

A Letter to My Teammates



San Francisco Deltas [Follow](#)
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From Assistant Captain Cristian Portilla



To my teammates,

As you know, I've had the privilege of playing in the top leagues in the world. I've played in La Liga, in the first divisions in Greece, Hungary and Cyprus. I've played in big derbies with thousands and thousands of fans in the stands. I've played against Barcelona, Manchester City, Atlético de Madrid, Olympiacos. I've played against Messi, Ibrahimovic, David Villa, Iniesta...

But guys, right now at this moment, I'm drinking a cup of coffee at my favorite coffee shop — The Fairmont — and I just realized that the most important game of my career is on Sunday... and I can't play because I'm injured.

I feel frustrated. Sometimes I don't understand how an injury can come at the most inopportune moment...at the very moment when you are most enjoying soccer in your entire career. At the same time, I feel at peace because I know that I have the best group of players, technical staff, and medical staff of my entire career. Believe me! I feel at peace because I know that each of you guys will give 200% in every second of Sunday's final. If some of you don't start in the first eleven, no worries, maybe you can decide the game in the second half or even in penalties. Each and every one of you are important to our team. Never forget that.

I would love to have the opportunity to be on the bench this Sunday because it would mean that I could help you on the field, but it's not gonna happen. Please know that I will fight with you from my little white chair close to the bench and I will send all of my energy out onto the field to fight alongside you.

I want to say a special thank you to Marc and the entire technical staff because you brought together 23 professional players with different backgrounds from all over the world and you turned us into a TEAM. This team is making history because of how well you managed the locker room. All of us feel crucial to the success of this team and that's because of your commitment to us as a coach. It is truly extraordinary.

Guys, win this for Miguel and Mitchell, they work really hard to make our lives easier every single day. Win for our incredible fans who love you all so much. Win the trophy for them. They supported us in warm days and in really cold and foggy nights. We really appreciate it Deltas fans, believe me.

Win it for our people from the office, without them this wouldn't be possible. They spent 3 years making this dream come true and worked really hard to get us to this point. All of them deserve a piece of that trophy.

And finally, of course, win this for yourselves. We spent more time with each other than we did with our families. We've committed so many hours that all build toward Sunday. We have so many travels, training sessions, hotels and memories... and guys as I told you last week, YOU DESERVE IT! One more step, the last one...

Win for those who can't play this Sunday because they are injured. Win for those who worked with us during the season — Andrea di Pietrantonio, Bivek, and Danny Cruz — this final is also yours!

Thank you guys! I'm so proud to be one of your captains.

See you all at Kezar!

Sincerely,

Cristian Portilla #8