WINGS/AMT accredited, scheduled throughout each day.

On Thursday and Friday afternoon, attendees can hear from Trevor Simoneau, an Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University undergraduate student and researcher, on regulations important to sport pilot operations and safety.

"It's an aspect of the industry not too many people get excited about," Simoneau said with a chuckle regarding the topic he pitched.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University student Trevor Simoneau wears a mask made by his aeronautical-themed apparel company Chart It All. Simoneau will speak at two forums this week as part of DeLand's Sport Aviation Showcase, which was canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

The 18-year-old sophomore said he wants to educate pilots on the role they can play in the rule-making process and how to keep apprised of upcoming regulatory changes.

On Saturday at 11 a.m., Simoneau will present "Aviation Scholarship Tips for Students."

Filip has about 100 volunteers helping her with the event.

Orange City resident Bryan Tittle attended previous showcases as a vendor, but this year he's just here to help.

"People travel in from all over the country, literally, to be a part of this," Tittle said Tuesday as he prepared aircraft tie-down kits for attendees.

In addition to national and international visitors, there also will be vendors from other countries including, but not limited to: Brazil, Germany and South Africa.