

Players from America, Land of the Free Home of the Brave

Some golden moments in U.S. soccer history, let us not forget: [1994](#), [2002](#), [2009](#), [2010](#), [2010](#), [2015](#), [2015](#). Not forgetting 50 [Greatest U.S. goals](#). Click on each.

These are the names of U.S. players, whom the past 20 months progressed with the team, and were worth watching: Josh Sargent (forward), Timothy Weah (winger-forward, his dad is President of Liberia, Tim scored against Morocco this year, plays in France w/Lille, didn't play vs Japan due to injury), Californian Brandan Vazquez (plays at FC Cincinnati + he was the leading American in goals in MLS as of August), Walker Zimmerman (center back who due to an injury was out of the Gold Cup), Weston McKennie (midfielder), Yunus Musah (forward), Chris Richards (middle fielder, now plays at Crystal Palace, English Premier League), Tyler Adams (midfielder, usually R back, and the Captain, who now plays w/Leeds United in Premier League), "Jedi" Robinson (left back from Fulham), De Andre Yedlin (veteran, Inter Milan), Ricardo Pepi (Groningen, and actually started at Dallas), Gio Reyna (plays in Germany w/Borussia Dortmund), and last but not least Christian Pulisic Star forward.

So back to that Nov. game between the U.S. and Mexico, the first half ended 0-0. It was a crucial game. It was a pretty cold night with a Nov. temp in the 40s with some scattered light rain. Mexico seemed more potent that first half than the U.S. men. Their defense at times got caught as Mexican opponents ran inside their defense with sheer precision passes; their main problem: they didn't finish off a last boot to get the ball into the net. Thank God.

The 2nd half something happened, and our defenders found a way to plug the Mexican offense. Finally, I can say, after sensing that the defense has been their main weakness for years, I can say with a smile, Oh brother, I think we got our magic formula back from the days of 2002-06 when both def and attackers were quick and tough. The international world took notice, especially against a Korean team in 2002, which had a stadium packed with over 60,000 fans in red shirts routing for their Korean team. (Landon Donovan said everyone was decked in red. "I've never seen that in my life. Anytime I close my eyes, I can see that memory so vividly. They were in unison chanting the whole game. It was the single best atmosphere I've ever been a part of.") The unknown soldier Mathis, with his Mohawk haircut, scored the first goal; the post-Lalas and Wynalda days. How proud am I about the U.S. era of 20 years ago? Check this little [video](#), captioned by Claudio Reyna.

The Mexican team with a smart manager came into the year with a perfect 5-0 record over the U.S. before 2021. But, then all of the Americans that were playing in overseas leagues were recalled and this is a very important concept, they got to play together. And, if all goes well and on schedule, overseas and domestic players will continue to get stronger, and scare the pants off the rest of the top hot shot world.

So, how did the U.S. fare on that Nov. 12 game? We saw how good the team was without

Weston McKennie (who plays for Juventus) and Mile Robinson earlier--Mile scored the winning goal on Aug. 1 in the Gold Cup Championship against Mexico. McKennie?

How good is McKennie? You've seen McKennie react. He is a no quitter.

That November of 2021, he was cool, and he scored America's 2nd goal. McKennie tried to combine with Adams, but the ball hit a defender and then it fell to him, and McKennie finished it with a classy shot.

The first goal came from the head of Chris Pulisic, who had showed no mercy being deadly accurate when he plays on the U.S. squad. Hopefully, he leaves present-day Chelsea, although there is a new coach, which is another story. Final Score: U.S.-2. Mex.-0.

His Nov. header was not so easy, and he had to fight his way to get in front of the Mex defender, and then came the header. That is aggressiveness of a forward with a killer instinct. Some days before the big match, Ochoa taunted the United States, saying, "Mexico is the mirror in which the U.S.A. wants to see itself and wants to copy." In other words, they better than us. Hmmmm. *If you have a 3-D TV, consider the following Blu-ray, not just any Blu-ray, it is super spectacular.*

So, after Chris scored his header goal, he ran to the sidelines and pulled up his jersey showing a t-shirt with the words, "Man in the Mirror." (According to scout reports, it were his buddies Timothy Yeah and DeAndre Yedlin who came up with the T-shirt idea based upon a 1988 song by the famous Michael Jackson, called [Man in the Mirror](#).)

So, the United States is lucky to win? and were treated as dorks and clowns and a bunch of guys wishing to be like the "great" Mexico?, only fit to "mirror" its image after their team?

If you are a young person and know little about the rivalry between the U.S. and Mexico, the barbs and insult exchanges are nothing new.

Winning 3 in a row in 2021 *is new*. However, compared to some 15- 20 years ago--really is it almost 20 years ago?--when we had star players like McBride, Beasley, Donovan, Reyna, a goalie duo of Friedel and Keller, O'Brien, Stewart, Lewis, Mathis, Wolff, Agoos, Mastroeni, Sanneh, Pope, lighting fast Cobi Jones, and the guy whose last name I could never pronounce named Frankie whose speed reminded me a lot of myself when I was young, who electrified my soccer world, these new generation of players are going in the right direction by accomplishing what they did, and are doing. Note: Notable-future-stars Clint Dempsey and Mike Bradley arrived after 2002. Incidentally, our present coach Berhalter, [a high school teammate of Reyna at St. Benedict's College Prep] was part of that fabulous era, was a mean defender and was on a team that was called too young to beat any world class teams. Brother, did America proved them wrong.

I've waited a dozen years to see a new generation make things happen with a team that is lightning quick, that can score, have a stout defense, and when up against the wall, respond with tenacity and a never die attitude, as they did back in August in the Gold Cup. Once upon a time, during WW II, European generals thought little on the skill of the fighting American. You may not like the analogy, but a World Cup is like a battlefield. You do not literally die, but at times there can be blood as an opponent will try to do everything to assure his victory.

