

## U.S. WOMEN & U23 MEN CLINCH 2008 OLYMPIC BERTHS

### CAL SOUTH ALUMNI PLAY LARGE PART IN SUCCESS

Looking for your team to clinch a berth into the Summer Olympics? Having a handful of Cal South alumni on your side certainly doesn't hurt. Both the U.S. Women's National Team and the U.S. U23 Men's National Team made traveling to Beijing this summer a sure thing by clinching berths at their respective CONCACAF Olympic Qualifying tournaments.

The U23 Men defeated Canada, 3-0, on March 20 in the semi-final round. Five of the six Cal South alumni on the 20-man roster started the match on Nashville, Tennessee's LP field, including Marvell Wynne, Sacha Kljestan, Michael Orozco, Maurice Edu, and goalkeeper Chris Seitz, who earned his second shutout of the tournament. (Alumnus Sal Zizzo did not play in this match.) After Freddy Adu scored twice on a pair of devastating free kicks that practically book-ended halftime, Kljestan shut the Canadians down for good when he scored inside the box on a ball fed perfectly by Stuart Holden in the 78th minute.

While the U.S. lost 1-0 to Honduras in an exciting double-overtime match in the finals on March 23, it had no effect on the joy that the team felt over clinching the Olympic berth. "It's exciting," said Kljestan. "We're happy to finally celebrate. The whole tournament our team unity was good." Edu and Orozco were named to the Best XI team, while Kljestan was named as an Honorable Mention. The win marks the U.S. team's first Olympic trip since 2000, and also the 13th time that the U.S. will compete for an Olympic medal.

The U.S. Women's National Team dominated their competition in both group play - taking down Jamaica, 6-0, and rival Mexico, 3-1 - and in the semi-finals where, despite a sluggish first half, they rebounded with three goals to clinch their spot in the Olympic tournament. Cal South alumnus Amy Rodriguez sparked the team with her play as a late substitute, helping to create one scoring opportunity, and then nearly scoring her own goal a few minutes later. Shannon Boxx and Rachel Buehler, also former Cal South players, played solidly throughout the tournament. Summing things up dramatically with an overtime win over Canada in the final match, 6-5 on penalty kicks, the U.S. Women's team will now attend their fourth consecutive Olympic Games, where they previously won gold medals in 1996 and 2004.

*[At press time, there is no word as to which players will make the squads heading to Beijing. CalSouth.com will continue to post updates about both the Men's and Women's Olympic soccer teams throughout the summer.]*

## CAL SOUTH ODP STANDOUT MAYEN SIGNS WITH CHIVAS

Adding even more testimony to the effectiveness of the Cal South Olympic Development Program, midfielder Gerson Mayen signed a developmental contract with Chivas USA in late March. The 19-year old Mayen made quite an impression while playing in Cal South, winning three consecutive US Youth Soccer National Championships with Arsenal FC from 2005-2007, and collecting the adidas Golden Boot Award at that event in the last two years. Mayen was also a fixture on the Cal South ODP roster for several years, collecting a National Championship with the 1988 Boys team in 2006.

"Gerson is an exciting young player that we've been keeping an eye on," said Chivas USA Head Coach Preki. "We're just now bringing him into the first team and we're hoping that he can make progress and challenge for a spot." In addition to training with Chivas going into this season, Mayen also roamed the field in January with Chivas USA's U18 squad when it took part in the Copa Chivas in Guadalajara.



*Cal South's Briant Reyes shown on right*

## BRIANT REYES CHOSEN BY CHIVAS USA AT MLS SUEÑO 2008

### 3 OF TOP 5 CANDIDATES ARE CAL SOUTH PLAYERS

Two thousand players, and it all came down to Briant Reyes. A 17-year old midfielder with Manchester United in the Anahuak Youth Soccer League of Cal South, Reyes outperformed two thousand other hopefuls at the MLS Sueño 2008, winning a spot on the Chivas USA U18 team and possibly opening up a future with the club in the process.

After several weeks, Chivas pared the final field down to five top players, including two others from Cal South - Juan Moreno of Compton and Servando Perez of Guadalupe, also midfielders. These players went through a two-week training stint with Chivas' U16 club, including taking part in a match against Chivas' U15 side. In the end, it was Reyes' versatility and eagerness that most impressed Chivas USA director of football Dennis te Kloese. "Throughout the whole process he's been very consistent, not too many ups and downs," said te Kloese. "He's very eager and you saw that he really wanted to have a spot. He's also technically a good player but he can also play lots of different positions -- right back, right midfield."

Soon, Reyes found himself at the Chivas-FC Dallas season opener in Texas on March 30, being announced as the Chivas winner of the MLS Sueño 2008 alongside FC Dallas' winner Gabriel Funes. Both were given jerseys for their respective teams, as well as crystal trophies marking their achievements.

This marks the second year running that a Cal South player has been chosen at the MLS Sueño event. Jorge Flores, who played with Santa Ana DSP Juventus with Cal South, won last year's competition. After performing well with the Chivas U19 team in such events as the 2007 Copa Saprissa in Costa Rica, Flores was given a developmental contract. Flores, who has also been starring with the U.S. U20 team, made his MLS regular season debut with the parent club last September, though he remains officially a Senior Development player on the roster.

Reyes is picking up with Chivas a full year younger than when Flores did it, and while he has much to learn and improve upon, his future is looking bright indeed.

## NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN!

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