

# San Francisco Deltas plays fútbol on a prison yard

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For the first time in memory, professional soccer club members visited San Quentin Prison for a clinic and game with about two dozen incarcerated players.

The owner, general manager, several coaches and active players Cristian Portilla and Tyler Gibson for the San Francisco Deltas greeted the San Quentin squads.

"It's an honor to have them with us," said Brandon Hidalgo, The Youngsters' team captain.

Delta members coached both teams. Head coach Marc Dos Santos put the OG's into a 4-4-2 formation. Assistant coach Andrea Di Pietrantonio took charge of The Youngsters with a 3-4-3, with strikers Hidalgo, Cesar Delgado and Adrian "Güero" Montez leading the attack.

Members of Delta ran drills and barked orders on the prison's mainly dirt field in warm-ups.

"This is the first time that we had professionals come and coach us," said OG player Gavin Robinson. "I've been waiting for this for 10 years."

Among the visiting club on June 27 was Chris Brown, the Delta goalie coach, whose pre-game drills would prove to be crucial for both opposing goalkeepers, Moses Fuentes and Marco Villa, in a match that hinged on penalty kicks.

"We are committed, and will give our best to you guys," said Dos Santos with a heavy Portuguese/French accent.

"Professional sports was never meant to be a business but a way of bringing the community together, under one umbrella," said Delta founder and CEO Brian Andrés Helmick, a belief that he said is lacking in professional sports, "Fútbol does that."

Delta is the newest Bay Area professional expansion team since San Jose Earthquakes was formed in 1974. They are second in North American Soccer League (NASL) this season at 23-6-2-5 (points-wins-loses-ties).

Their rapid success stems from diversity, humility and their responsibility as professional athletes to be one with their community, according to Helmick, "We're humble bad asses."

In minute 13, Taré "Cancun" Beltranchuc scored off an assist from Delta GM Todd Dunivant, a 22-year retiree and five time MLS champion with the San Jose Earthquakes and Los Angeles Galaxy.

Dunivant's presence on the field seemed unfair as the OGs' Carlos "Venado" Ramirez, on a Beltranchuc assist, scored in minute 18. It was 2-0 at the half.

"They (OGs) just defend!" exclaimed Di Pietrantonio. "Their coach (Dos Santos) takes the fun away from soccer!"

Di Pietrantonio's halftime speech was aimed at beating the OG's clogged middle. "Take the ball wide," he said.

In the 49th minute, four minutes into the second half, Youngster Cesar Delgado scored, which tilted the momentum toward The Youngsters. Their relentless pressure resulted in an additional goal by Hidalgo with two minutes left in regulation.

The match ended in a 2-2 tie after an extra time goal was disqualified. Instead, both teams selected shooters for penalty kicks.

Beltranchuc, the OGs' star-player, scored easily.

Luis Diaz-Lopez's shot was nowhere near the goal: 1/0.

Jesús "Morelia" Lopez, like Diaz-Lopez, missed.

Cesar Delgado's shot was wide-left by inches. 1-0/0-0.

Julio Martinez, OG, scored.

Youngster's Hidalgo, scored with authority: 1-0-1/0-0-1.

OGs' Le "Lamsuy" Lam missed, while Adrian "Güero" Montez scored: 1-0-1-0/0-0-1-1.

Carlos Meza's shot for the lead and possible win was blocked, leaving the match in the legs of Youngster José "Magina" Mendoza. He scored on goalkeeper Villa. 1-0-1-0-0/0-0-1-1-1.

"The ball came so slow that I was sure I was going to stop it," said Villa. "My confidence got the best of me."

The professional play by Dunivant was not enough help for the OGs. The youngster stripped away the OG's lead to win 5-4.

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