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U.S. stays alive in World Cup

WATERFORD, Barbados (AP) Just 27 minutes from possible World Cup elimination, the United States finally broke through.

Clint Mathis scored the go-ahead goal and Earnie Stewart, Cobi Jones and Ante Razov tacked on scores as the United States beat Barbados 4-0 Wednesday and advanced to next year's regional finals of qualifying for the 2002 World Cup.

"You've got to give a lot of credit to Barbados," Mathis said. "We knew the conditions were going to be a little bit rough. We were able to fight back and keep our composure and get some goals.'

For nearly three-quarters of the game, the Americans flailed at their shots, missing chances and letting Barbados have breakaways that nearly put the U.S. team behind. The crowd of about 4,000 danced to calypso music and cheered, sensing the Bajan Rockets, ranked just 102nd in the world, had the chance to upset the United States, ranked 18th.

"For a while, it seemed like we couldn't get a goal," said U.S. goal-keeper Tony Meola, playing his first qualifier since 1989.

Five minutes into the second half, Barbados nearly scored, but Meola

managed to deflect a hard shot from Llewellyn Riley. The rebound hit the knee of defender Carlos Llamosa, then hit the crossbar and bounced away.

"Maybe the play of the game is Meola's save," said U.S. coach Bruce Arena.

"We knew the conditions were going to be a little bit rough. We were able to fight back and keep our composure and get some goals."

> — Clint Mathis U.S. soccer team member

The Americans, who beat Barbados 7-0 in August at Foxboro, Mass., would have been eliminated if they had failed to win because Guatemala beat Costa Rica 2-1 in a game played simultaneously.

Chris Klein appeared to put the Americans (3-1-2) in front in the 58th minute when he put in a rebound of a Moore shot, but referee Noel Bynoe of Trinidad and Tobago called Moore offsides. That was just about the time the U.S. bench learned Guatemala had taken a 1-0 lead.

'It could be one of those days,' Arena said to himself.

Moore, who scored twice in the win at Foxboro, picked up a pass from Chris Armas in the corner of the field a few minutes later, ran down the end line and passed the ball back to Mathis, who had a virtually open net and scored from about six yards out.

"I just got the ball to Joe and let him do all the work and just tried to stand there," Mathis said. "He just hit me with the ball — I didn't even

Ten minutes later, Stewart seemed to surprise the defense, taking a 17yard shot that beat goalkeeper Horace Stoute and went into the far upper corner of the net.

Jones, who came in as a substitute in the second half, scored off a pass from Mathis in the 77th minute. Razov added the last goal in the final minute.

We thought we could get a goal early," said Barbados coach Horace just come down to fitness. We had players who weren't able to play the full game.

The United States, which has shut out five straight opponents for the first time, advances to next year's finals of qualifying in the North and Central American and Caribbean region along with Honduras, Jamaica,

Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago. Costa Rica and Guatemala (3-2-1) were even on all tiebreakers and must play a one-game playoff to fill out the field. The top three teams in the finals advance to the 2002 tournament in Japan and South Korea.

A rainbow appeared across Barbados National Stadium 10 minutes before the game began. It quickly turned into a cool and windy afternoon.

Both teams had problems with the slippery, bumpy field, which created bad bounces and breakaways.

Mathis had the best U.S. chance in the first half, hitting the right post in the 36th minute off a pass from Moore.

Barbados nearly got a goal in the

41st minute when Matthew Joseph went downfield on a breakaway. Ryan Lucas was open, with only Meola to beat, but the pass was just ahead of him.

BASKETBALL

from here on out."

VOLLEYBALL

"We stayed relaxed and

dominated them," Clark said

made an error, we didn't m

were just ready for the next

.431 hitting percentage and of the Bears, 13-4. Marshall an

posted 12 kills each, and set

Moscovic added 42 assists.

steady," Marshall said. "I

night, and tonight was our

dence the past few weeks, but

was a big turnaround for the

opportunity to finish as high

the Big 12.

With only three games rer

"Our game tonight

ground. We have been low bock by

in league play, the Aggiesh adverse

ond place or as low as fifth B-1 and

Marshall said. "It's in our hat through

and we're going to be in com starting

Tech in Lubbock Saturdaya The

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The Aggies posted a sea

Continued from Particer s

At one point, Watkins felth refit to t was getting too comfortable lead and replaced the entires lineup with backups.

"I didn't like our intensity," "It may not have been the sta thing to do, but I was trying! message to forget the score an centrate on the things we have become a better basketball tea A&M's exhibition games W. Bu

count toward the regular season who v are a means of evaluating the A performance in a game when the can utilize its full rotation for 4 utes without playing against its

"I thought we came out and moving in the right direction in of where we want to be," Watkins

The Aggies' rotation was pered slightly as three starters the 1999-2000 campaign were it bench with injuries: Aaron Andy Slocum and Tomas Res A&M will open up its 2001:

paign Saturday against (Washington in Washington, I

Texas Olympian strikes gold in New York

NEW YORK (AP) — It was not Sydney with o'clock in the morning, it was on at a more reaits opera house. It was Rockefeller Center, with a huge Christmas tree in the background, where Brandon Slay finally got his Olympic wrestling

Instead of thousands of spectators watching from the stands, a couple hundred gathered behind barricades Wednesday, waving tiny American, South Korean and Turkish flags, many in bizarre getups designed to catch the television camera's eye.

And the Olympic flame had long been extin-

But this was historic because for the first time, a full medal presentation ceremony was held outside an Olympic venue.

"This is better than Sydney," Slay said. "More people, more Americans got to see it. It wasn't 1

sonable time.

Slay was awarded the gold in the 167 1/2pound class by the International Olympic Committee, which had stripped the medal from Germany's Alexander Leipold after he tested positive for the steroid nandrolone.

"I have a feeling of relief," said the 25-year-old from Amarillo, Texas, who learned a month ago that he would get the medal. "It's a feeling of completion, of closure.

Slay was not pleased by what happened in Sydney, when he received a silver medal on the podium.

He lost 4-0 to Leipold on the final day of the Games on Oct. 1. He complained afterward that the referee had unfairly penalized him and had not

allowed him to wrestle properly.

bronze-medal winner Adem Bereket of Turkey to an Olympic-type podium set up in the street outside the show's studio

Moon finished third in the competition and Bereket fourth, but they moved when Leipold was disqualified.

Leipold told him on the podium not to feel bad

"I wanted it now," said Slay. "I didn't want to

It was vastly different this time in a made-for-

about not winning the gold because he was young and still had two more Olympics ahead of him.

wait four or eight years. But what really got to me,

he didn't put his arm around me when he said it,

TV ceremony that was aired on NBC's "Today." TV weather reporter Al Roker led Slay, silver-

medal winner Moon Eui-jae of South Korea and

he patted me on the head. I felt demeaned.

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