

## Red Bull New York Clips: May 30-June 1, 2008

1. Red Bulls-Dynamo Preview (Nicolino Dibenedetto – The Ledger)  
<http://www.theledger.com/article/20080530/APS/805300999>
2. Barca to face Red Bulls and Chivas in August (Goal.com)  
<http://goal.com/en/Articolo.aspx?ContenutoId=717377>
3. Red Bulls Reyna, van den Bergh out for Houston (Brian Lewis - New York Post Blog)  
[http://blogs.nypost.com/sports/soccer/archives/2008/05/red\\_bulls\\_reyna.html](http://blogs.nypost.com/sports/soccer/archives/2008/05/red_bulls_reyna.html)
4. Barcelona vs. Red Bulls Aug. 6 at the Swamp (Brian Lewis - New York Post Blog)  
[http://blogs.nypost.com/sports/soccer/archives/2008/05/barcelona\\_vs\\_re.html](http://blogs.nypost.com/sports/soccer/archives/2008/05/barcelona_vs_re.html)
5. Red Bulls' Angels stealing the show (Bernardo Fallas – Houston Chronicle)  
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/sports/soc/5810772.html>
6. Red Bulls look to rebound from ugly defeat (Stefan Bondy – Herald News)  
[http://myheraldnews.com/view.html?type=stories&action=detail&sub\\_id=35810](http://myheraldnews.com/view.html?type=stories&action=detail&sub_id=35810)
7. Red Bulls to play Barcelona again (Frank Giase – Star-Ledger)  
<http://www.nj.com/redbulls/ledger/index.ssf?/base/sports-0/1212208529221180.xml&coll=1>
8. Ching's goal lifts Dynamo over Bulls (Stefan Bondy – Herald News)  
[http://myheraldnews.com/view.html?type=stories&action=detail&sub\\_id=35946](http://myheraldnews.com/view.html?type=stories&action=detail&sub_id=35946)
9. Bull's fire blanks (New York Post/Associated Press)  
[http://www.nypost.com/seven/06012008/sports/bulls\\_fire\\_blanks\\_113440.htm](http://www.nypost.com/seven/06012008/sports/bulls_fire_blanks_113440.htm)
10. Rating the Red Bulls vs. the Houston Dynamo (Jack Bell – New York Times Blog)  
<http://goal.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/31/rating-the-red-bulls-vs-the-houston-dynamo/>
11. Ching powers Dynamo past Red Bulls (ESPN)  
<http://soccernet.espn.go.com/report?id=237815&cc=5901>
12. Dynamo 1, Red Bulls 0: The aftermath (and some more notes) (Bernardo Fallas – Houston Chronicle Blog)  
[http://blogs.chron.com/soccer/archives/2008/06/dynamo\\_1\\_red\\_bu.html](http://blogs.chron.com/soccer/archives/2008/06/dynamo_1_red_bu.html)
13. Depleted Dynamo find strength to top Red Bulls (Bernardo Fallas – Houston Chronicle)  
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/sports/soc/5812092.html>

### 1. Red Bulls-Dynamo Preview

By: Nicolino Dibenedetto  
The Ledger  
May 30, 2008

After watching his team get embarrassed at home by his former club, coach Juan Carlos Osorio returns to the bench hoping the New York Red Bulls can rebound against the short-handed Houston Dynamo on Saturday night.

The Red Bulls (3-2-3) gave up four goals in a 14-minute span during the second half on Sunday and fell 5-1 to Chicago. Osorio, though, was forced to watch the sloppy performance from a luxury suite as he served a one-game suspension for being ejected during a 1-1 tie with Kansas City on May 17.

“We were not ready and it seemed to me from the start we were not interested. It was very frustrating to say the least.” said Osorio, who guided the Fire to the Eastern Conference finals in November breaking his contract to join the Red Bulls a month later.

Osorio will now be back on the bench, and he'll likely have Jozy Altidore back in the starting lineup after an in-grown toenail forced him out on Sunday.

Altidore, though, scored the Red Bulls' lone goal in the 74th minute after entering the contest in the second half. The 18-year-old forward, who has reportedly drawn interest from several European clubs, has a team-high three goals in seven games after netting nine in 22 contests last year.

Altidore found the back of the net in his only career game against Houston (2-3-5), helping the Red Bulls to a 1-0 home victory on April 21, 2007. They didn't fare well without him in the next meeting, losing 4-0 on July 5 at Houston.

The Dynamo, meanwhile, are hoping to overcome three key absences in their first game after midfielder Dwayne De Rosario scored in stoppage time to help salvage a 2-2 draw at Dallas on Wednesday.

De Rosario, Houston's leader with three goals, and goalkeeper Pat Onstad will not play against New York. They will be with the Canadian national team for its contest against Brazil on Saturday at Seattle.

The Dynamo will also be without defender Eddie Robinson, who was issued a red card for an altercation with Dallas' Marcelo Saragosa and Andre Rocha late in Wednesday's tie.

Those absences will likely mean reserves Patrick Ianni and Tony Caig will start, while Stuart Holden moves into De Rosario's playmaking role behind the forwards.

Ianni has been used as a sub for Robinson in two of the last four games since making his last start in a scoreless tie with Chivas USA on May 3.

Caig has played three games, going 0-0-3 with a 1.86 goals-against average since signing with Houston from Scottish club Gretna in January. However, he hasn't played since making seven saves in a 2-2 tie at Los Angeles on April 19.

Holden, a versatile midfielder, has only one assist in nine games - six starts - after enjoying a breakout season in 2007 with five goals and five assists. He had a goal and two assists in Houston's win over New York in July.

## **2. Barca to face Red Bulls and Chivas in August**

Goal.com

May 30, 2008

FC Barcelona will play the New York Red Bulls and CD Guadalajara of Mexico in August during their 2008 summer tour, which will kick off a five-year partnership between the Spanish giants and Major League Soccer

Barcelona, which will be making their first trip to the U.S. since 2006, will first play Chivas at Soldier Field in Chicago on August 3. Three days later, they will travel to New Jersey to take on Juan Carlos Osorio's side at Giants Stadium.

Barcelona is coming off a season which saw them finish third in La Liga, as well as advance to the semifinals of the Champions League and Spanish Cup. The legendary club has won 18 La Liga trophies, 24 Copa del Rey championships and two UEFA Champions League titles.

The Red Bulls won't be a stranger to several players on Barcelona, as the two sides matched up on August 12, 2006 at a packed Giants Stadium. The visitors emerged with a 4-1 victory that night, led by Ronaldinho's two goals. That match also marked the first game for Bruce Arena as the team's head coach.

During that same trip, FCB also tied Chivas 1-1 at the Los Angeles Coliseum. Chivas, the first place season finisher in the Clausura 2008 this past winter, has a star-studded roster, including Mexican National Team standouts Ramon Morales, Johnny Magallon, Luis Ernesto Michel and Alberto Medina.

### **3. Red Bulls Reyna, van den Berg out for Houston**

By: Brian Lewis  
New York Post Blog  
May 30, 2008

Captain Claudio Reyna and midfielder Dave van den Bergh will both miss Saturday night's game at Houston. After missing 2 1/2 games with a calf injury before returning last Sunday, now Reyna is hamstrung. And van den Bergh didn't fly with his wife is expected to deliver at any moment.

Seth Stammers did travel with the team today and is expected to play after missing three straight games. His return will be a huge lift for the injury-riddled midfield, which could see Mike Magee slot into the attacking role.

Despite Ricardo Clark returning from U.S. national team duty \_ he played in the 2-0 loss to England Wednesday, but practiced today \_ Houston is even more shorthanded than the Red Bulls (3-2-3, 12 points). This is clearly a chance to pick up a much-needed result on the road. We'll see.

Leading scorer Dwayne De Rosario and GK Pat Onstad are away with the Canadian National Team facing Brazil Saturday, and top defender Eddie Robinson is suspended after picking up a red card against Dallas. Defender Wade Barrett, the Dynamo's captain, is doubtful after sitting out the Dallas tilt with a groin pull.

One can only hope the Red Bulls show more cojones than they did in getting thrashed 5-1 last Sunday AT HOME by Chicago. But Houston has been vulnerable to pace without Robinson, and with Jozy Altidore available after not starting vs. the Fire, he could join wingers Dane Richards and Danleigh Borman in giving the Red Bulls a pretty pacy attack.

There is still no news on whether 22-year-old Mexican fullback Diego Jimenez accepted the Red Bulls' contract offer, but that shouldn't drag out too much longer.

### **4. Barcelona vs. Red Bulls Aug. 6 at the Swamp**

By: Brian Lewis  
New York Post Blog  
May 30, 2008

The Red Bulls' long-rumored friendly against FC Barcelona is finally official. They'll play the 2006 Champions League winners at Giants Stadium on Aug. 6 at 7 p.m.

It's part of the Spanish giant's money grab \_ er, I mean, U.S. tour. It's their third cash-cow excursion stateside in the last five years. They came in 2003 and then they came back to face the Red Bulls in 2006, with Barcelona beating Bruce Arena in his debut 4-1 in front of 79,002 on Aug. 12.

Barca finished third in La Liga this year and reached the Champions League semis before they were defeated by eventual champion Manchester United.

## 5. Red Bulls' Angel stealing the show

By: Bernardo Fallas  
Houston Chronicle  
May 31, 2008

Follow this No. 9 from whistle to whistle, and New York Red Bulls forward Juan Pablo Ángel is in constant movement, his feet never resting.

His presence in the box is just plain intimidating, his movement stealthy and unpredictable.

His status as New York's marquee designated player, with his spiffy international résumé and \$1.5 million salary (fourth highest in MLS), makes him a marked man.

"He's a beast; he's always moving, especially in the box," Dynamo defender Craig Waibel said of Ángel.

Ángel, 32, looks to be a handful for the Dynamo when they host the Red Bulls tonight at Robertson Stadium.

He wants goals. And he wants them badly.

And it wouldn't be a surprise if he ends up grabbing the spotlight away from the Dynamo (2-3-5) in their return home after a three-game road swing that netted them a tepid 1-1-1 record.

Face of franchise

Ángel proved he can steal the show. Having arrived in MLS from Aston Villa in the English Premier League with limited name recognition last year, he overshadowed the likes of David Beckham and Cuauhtémoc Blanco on the field to become the best designated-player acquisition in 2007.

Ángel literally carried the Red Bulls to the playoffs with a 19-goal, five assist season.

His thirst for scoring will have little to do with wanting to duplicate last season's sensational performance. New York (3-2-3) is in need of points and, following a 5-1 whipping at the hands of Chicago last week, a boost in morale.

"The latest results haven't been the best, so I think (today's) game presents us with a good opportunity to revert the situation against the league champions," said Ángel, who prior to his seven-year stint in the EPL played for River Plate (Argentina) and Nacional (Colombia).

It's hard to imagine what kind of team the Red Bulls would be without the Colombian standout in the lineup.

Ángel's season got off to a slow start because of a back injury. Not coincidentally, the Red Bulls, who are also adjusting to a new coach Juan Carlos Osorio, have struggled early.

Now healthy, Ángel, who has one goal and two assists, will keep the Dynamo, who will be missing as many as four starters, including at least one defender and keeper Pat Onstad, busy.

Ángel will benefit from the presence of teenage sensation and teammate Jozy Altidore (three goals, one assist), who makes the Red Bulls' tandem of attack that much more lethal.

What the future holds

"Ángel is a great box player, good finisher; Altidore has pace and power," Dynamo coach Dominic Kinnear said. "Those things mixed into one combination can be very service."

"But obviously they depend on service, and the better we play and the farther we keep them away from the goal makes them less effective."

He is noncommittal on his future in MLS beyond the end of 2009 when his contract expires, but Ángel said he and his family are enjoying their U.S. adventure.

Having spent the past seven years in England, Ángel cherishes the connection with the Latino fan, especially the love he has felt from the large Colombian community in the New York/New Jersey area and others such as Houston.

"Their support has been special," Ángel said. "It has made my stay that much more interesting."

Still, Ángel is trying to come to terms with the subtle and not-so-subtle differences between the way the game is played in the United States.

"I wasn't used to playing conferences; I was used to a single (standings) table, and then there are only 14 teams," Ángel said. "All these things make the league a bit strange at first, but I've always said that regardless of there being certain things that still surprise me or that are hard for me to accept, it is unfair to criticize the league or compare it to the EPL because MLS is a very young league and the EPL has a long history.

"But I can tell you that soccer here will continue to grow, and, not short-term, but long-term, this league will be a competitive league, a lot smarter and stronger at the international level.

"It will take time. As the league continues to bring better players, open the market and change the rules (regarding the salary cap), I'm sure it will grow even more."

## **6. Red Bulls look to rebound from ugly defeat**

By: Stefan Bondy  
Herald News  
May 31, 2008

Juan Carlos Osorio sat behind his desk and said all the right things about last weekend's disaster, all the things that a coach needs to believe in order to move forward.

He talked about Sunday's 5-1 loss to Chicago as an unfortunate fluke, a game that exposed flaws the Red Bulls will fix by tonight's game at Houston (8:30 p.m., HD Net). Osorio watched the video with his players Wednesday morning and said "we want to believe it is one off-game and one of those games in a season that every team will have.

"That is how we bounce back."

Although Osorio's thinking might turn out to be accurate, it was mostly theoretical optimism. Here is the reality: The Red Bulls (3-2-3) are one game over .500 -- that's how they finished last season and about the same level they've always played at (.467 winning percentage since 1996).

As much as the first seven games instilled confidence in Osorio's philosophy, the eighth game served as a bulldozer that crushed RBNY's defensive aura. Osorio went from talking about a five-game unbeaten streak and the second-best defense in the league to rebuilding and restructuring the roster.

"We're still making this team and, in the process, we're going to suffer," he said.  
The International Fixture

Osorio compiled a list of needs for the summer transfer period, the same list that he failed to check off before the season because the necessary players weren't available. He said the Red Bulls are in negotiation

with "two or three players" to fill midfield and defensive spots, and they made an offer to 22-year-old Mexican defender Diego Jimenez.

The chronically-injured Claudio Reyna will miss his third game of the season, this time because of a hamstring injury (he was previously hampered by a calf injury). Midfielder Dave van den Bergh, who was suspended for last week's game because of a red card, also did not travel with the team to Houston because his wife is expecting to give birth.

However, two players -- Seth Stammler and Oscar Echeverry -- will return tonight to the active roster. Stammler was receiving epidural shots for a back injury and should start in the midfield, where his presence has been missed the past three games.

Echeverry hasn't played since suffering a sprained knee in April. He is available off the bench tonight, Osorio said.

FC Barcelona will return to Giants Stadium on Aug. 6 to face the Red Bulls.

Barcelona, the 2006 UEFA Cup champs, feature top players Thierry Henry, Ronaldinho and Lionel Messi. Approximately 77,000 fans filled Giants Stadium the last time Barcelona played the Red Bulls in 2006 (a 4-1 Barcelona victory).

Tickets will be available at [www.newyorkredbulls.com](http://www.newyorkredbulls.com).

Erik Stover was named the team's managing director Wednesday, about six weeks after his predecessor, Marc de Grandpre, resigned.

Stover will oversee all of the business and commercial aspects of the team. Given his background as the general manager of Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego the past three years, it seems Stover's main job will be opening Red Bull Park for the 2009 season.

Stover also spent nine years with the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, becoming vice president of stadium operations at Giants Stadium. He has no experience running a team, but Osorio and general manager Jeff Agoos will report to Stover regarding some on-field decisions.

## **7. Red Bulls to play Barcelona again**

By: Frank Giase  
Star-Ledger  
May 31, 2008

Two weeks ago, Major League Soccer and legendary Spanish club Barcelona announced a five-year partnership. Two months from now, the fun begins.

MLS announced yesterday that Barcelona will play a two-game tour of the United States, with the second game against the Red Bulls Aug. 6 at Giants Stadium. Barcelona will also play Mexican club Chivas de Guadalajara Aug. 3 at Soldier Field in Chicago.

Barcelona played the Red Bulls when it toured the U.S. two years ago. Five days into then-coach Bruce Arena's tenure, the Red Bulls lost, 4-1, before a near-record crowd of 79,002. Barcelona averaged 80,734 in selling out its three-game tour.

This year, Barcelona finished third in the Spanish league with a 19-9-10 record and lost to Manchester United in the UEFA Champions League semifinals. After the season, coach Frank Rijkaard was fired and replaced by Josep Guardiola, a former Barcelona player who was coaching the club's B team.

The Red Bulls have done well against foreign clubs in their history, posting a 28-18-11 record. Among the highlights in Giants Stadium were two victories over Bayern Munich and wins over Sampdoria and Boca Juniors.

Tickets for the Barcelona game will be available first to Red Bulls season-ticket holders beginning Monday. Further information is available by phoning (877) 727-6223 or going to the team's website ([newyorkredbulls.com](http://newyorkredbulls.com)).

## **8. Ching's goal lifts Dynamo over Bulls**

By: Stephan Bondy (and Associated Press)

Herald News

June 1, 2008

The Red Bulls did nothing to help fans forget about last week's disaster, or the glaring holes in its inexperienced roster. They are back to .500, back to the mediocrity that plagued this franchise since its inception.

RBNY threw out its latest makeshift lineup and got the expected result -- a 1-0 defeat to the Houston Dynamo on Saturday night on a goal by Brian Ching in the 68th minute.

After a sloppy first half -- indicative of both teams missing a combined seven starters -- Houston (3-3-5) dominated the final 40 minutes, finally getting the game-winner on a cross inside the box that Ching knocked inside the far post on a diving stab.

The Red Bulls (3-3-3), coming off an embarrassing 5-1 defeat at home last Sunday against the Chicago Fire, seemed content with playing for the draw until Ching's goal.

They were out of sync for most of the match and were out-shot 7-5. The Red Bulls' first opportunity didn't come until the 17th minute, when Jozy Altidore held off a defender in the box before hitting an 8-yard shot into the goalie.

Danleigh Borman missed the potential equalizer on an open shot in the 89th minute, sealing the Red Bulls' 0-2-1 record in their last three games.

Considering their lineup (and their inactive list), it was tough to expect more.

Central midfielder Claudio Reyna didn't play for the third time in the last four games, this time because of a hamstring injury. Outside midfielder Dave van den Bergh, who sat out the Chicago loss because of a red card suspension, also didn't make the trip because his wife was expecting to give birth.

Striker Juan Pablo Angel missed his third game because of a virus. Striker Oscar Echeverry was also absent despite practicing all week while recovering from a sprained knee suffered in April.

The plugged-in players were predictably sloppy and tentative, creating an ugly game of turnovers and inconsistency. The midfield, featuring two rookies and a second-year player, was non-existent.

Ching was the most dangerous player on the field and started to find a rhythm in the second half. He nearly scored in the 64th minute, when the Houston striker hit a diving header off a free kick that Red Bulls goalie Jon Conway barely deflected with his right hand. Ching had another strong chance two minutes later, a breakaway that Conway knocked in the air.

Houston was playing without its top player, Dwayne De Rosario, who was with the Canadian National Team.

Second-half goals by defender Julius James and forward Jeff Cunningham carried Toronto FC to a 2-0 victory over the David Beckham-less Los Angeles Galaxy.

Both teams had depleted rosters due to injuries and international callups, most notably England's Beckham.

After just one shot on goal in the first half, a Sean Franklin foul on Cunningham set up the game's first goal in the 49th minute. Rohan Ricketts lofted a free kick into the box and James headed the ball into the right corner of the net past a diving Steve Cronin.

Sixteen minutes later, after a brief downpour, Cunningham capped a give-and-go with Jarrod Smith by breaking in on Cronin and sliding the ball to the goalie's right. Cunningham then retrieved the ball, tucked it under his shirt and ran to the Toronto FC (5-3-2) bench before hurling it into the crowd.

The Galaxy (4-4-2) generated little offense, rarely testing Toronto goalie Brian Edwards. His only save came in the 83rd minute, on an Alan Gordon shot.

U.S. national star Landon Donovan also missed the game for the Galaxy with a right groin injury.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

## **9. Bulls fire blanks**

Associated Press

June 1, 2008

HOUSTON - Brian Ching scored in the 68th minute and Tony Caig made three saves to earn his first career MLS shutout as the Houston Dynamo beat the Red Bulls 1-0 last night in an MLS match.

The Red Bulls (3-3-3, 9 points) have lost two in a row after a five-game unbeaten streak. They had two chances to tie late, but Danleigh Borman's shot in the 89th minute went wide left, and Chris Leitch's header in the 93rd minute went high.

The Red Bulls played without Juan Pablo Angel, who was ill and didn't make the trip to Houston. In the 44th minute, Luke Sassano was replaced after injuring his left toe.

Houston (3-3-5, 14) has rebounded from an 0-2-3 start to go 3-1-2 in its last six games. The Dynamo played without goalkeeper Pat Onstad and midfielder Dwayne De Rosario, who were playing with Canada against Brazil in a friendly.

## **10. Rating the Red Bulls vs. the Houston Dynamo**

By: Jack Bell

New York Times Blog

June 1, 2008

The Red Bulls (3-3-3, 12 points) came into Saturday night's game after their worst performance of the season, last week's 5-1 loss to the Chicago Fire. This week, the Red Bulls are in Houston to play the two-time defending Major League Soccer champion Dynamo (3-5-3, 14 points).

After playing 45 minutes last week, Claudio Reyna will miss his third game of the season because of injury. In addition, Dave van den Bergh did not make the trip to Texas because his wife is due to give birth. Juan Pablo Ángel was ill and did not make the trip, although the club listed him as available as a substitute.

Red Bulls Coach Juan Carlos Osorio had defender Hunter Freeman. Defensive midfielder Seth Stammers returned to the starting lineup after missing three games because of a back injury.

Houston was missing midfielder Dwayne De Rosario, who was with the Canadian national team for an international friendly against Brazil. The American midfielder Ricardo Clark is back after playing for the United States in last Wednesday's 2-0 loss to England at Wembley.

And finally, after reading a number of comments posted on the Goal blog, we have altered the rating system a bit, changing it from a 5-point scale to a 10-point scale.

## **11. Ching powers Dynamo past Red Bulls**

ESPN Soccernet

June 1, 2008

HOUSTON -- Brian Ching scored in the 68th minute and Tony Caig had three saves as the Houston Dynamo recorded their third win in their last five matches with a 1-0 triumph over the New York Red Bulls on Saturday at Robertson Stadium.

Ching accepted a feed from Geoff Cameron in the upper right box and kicked it past Red Bulls goalkeeper Jon Conway for the game's only tally.

New York (3-3-3) attempted to knot the score in the 89th minute, but Danleigh Borman's shot from the left box sailed wide left. In the 93rd minute, Chris Leitch's header in the box went high.

Houston (3-3-5) improved to 3-1-2 in its last six games and moved into a tie with the Los Angeles Galaxy (4-4-2) atop the Western Conference standings - a fact not lost on Ching.

"It was a huge win if you look at where it puts us in the standings," he said. "It puts us up in first place and that is where we want to be."

"A win is a win. We created some chances and I don't think they created much," Dynamo coach Dominic Kinnear said. "It was a hard fought, physical game. I think we knew after the result that they got last week that they were going to come with a different mentality, and they did. We got a good effort from a lot of our guys, and I think we should be happy with the three points that we got."

Despite the setback, New York coach Juan Carlos Osorio remained positive with his team's progress.

"We always know that Houston is very effective and very dangerous on set plays and that was the decisive point in the match," Osorio said. "I think we need to keep working, we need to keep improving."

"Credit to them, not too many chances between both teams and when they had one, they put it away and that's how they won the game."

The Dynamo were playing without goalkeeper Pat Onstad and midfielder Dwayne De Rosario, who were both playing for Canada in its friendly against Brazil.

New York played without forward Juan Pablo Angel, who was ill and didn't make the trip to Houston.

The Red Bulls lost one more player in the 44th minute when midfielder Luke Sassano suffered a left toe injury.

New York had a chance to take the lead in the 17th minute when Jozy Altidore got a bloop pass into the left box from Seth Stammers, but his shot was stopped by Caig.

"The effort was there tonight," Altidore said. "I thought we played to the end, but it was a night like this that's tough. Houston's very good defensively so it was tough for us to create chances, but we did have a couple of pretty good looks."

Conway made two saves for the Red Bulls.

## **12. Dynamo 1, Red Bulls 0: the aftermath (and some more notes)**

By: Bernardo Fallas

Houston Chronicle Blog

June 1, 2008

Dynamo 1, Red Bulls 0: The aftermath (and some more notes)

It wasn't the prettiest of victories, but, considering the circumstances (missing four starters, that is), it was a well-deserved result for the Dynamo.

Keep in mind, though, that New York was also missing key starters.

If anything, the Dynamo's 1-0 win over the Red Bulls proved the MLS champs' bench is up to the challenge and ready to fight for a spot in the starting lineup.

The warm, humid weather and the absence of New York forward Juan Pablo Angel also worked in the Dynamo's favor.

But credit should be given where credit is due. And the on-field effort was there for 90 minutes.

Here's the uncut version of the game writeup on Chron.com .

And here are some notes, including the reason Corey Ashe left the game at halftime and the reason why you didn't see J.P. Angel in action.

Saturday's other MLS action.

As for Ashe, he said postgame:

The doc ran some tests and advised me not to go back out on the field. But I'll be all right.

He was rattled a bit, that's for sure.

Some quick notes that didn't make the paper:

- In case you didn't notice, Brian Ching wore the captain armband.
- Wade Barrett, while out, got to sit on the bench. With a spot open, Barrett was listed as an assistant coach. Clever Dynamo.
- Dominic Kinnear was "happy" Juan Pablo Angel missed the plane and game for New York.
- I'm hearing Eddie Robinson was fined by the team for the red card that caused him to miss the game.
- The game was a homecoming of sorts for N.Y. mid Dane Richards, who played at San Jac.
- Dwayne De Rosario, Pat Onstad and Team Canada fell to Brazil 3-2 in a surprisingly entertaining game.
- Speaking of DeRo and Onstad, they will rejoin the Dynamo Monday morning.
- Next stop is D.C., where the Dynamo are 0-2 against United. But 1-0 in MLS Cup play at RFK.

• The team isn't saying anything, but you can be sure Clark will miss the game at D.C. while in Spain with the U.S. national team.

## GRADES

### GOALKEEPER A

Tony Caig wasn't forced to do much because the Red Bulls seldom strung together clear chances. Still, his save of Jozy Altidore's 17th-minute shot marked the difference between a win a tie for the Dynamo. He finished with three saves and earns the good grade without hesitation.

### DEFENDERS B+

With much help from the midfield, the back line recorded its third shutout of the season in convincing fashion and despite missing staples Wade Barrett and Eddie Robinson. With J.P. Angel out for New York, Bobby Boswell frustrated Altidore all night. They covered Dane Richards well. The passing going forward wasn't always optimal, which could have led to problems that luckily for the Dynamo never materialized. Pat Ianni and Richard Mulrooney had good showings. Still, the defense afforded the Red Bulls two late chances that could have cost the team at least two points.

### MIDFIELDERS B

A young midfielder got it done. Ricardo Clark was the oldest midfielder at one point at 25 years old. Stuart Holden and Geoff Cameron added a spark, and Corey Ashe was very active until he had to come out with a slight concussion. His replacement, Brad Davis, brought composure to the Dynamo and better ball control in the second half. The group generated little in terms of crosses from the flanks. But the game-winning goal came as a result of quick thinking by Holden and Cameron.

If we graded on effort alone, the young ones would get the A.

### FORWARDS B

They got going in the second half. Dynamo didn't have a single shot on goal after at the half. Brian Ching has now scored in three of the past five games. He had two other clear chances frustrated by Jon Conway. Brian Mullan, getting a rare start at forward, made dangerous runs to free up Ching and had two good chances of his own. His timing was understandably off, and it showed in the five or so offsides he was called for. In all the Dynamo were caught offsides 10 times to New York's one.

### COACHING A-

Missing four veteran starters, Dominic Kinnear trusted his younger players and got a result. He started Ricardo Clark and Brian Mullan, who were question marks after midweek performances. Mullan looked more dangerous at forward than Franco Caraccio and Kyle Brown combined in recent outings.

### BENCH B+

Davis got the job done. Brown played eight minutes.

### PLAYER RATINGS

0 = horrible; \* = bad; \*\* = deficient; \*\*\* average; \*\*\*\* = good; \*\*\*\*\* = excellent

Caig 4 stars  
Waibel 3 1/2  
Ianni 3 1/2  
Boswell 5  
Mulrooney 4  
Clark 3 1/2  
Ashe 3 1/2  
Cameron 3 1/2

Holden 4  
Ching 4  
Mullan 4

Davis 5  
Brown 3

How do you grade the Dynamo's performance? Who's your MVP? Should Kinnear keep the Mullan-Ching combo against D.C.?

Don't forget Santos-Cruz Azul at 5 p.m. on Azteca America. Santos leads the Mexican league finals series 2-1 in aggregate.

### **13. Depleted Dynamo find strength to top Red Bulls**

By: Bernardo Fallas  
Houston Chronicle  
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The way the Dynamo's season has unfolded left little reason to be optimistic about their Saturday date with the New York Red Bulls.

Missing four starters, including two defenders and the goalkeeper, made for a grim outlook on paper.

But being shorthanded may have proved a blessing in disguise.

In a battle of depleted teams, a collective workmanlike effort, solid second-half play by those pressed into duty and a goal by Brian Ching combined to lift the Dynamo to a 1-0 victory over the Red Bulls before an announced crowd of 17,204 at Robertson Stadium.

"The young guys that came in definitely had a positive effect on the way we played," Dynamo coach Dominic Kinnear said.

The result snapped a two-game winless streak for the Dynamo (3-3-5) and improved their unbeaten run at home to 2-0-2. Moreover, it pushed the defending MLS champions into a three-way tie for first place in the Western Conference.

The Red Bulls, attempting to bounce back from an embarrassing 5-1 loss to Chicago last week, dropped to 3-3-3 to remain stagnant in the East.

"It was a physical game," Kinnear said. "They made it difficult for us."

Helped by the return of Ricardo Clark from U.S. national-team duty and good defensive play, the Dynamo controlled possession throughout the match and asserted near complete dominance in the second half, when the team looked more composed. Still, much like in games past, they had nothing to show for the effort.

Stuart Holden and rookie Geoff Cameron, notching rare starts at attacking midfield and right wing, respectively, changed all that in the 68th minute.

Holden played a free kick quick and short to Cameron, who served Ching a pass into open space with clinical precision. The forward didn't waste the chance, chasing it to rip a shot past New York keeper Jon Conway for the game-winner.

"Stuart made a heads-up play and caught their defense sleeping," said Ching, who has scored in three of the last five games. "Geoff was alert, too, and left it for me to finish."

Both teams were shorthanded.

The Dynamo were without defenders Wade Barrett (groin injury) and Eddie Robinson (suspension), along with goalkeeper Pat Onstad and midfielder Dwayne De Rosario (Canada call-ups).

Star forward Juan Pablo Ángel (flu-like symptoms) and midfielders Claudio Reyna (hamstring) and Dave van der Bergh (family issues) missed the match for New York.

The absences on both sides of the ball may have helped the Dynamo. The home team looked faster, sharper and more engaged than in games past against a team that was affected by the warm temperatures.

"It was a team effort; we all worked hard for one another," said Cameron.

Reserves Pat Ianni, Corey Ashe, Holden and Cameron didn't disappoint, posting solid performances. Tony Caig, who replaced Onstad, had two saves for his first win of the season.

Kinnear sat out Franco Caraccio for a second straight game, placing midfielder Brian Mullan at forward for pace. The move paid off, with Mullan making runs to alleviate pressure from Ching.

With Ángel out of the mix, the Red Bulls relied on teenage star Jozy Altidore for offense. He had New York's best chance, a powerful 10-yard blast in the 17th minute, foiled by Caig, who finished with three saves.

Visibly fatigued, the Red Bulls all but vanished in the second half. Still midfielder Danleigh Borman had an excellent chance to tie it in the 89th minute go wide and high of the near post. A last-minute header by Chris Leitch also went high of the crossbar.

Ching's goal came on his third try in five minutes midway through the second half. He had a point-blank range shot and a header saved by Conway in the 66th and 63rd minutes, respectively.

Davis, who replaced Ashe to start the second half, had a great chance go sky high in the 50th minute. Holden's bicycle-kick attempt was also high in the 61st minute.

"The result lets you know these guys can play, and it lets you know that your squad is as deep as you thought it was," Kinnear said.