



Dynamo 1, Charleston Battery 0

March 18, 2006
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Ronald Cerritos' 74th-minute free kick was all it took in the scrappy affair that saw the Battery bunker in for much of the match.

"They sat in pretty much in their own half, so they made it difficult to break them down," said Dynamo coach Dominic Kinnear. "We started getting some balls in over the top. That finally opened some things up for us in the second half."

The Battery, the only non-MLS club participating in the annual pre-season tournament, had only six

days to prepare for the opening match of the third annual tournament. Houston, D.C. United, and Red Bull New York had all been training since February 1. The round robin tournament, which runs through next Saturday, is all three of the MLS clubs' final pre-season games before the season opens April 1.

The free kick was the result of one of the searching balls played out of the Houston defense, run onto by Dwayne De Rosario. Battery defender Chris Gores was whistled for a shoulder-to-shoulder challenge on De Rosario as they both chased after what would probably been an otherwise innocuous ball. Cerritos stepped up and neatly lobbed the ball from 22 yards out over the six-man Battery wall into the top left corner, freezing Battery goalkeeper Dusty Hudock on his line.

Despite its defensive stance, the Battery created the first scoring chance of the game. In the 19th minute, Dynamo goalkeeper Pat Onstad was forced to dive through traffic to collect a low-driven cross with two Battery attackers lurking on the far post.

Shortly after, the game was suspended due to a problem with the Blackbaud Stadium lighting. After nearly 45 minutes, play resumed, though neither team was able to establish any rhythm until well into the second half. Not having played a game in more than a week, Kinnear ran out what is effectively his starting 11 for much of the match, missing only Brian Ching, who is in Germany with the U.S. national team, and Brad Davis, who was unavailable due to injury.

Though Houston maintained a good hold on the game, the Battery came close to equalizing in injury time. Throwing everyone forward on a free kick from the right flank, Gores got on the end of well-taken free kick, heading just over the crossbar.

"There are some good things and some bad things we can take from this game," Kinnear said. "It gives us a good indication of what we need to work on."

Houston Dynamo (1-0-0) vs. Charleston Battery (0-1-0)
March 18, 2006 -- Blackbaud Stadium, Charleston SC
Carolina Challenge Cup

Scoring Summary:

Houston Dynamo -- Pat Onstad, Craig Waibel, Kevin Goldthwaite (Marcus Storey 75), Eddie Robinson (Ryan Cochrane 15), Wade Barrett, Kelly Gray, Ricardo Clark, Dwayne De Rosario, Brian Mullan, Alejandro Moreno, Ronald Cerritos (Stuart Holden 75).

Charleston Battery -- Dusty Hudock, Chris Brunt, Mark Watson (Brandan Curran 46), Chris Gores, Chris Corcoran, Jeff Mateo, Ugo Okoye (Jordie Huges 80), Andres Perez (Armando Romero 46), Luke Vercollone, Ben Hollingsworth, Alon Lubezky (Gavin Glinton 46).

All statistics contained in this boxscore are unofficial

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