

# SASH

## HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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It has become a common thing in the last few years for a victory by the United States national team to be referred to as one of the United States' greatest ever in international soccer and compared to previous triumphs. And it's true. The United States has put together a string of upsets in recent years that deserve such praise, among them Mexico in 1991, Ireland in 1992, England in 1993, Colombia in 1994 and Argentina in 1995.

But what about earlier decades? The United States has had some good victories over the years, and not just in the last five years. Here are 10 of the best victories by the United States national team prior to 1990:

**United States 3, Belgium 0**, World Cup first round, Central Park stadium, Montevideo, Uruguay, July 13, 1930--After a poor performance at the 1928 Olympics, the United States had something to prove, and this result opened a few eyes around the world. Bart McGhee got the first two American goals, late in the first half, and Bert Patenaude scored the third after halftime. McGhee's opening goal came on a rebound from the crossbar of a shot by Billy Gonsalves. He got the second just before halftime when the Belgians paused, expecting an offside whistle, and left McGhee alone in front of the goalkeeper.

**United States 3, Paraguay 0**, World Cup first round, Central Park stadium, Montevideo, Uruguay, July 17, 1930--A second consecutive victory over a legitimate soccer-playing nation boosted the robust Americans into the semifinals of the inaugural World Cup. There has long been some dispute over the identity of the goalscorers, with some accounts crediting all three to Patenaude, some giving one of them to Tom Florie and some counting one of them as a Paraguayan own goal. It is certain that Patenaude scored the first and last goals, in the 11th minute and the 50th minute, both set up by crosses from Andy Auld.

**United States 4, Mexico 2**, World Cup qualifying, PNF Stadium, Rome, May 24, 1934--This game is famous for one of the greatest individual performances ever by an American player. Aldo "Buff" Donelli scored all four United States goals, in the 15th, 30th, 73rd and 87th minutes. This game, although a qualifier rather than part of the World Cup finals, was played in Italy because FIFA had received the United States' entry late. This World Cup was a single-elimination tournament, so it was not necessarily all that incongruous that two North American teams travelled all the way to Europe to play a game to determine which one would go right back home. Even the winner was not assured of staying much longer. The United States was eliminated by Italy just three days later.

**United States 5, Cuba 2**, World Cup qualifying, Olympic Stadium, Mexico City, Sept. 21, 1949--Why is this game such a big deal? Cuba wasn't an international power. But without this victory, the successes of 1950 wouldn't have been possible. This United States had its back to the wall, needing a victory here to stay alive (although it didn't really clinch its place in the World Cup until Cuba lost to Mexico four days later). The Americans, who had played a 1-1 tie with Cuba on the same field a week before, pulled away quickly, taking a 4-0 lead in the first 35 minutes on goals by Walter Bahr, John Souza, Peter Matevich and Matevich again. In the second half, Frank Wallace scored the fifth American goal.

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**United States 1, England 0**, World Cup first round, Mineiro Stadium, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, June 26, 1950--This is the one that everybody knows about, but some dismiss it as not terribly significant, because it didn't spark a huge growth of the sport in the United States. However, it has plenty of significance if you look at it from the English standpoint. This game was the first nail in the coffin of England's long held assumption of it's own superiority over the rest of the world in soccer. Other nails may have been larger, such as those driven by Hungary in 1953 and 1954, but this was the first.

**United States 1, Poland 0**, friendly, Willowbrook Park, New Britain, Conn., Aug. 12, 1973--Poland had perhaps its strongest team ever at this point. The year before, it had won the Olympic title; a year later, it made a serious run at winning the World Cup. This was the fourth time that the United States played Poland in 1973, and the Americans finally got a victory, their first over a European nation since 1950. Al Trost scored the goal in the 38th minute, when he picked up the ball in midfield, dribbled to within about 25 yards of the goal and hit a hard shot into the corner of the net that took goalkeeper Jan Tomaszewski by surprise. Just as important to the American victory was the work of United States goalie Mike Ivanow, who kept the Polish attack at bay.

**United States 2, Hungary 0**, friendly, Nep Stadium, Budapest, Hungary, Oct. 26, 1979--OK, so this wasn't the Hungary of Puskas or of Albert. But it was still Hungary, a major European team, and one that had been in the World Cup just the year before. And the game was at Hungary's national stadium. Both American goals came on breakaways, the first by Louie Nanchoff in the 70th minute and then by Angelo DiBernardo in the 80th, when Hungary was pressing forward, looking for an equalizer. In between the two goals, Hungary had been awarded a penalty, but the shot went over the bar.

**United States 1, Colombia 0**, friendly, Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, Oct. 11, 1984--It's easy to forget this game in the wake of the famous victory over Colombia a few miles away in Pasadena 10 years later. But this was the United States' first victory over a South American nation since 1930. The goal that did it came in the 84th minute. Chance Fry was set free down the left side by Hugo Perez and sent a cross to an open Ade Coker, who rounded the goalkeeper and shot into an open net.

**United States 3, Peru 0**, Marlboro Cup final, Giants Stadium, East Rutherford, N.J., June 4, 1989--It was only a friendly tournament, and the opponent wasn't the best that South America had to offer. But still, this victory over a legitimate South American team, one that had been in three of the previous five World Cups, was a tremendous confidence builder, particularly since it came in front of a crowd that favored the visitors almost unanimously. A first-half barrage of goals did the job for the United States, with Brian Bliss scoring in the 15th minute (on a long-range volley), Tab Ramos in the 18th and Bruce Murray in the 44th.

**United States 1, Trinidad 0**, World Cup qualifying, National Stadium, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, Nov. 19, 1989--United States victories over the small nations that make up most of CONCACAF are not usually hailed as landmark triumphs, but this one was. Most American fans remember this one well, a desperate struggle in a stadium packed with 35,000 Trinidadian fans who were convinced that their team, not the United States, was about to qualify for the World Cup finals. Paul Caligiuri's looping shot in the 31st minute changed that, and possibly a great deal of American soccer history since. Because of the financial strictures that the USSF was reported to have faced had it lost this game, it can be argued that all of the United States victories in the six years since have been built on the back of this one.

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### **Membership notes**

As you can see, included with this issue of the newsletter is the 1995 version of the SASH membership directory. This is somewhat shorter than last year's version. Time limitations have forced us to drop the biographies that were included last year, limiting it this time to names, addresses and phone numbers. We hope it will be useful to you nevertheless.

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Three positions will be up for election in next year's SASH election. They are vice president (currently held by Ric Fonseca), secretary (currently held by Jack Huckel) and one of the four director positions (currently held by Walter Bahr). Executive director Al Colone has agreed to serve as a one-man Nominating Committee to conduct the election, which will be held next spring. If you are interested in running for one of the three positions named above, please contact him at the National Soccer Hall of Fame, 11 Ford Ave., Oneonta, N.Y. 13820 or (607) 432-3351 to let him know that you want to be on the ballot. The election will be held by mail, probably in the spring.

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The last page of this newsletter is a form with which you can renew your SASH membership for 1996. The deadline for renewing your membership is April 1. You will receive the winter 1996 issue of the newsletter, due out in January, regardless of whether you have yet renewed by then.

The SASH membership rate for 1996 remains at \$10. Some of you already have paid for 1996. To see whether your membership expires on Dec. 31, 1995 or Dec. 31, 1996, check your entry in the SASH membership directory that is included with this newsletter. Payment should be in the form of a check payable to SASH.

Please return the membership form, along your payment, to SASH, c/o Albert Colone, National Soccer Hall of Fame, 11 Ford Ave., Oneonta, N.Y. 13820.

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Please enter me as a member of the Society for American Soccer History for the year 1996. My check for \$10, payable to SASH, is enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to SASH, c/o Albert Colone, 11 Ford Ave., Oneonta, N.Y. 13820.