



Soccer to be played in Kansas City

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Although U.S. coach Bruce Arena still seems partial to his veterans, he hasn't been shy about giving youngsters — particularly MLS players — a chance.

When the United States meets Costa Rica in Game 3 of the World Cup qualifying tournament Wednesday night, Arena will have a mix of proven international performers and MLS mainstays. It should remain that way for the rest of the CONCACAF regional qualifiers, which stretch into November.

On the 18-man American roster for the game at Arrowhead Stadium were such European league regulars as midfielder Claudio Reyna, forward Earnie Stewart, defenders David Regis and Gregg Berhalter and goalkeeper Kasey Keller.

Also on hand were MLS players Josh Wolff and Clint Mathis, who combined to lead the U.S. team past Mexico in its first qualifier, plus Chris Armas, Eddie Lewis, Carlos Llamosa and goalie Tony Meola.

It is a mixture Arena would like to

maintain.

"It gives us a balance we seek for the national team," he said. "The strategy was to prepare both long term and short term. I am very comfortable where we stand with our depth."

But Arena also knows it can be difficult to free up players from their overseas clubs. Brad Friedel, who played in goal in wins over Mexico, 2-0, and Honduras, 2-1, was not available for this game. It can happen with many of the others, too.

So MLS performers, who tend to be younger than their American counterparts playing abroad, might become critical to success in qualifying.

The top three teams from the 10-game round-robin series will advance to World Cup 2002 in Japan and South Korea.

"In fact, we are grateful for the unbelievable support MLS has provided the entire men's national team," Arena said. "MLS has been incredibly supportive and coopera-

tive in the release of players and in the selection of venues for these games."

A crowd of 35,000 is conceivable for the match with Costa Rica, which tied Honduras 2-2 and beat Trinidad and Tobago 3-0. The Costa Ricans have been something of a nemesis for the United States, which has never won in Costa Rica and played a 0-0 tie with the Central Americans in the semifinal qualifying round.

"We are in this for the long haul," Arena said. "It's a 10-game series. Costa Rica is a key game for us, and our focus is on three points. Costa Rica is going to be a tough battle right to the end."

"We feel good about having six points, but it is too early to feel real good about yourself or real bad about yourself. History shows that in the last round, which was a shorter round, we started off with one point from two games and were counted out, but ended up winning our group."

A victory Wednesday would put them in strong position to win the final round, too.

baseball scoreboard

By The Associated Press				
AMERICAN LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	14	6	.700	—
Toronto	13	7	.650	1
New York	11	9	.550	3
Baltimore	9	11	.450	5
Tampa Bay	6	14	.300	8
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	14	4	.778	—
Cleveland	11	7	.611	3
Chicago	6	12	.333	8
Kansas City	6	13	.316	8 1/2
Detroit	5	13	.278	9
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	16	4	.800	—
Texas	10	11	.476	6 1/2
Anaheim	8	12	.400	8
Oakland	7	13	.350	9
Monday's Games				
No games scheduled				
Tuesday's Games				
Baltimore 8, Detroit 3				
Tampa Bay 4, Kansas City 2				
Boston 9, Minnesota 4				
Seattle 7, N.Y. Yankees 5				
Anaheim 7, Cleveland 2				
Toronto 7, Texas 5				
Oakland 6, Chicago White Sox 4				
Today's Games				
Texas (Rogers 1-1) at Toronto (Carpenter 2-1), 5:05 p.m.				
Minnesota (Radke 4-0) at Boston (Martinez 2-0), 5:05 p.m.				
Baltimore (Roberts 2-0) at Detroit (Sparks 1-1), 5:05 p.m.				
Anaheim (Valdes 0-2) at Cleveland (Sabathia 2-0), 5:05 p.m.				
Seattle (Halama 2-1) at N.Y. Yankees (Pettitte 3-1), 5:05 p.m.				
Kansas City (Suppan 1-2) at Tampa Bay (Wilson 0-2), 5:15 p.m.				
Oakland (Lidle 0-1) at Chicago White Sox (Wells 2-2), 6:05 p.m.				
Thursday's Games				
Kansas City (Suzuki 1-1) at Tampa Bay (Rekar 0-2), 10:15 a.m.				
Baltimore (Johnson 1-1) at Detroit (Holt 1-2), 11:05 a.m.				
Minnesota (Milton 3-0) at Boston (Nomo 2-1), 5:05 p.m.				
Anaheim (Rapp 0-3) at Cleveland (Finley 1-2), 5:05 p.m.				
Seattle (Moyer 3-0) at N.Y. Yankees (Mussina 1-2), 5:05 p.m.				
Oakland (Heredia 0-4) at Chicago White Sox (Parque 0-2), 605 p.m.				
NATIONAL LEAGUE				
East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	13	6	.684	—
Montreal	9	11	.450	4 1/2
Atlanta	9	12	.429	5
New York	8	11	.421	5
Florida	8	12	.400	5 1/2
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	12	7	.632	—
Houston	11	8	.579	1
Cincinnati	10	9	.526	2
Milwaukee	9	10	.474	3
St. Louis	9	10	.474	3
Pittsburgh	8	10	.444	3 1/2
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Colorado	11	8	.579	—
San Francisco	11	8	.579	—
Arizona	10	10	.500	1 1/2
Los Angeles	10	10	.500	1 1/2
San Diego	7	13	.350	4 1/2
Monday's Games				
Atlanta 9, Houston 7				
Arizona 9, Florida 0				
Philadelphia 5, San Diego 3				
Tuesday's Games				
Houston 11, Atlanta 6				
St. Louis 7, Montreal 2				
Milwaukee 6, N.Y. Mets 4				
Colorado 14, Chicago Cubs 1				
Arizona 9, Florida 8				
Pittsburgh 5, Los Angeles 1				
Cincinnati 9, San Francisco 5				
Philadelphia 12, San Diego 7				
Today's Games				
Atlanta (Millwood 0-2) at Houston (Elarton 3-1), 6:05 p.m.				
N.Y. Mets (Trachsel 0-3) at Milwaukee (Haynes 1-2), 6:05 p.m.				
Montreal (Reames 2-0) at St. Louis (Benes 0-1), 6:10 p.m.				
Chicago Cubs (Bere 3-0) at Colorado (Neagle 2-0), 7:05 p.m.				
Florida (Grilli 2-1) at Arizona (Schilling 2-0), 7:35 p.m.				
Philadelphia (Daal 1-0) at San Diego (Tollberg 1-1), 8:05 p.m.				
Pittsburgh (Martinez 0-1) at Los Angeles (Gagne 1-1), 8:10 p.m.				
Cincinnati (Fernandez 3-1) at San Francisco (Rueter 2-1), 8:15 p.m.				
Thursday's Games				
Montreal (Armas Jr. 0-4) at St. Louis (Ankief 1-2), 11:10 a.m.				
N.Y. Mets (Leiter 0-3) at Milwaukee (Rigdon 2-0), 12:05 p.m.				
Chicago Cubs (Lieber 1-1) at Colorado (Bohanon 0-2), 1:05 p.m.				
Cincinnati (Harnisch 1-2) at San Francisco (Ortiz 3-1), 1:35 p.m.				
Philadelphia (Person 1-1) at San Diego (Jarvis 0-1), 3:05 p.m.				
Atlanta (Maddux 2-1) at Arizona (Ellis 2-0), 7:35 p.m.				
Pittsburgh (Ritchie 0-2) at Los Angeles (Brown 2-1), 8:10 p.m.				

basketball playoffs

By The Associated Press		Phoenix at Sacramento, 8:30 p.m.	Utah at Dallas, 1 p.m.
First Round		Thursday, April 26	San Antonio at Minnesota, 3:30 p.m.
(Best-of-5)		Toronto at New York, 6 p.m.	Milwaukee at Orlando, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, April 24		Portland at L.A. Lakers, 8:30 p.m.	Sunday, April 29
Philadelphia 116, Indiana 98, series tied 1-1		Friday, April 27	New York at Toronto, 10:30 a.m.
Utah 109, Dallas 98, Utah leads series 2-0		Miami at Charlotte, 6 p.m.	Sacramento at Phoenix, 1 p.m.
Wednesday, April 25		Saturday, April 28	L.A. Lakers at Portland, 3:30 p.m.
Orlando at Milwaukee, 6 p.m.		Philadelphia at Indiana, 10:40 a.m.	

Two players have reunion

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It'll be a reunion for Colorado's Rob Blake and Los Angeles' Adam Deadmarsh when the Avalanche and Kings open their second-round playoff series Thursday.

Blake and Steve Reinprecht were traded to Colorado on Feb. 21 in exchange for Deadmarsh and Aaron Miller.

"It'll be difficult the first couple games against them," Blake said Tuesday. "They surprised me, but I played there a long time. That is a good team."

The Kings couldn't agree on a new contract for Blake, and unloaded him before he became a free agent this summer. Otherwise, they risked receiving nothing for a valuable player who'd

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hockey schedule

By The Associated Press	
CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS	
(Best-of-7)	
Thursday, April 26	
Toronto at New Jersey, 7 p.m.	
Pittsburgh at Buffalo, 7:30 p.m.	
Los Angeles at Colorado, 10 p.m.	
Friday, April 27	
St. Louis at Dallas, 7 p.m.	
Saturday, April 28	
Pittsburgh at Buffalo, 3 p.m.	
Los Angeles at Colorado, 3 p.m.	
Toronto at New Jersey, 7 p.m.	
Sunday, April 29	
St. Louis at Dallas, 7:30 p.m.	
Monday, April 30	
Buffalo at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.	
Colorado at Los Angeles, 9:30 p.m.	
Tuesday, May 1	
New Jersey at Toronto, 7 p.m.	
Dallas at St. Louis, 7 p.m.	

Rockies outscore Cubs

DENVER (AP) — Get this: Larry Walker isn't feeling comfortable at the plate yet.

Walker, threatening to repeat his MVP performance of 1997, hit two home runs to tie Luis Gonzalez for the major league lead as the Colorado Rockies beat the Chicago Cubs 14-1 on Tuesday night.

With 11 homers, Walker has two more than all of last year and tied the NL record for April shared by five others, including Gonzalez of the Arizona Diamondbacks. Walker also hit 11 in April 1997.

"I'm just glad to be hitting the ball hard," he said. "I'm swinging the bat good. I'm not where I want to be, if that sounds all right to say. I haven't felt comfortable for a while, but I'm still getting my hits and hitting balls hard when I get the opportunity."

Walker, who is hitting .377 and leads the majors with 25 RBIs, drilled the first pitch he saw for a three-run homer off Chicago starter Kevin Tapani (3-1) and added a two-run shot off Todd Van Poppel in the fifth.

He has five more games at Coors Field this month, giving him a good chance to tie Ken Griffey Jr.'s April record of 13 home runs in 1997.

"We're tied for first, so that's more

important to anybody in this clubhouse, including myself," Walker said.

Todd Helton had two hits, including a three-run homer, to help Colorado beat Tapani for the first time in seven tries. The right-hander's ERA skyrocketed from 0.96 to 4.91.

"What happened can happen here especially when they are swinging the bats well," he said. "I can't really say they hit a lot of good pitches. They hit a lot of fat ones."

Entering the game, Chicago's pitching staff led the NL with a 2.96 ERA and had not allowed more than seven runs in a game. The team ERA increased to 3.56, and the Rockies had nine runs after Helton's home run with one out in the fourth.

Tapani, who had given up two runs in his first three starts, surrendered 10 runs and 11 hits in 3 1-3 innings. He also matched his season total with three walks.

"This place hasn't changed," said Cubs manager Don Baylor, who spent six seasons as Colorado's manager. "It still is giving up a lot of runs. Always will. It will when you don't make pitches and it showed."

Rockies starter Mike Hampton (3-0) had his second impressive start at Coors Field, holding the Cubs to one

run and three hits in five innings before leaving with a stiff neck.

"It's just hotel beds and pillows. It kind of stiffens up every once in a while," he said. "I didn't want to risk bad mechanics and a sore arm, so the smartest thing was to get out of there when I did."

Hampton, who signed a \$121 million, eight-year contract in December, said he will see a chiropractor and plans to take a special pillow on the road. His next scheduled start is Sunday at home where he has a 2.95 ERA in three starts this year.

Every Colorado starter except Hampton had a hit by the fourth. Todd Hollandsworth was 4-for-4, Brent Mayne and Neifi Perez had three hits, four other Rockies finished with at least two hits and seven players drove in a run.

Notes: Walker has 24 career multihomer games. Jeff Cirillo singled and homered against Tapani to improve to 11-for-21 against the right-hander.

The Cubs have allowed at least one home run in all 35 games they've played at Coors Field. Sammy Sosa, a career .350 hitter at Coors Field, was 1-for-4 and is 3-for-15 on Chicago's current nine-game road trip.

Royals overcome by Devil Rays

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Greg Vaughn and Gerald Williams hit two-run homers to back another strong pitching performance by Albie Lopez as the Tampa Bay Devil Rays came from behind Tuesday night for a 4-2 victory over the Kansas City Royals.

The game drew just 11,056, the smallest crowd for a home game in the Devil Rays' four-year history.

Lopez (3-1) allowed seven hits, walked three and struck out four in seven innings. He has worked at least seven innings in each of his five starts and his three victories are half the team's total for the season.

Williams' homer off Brian Meadows (0-3) erased a 2-0 deficit in the third. Vaughn chased the Royals starter with his team-leading fifth homer after Williams, who went 3-for-4, singled with one out in the fifth.

Tampa Bay won for the second time in six games under new manager Hal McRae, who waited more than six

years for his second chance to lead a club after serving as the Royals' manager from May 1991 through 1994.

Esteban Yan pitched the ninth for his third save in three opportunities.

Luis Alicea and Carlos Beltran opened the game with consecutive singles off Lopez and Kansas City's first run scored when Mark Quinn grounded into a double play. Joe Randa made it 2-0 with a RBI single in the second.

Lopez pitched seven scoreless innings in a game the Devil Rays eventually lost 9-1 to Boston in their debut under McRae last Wednesday. He wasn't as sharp this time, allowing two runs on four hits in the first two innings, but settled after working out of a bases-loaded jam in the third.

The Royals stranded seven runners in the first four innings and Tampa Bay wiped out a 2-0 deficit when Felix Martinez beat out a bunt for the first hit off Meadows and Williams followed

with his second homer of the season.

Kansas City's Jermaine Dye, mired in a 7-for-42 slump, fouled a pitch off his left knee in the first inning and departed in the fourth for precautionary X-rays. The tests were negative and he is listed as day-to-day.<

Notes: Vaughn's homer was the 325th of his career. He's 15th among active hitters and tied with Willie Horton for 72nd on the all-time list. RHP Brian Rose, claimed off waivers from the New York Mets, will join the Devil Rays on Wednesday.

The Royals haven't finished with a winning record since McRae managed them to a 64-51 during the strike-shortened 1994 season, his last in Kansas City.

Lopez won both of his previous starts against the Royals, including a decision in 1997 when he was with the Cleveland Indians. Devil Rays C John Flaherty committed throwing errors on two of the Royals' three stolen bases.

Carolina Panthers sign former Chief

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — The Carolina Panthers signed punter Todd Sauerbrun on Tuesday and released Ken Walter, whose average was second-to-last in the NFL last season.

Sauerbrun played for the Kansas City Chiefs last season but was waived in March. Chicago drafted him in the

second round in 1995 and he spent five seasons with the Bears before signing with Kansas City as a free agent last year.

The Panthers had been looking to replace Walter for some time. They signed Baltimore's Kyle Richardson to an offer sheet in March but the Ravens

matched it to keep him. Walter struggled in 2000.

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