



2002 Gold Cup

Five World Cup finalists are entered in this year's Gold Cup: the United States, Mexico and Costa Rica from CONCACAF and guest teams South Korea and Ecuador. Unfortunately, not every team is sending its top players.

BY PAUL KENNEDY

GROUP A

Any hope Gold Cup organizers had of getting big crowds for the Gold Cup's return to the Rose Bowl went by the wayside when **Mexico** announced plans to send a "B" team. Only three players — midfielders Victor Gutierrez and Tomas Campos and striker Jair Garcia — played in qualifying, and they played a combined total of four games. **Guatemala**, which won the UNCAF Cup (Central American championship) last spring, tuned up for the Gold Cup with trips to Cuba and Ecuador. **El Salvador** finished third at the UNCAF Cup. The Dallas Burn's Jorge Rodriguez will lead Carlos Recinos' young Salvadoran team.

SCHEDULE

Jan. 19 in Pasadena
El Salvador vs. Mexico
Jan. 21 in Pasadena
Mexico vs. Guatemala
Jan. 23 in Pasadena
Guatemala vs. El Salvador

GROUP B

The **United States** has won all 12 games it has played in the first round of the Gold Cup, but Bruce's Arena team faces a stern test against **South Korea**, which will spend 10 days training in San Diego.

Coach Guus Hiddink called up German-based Shim Jae Won and J-League players Yoo Sang Chul, Hwang Sun Hong, Park Ji Sung, Ahn Hyo Yun and Choi Yong Soo. Lee Chun Soo, who gave the U.S. fits in South Korea's 1-0 win in December, is one of five college players. **Cuba**, which lost to the United States, 3-0, in the 1998 Gold Cup, was the final team to qualify for the Gold Cup, beating Panama in a playoff.

SCHEDULE

Jan. 19 in Pasadena
USA vs. South Korea
Jan. 21 in Pasadena
Cuba vs. USA
Jan. 23 in Pasadena
South Korea vs. Cuba

GROUP C

Costa Rica, which won the Hexagonal, is taking the Gold Cup seriously. Unlike the United States and Mexico, the Ticos are sending their first team. (Star Paulo Cesar Wanchope will join the Ticos after the first round.) **Trinidad & Tobago**, which beat Costa Rica in the quarterfinals two years ago, will be led by Stern John (13 goals for Nottingham Forest). The future of T&T coach Rene Simoes is in doubt, following the withdrawal of CONCACAF president Jack Warner from T&T soccer. French island **Martinique**, birth-

place of U.S. defender David Regis, is making its first appearance since 1993.

SCHEDULE

Jan. 18 in Miami

Martinique vs. Costa Rica

Jan. 20 in Miami

Costa Rica vs. Trinidad & Tobago

Jan. 22 in Miami

Trinidad & Tobago vs. Martinique

GROUP D

Canada, whose 2000 Gold Cup title was its first title in 115 years, hasn't faced a Gold Cup team since being eliminated in the second round of World Cup qualifying. A dismal offense was its downfall. Coach Holger Osieck finally convinced Polish-born star Tomasz Radzinski to play for Canada again, but the Everton striker was recently injured and will miss the Gold Cup. Guest team **Ecuador** is expected to be without its key attacking players: Alex Aguinaga, Ivan Kaviedes and Agustin Delgado. Given the failure of Jamaica and Honduras to qualify, **Haiti** will be the only big draw at the Orange Bowl.

SCHEDULE

Jan. 18 in Miami

Haiti vs. Canada

Jan. 20 in Miami

Ecuador vs. Haiti

Jan. 22 in Miami

Canada vs. Ecuador

SCHEDULE

Quarterfinals

Jan. 26 in Miami

C1 vs. D2 (1)

D1 vs. C2 (2)

Jan. 27 in Pasadena

A1 vs. B2 (3)

B1 vs. A2 (4)

Semifinals

Jan. 30 in Pasadena

1 vs. 3 (5)

2 vs. 4 (6)

Third-Place Game

Feb. 2 in Pasadena

5 loser vs. 6 loser

Final

Feb. 2 in Pasadena

5 winner vs. 6 winner

CHAMPIONS

1991 — USA

1993 — Mexico

1996 — Mexico

1998 — Mexico

2000 — Canada

Young defender Gilberto Martinez is one of many stars from Costa Rica's World Cup qualifying campaign called up for the Gold Cup.

