



BOUNCINGS



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3 Mar 17



Matehuala	4	National Soccer League 1st Division
Stare Byki	2	The Odeum 24 February 2017

Slow start dooms Byki

The Byki lost their tenth match of the season in disappointing fashion last Friday, going down 4:2 to NSL newcomers Matehuala FC. Poor defensive discipline led to two Matehuala scores in the first two minutes, and the eight-man Byki squad struggled to play catch-up the rest of the night.

“We managed with only two subs in our win over Inter Blue,” lamented coach George Gorecki. “We needed that same level of teamwork in this game and didn’t get it. We finally found our rhythm, but we were chasing the game almost from the outset. Couple that with some terrific goalkeeping for Matehuala, you’ve got quite a hill to climb.”

The lack of precision in the early parts of matches has been an unfortunate trend for this Byki squad. They have played with a shortage of substitutes a significant number of times, so the process of engineering comebacks places the Byki in stretched situations.

They certainly got stretched against Matehuala. Just 1:06 into the contest, a sloppy pass in the Byki defensive end went directly to a Matehuala player. The Byki were not in position to react to a turnover at that moment and a Matehuala player fired a low shot from the arc past a diving Ray Najera,

Matehuala remained aggressive on the attacking side and went 2:0 up a minute later. The Byki dropped too deep into a defensive shell, inviting a Matehuala player to shoot from distance. He took the invitation with aplomb and sent a rocket into the back of the net.

The Byki eventually righted the ship midway through the first half. Mike Stamatinos stole the ball at midfield and ignited a 2 v 1 counterattack with Roman Kramarz. With Matehuala players giving chase, Kramarz squared the ball to Stamatinos, who was denied by a smart save from the keeper.

The Byki got back into the match with 7:55 left in the half. Kramarz controlled the ball deep in the left corner and emerged from the crowd to squeeze a pass into the Matehuala goal area. Kuba Banbor somehow got his foot to the ball first and slid it home for his fourth goal of the season.

But momentum swung back to Matehuala, who scored twice more before the break to return to the driver’s seat. They made it 3:1 with 6:03 left when they hurried forward 3 v 3 and a knuckling shot from distance skipped through Najera’s hands.

The score went to 4:1 with 2:25 to go when Matehuala converted a power play opportunity. The Byki failed to maintain their diamond formation and Matehuala displayed enough patience to finally find the open man on the right wing.

The Byki came out with a renewed sense of purpose when the sides changed ends. The new attitude produced a boatload of chances, but the Byki were undone by excellent goalkeeping and plain bad luck.

A flurry in the second minute sent Matehuala scrambling on defense. Kramarz centered for Tony Sabo, who looked destined to score. The Matehuala goalie, however, had other ideas and went full stretch to deflect the ball away. Seconds later, the Byki recycled the ball back to Stamatinos at the arc, and the keeper came up big yet again.

The Byki got to within 4:2 at the 3:49 mark of the second half in stunning fashion. Sabo controlled a bouncing ball in the neutral zone and knocked it over to Kramarz on the left flank. Kramarz measured his shot perfectly, crushing a half volley into the upper corner of the goal.

Kramarz and Sabo combined again with 10:42 left, as they sprinted forward on a 2 v 1 counter. Kramarz set up Sabo to go in alone on the goalkeeper, who came off his line forcefully to break up the play.

The Byki were set to celebrate Kramarz’s second strike of the contest just moments later. He lined up a shot from the right wing that clanged off of both posts before ricocheting back into the field. Kramarz thought the ball might have crossed the line, but the play happened too quickly for the nearest official to get a close enough look.

Unable to get over the hump after creating so many chances, the Byki began to run out of gas and it was easy work for Matehuala to maintain their comfortable two-goal margin.

BYKI LINEUP (2-2-1): Najera – Bickel, Stamatinos (c) – Boeckeler, Sabo – Kramarz . **Bench:** Banbor, Khankari.

BYKI SCORING SUMMARY

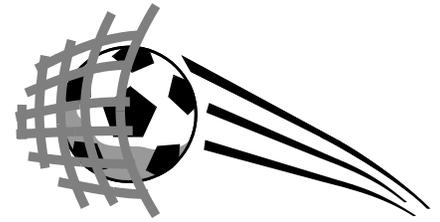
2:1 – Banbor 4 (Kramarz); 11:05.
4:2 – Kramarz 6 (Sabo); 22:49.

Byki Man of the Match: Roman Kramarz

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BYKI bits & pieces



The new MLS season is upon us this weekend and the Chicago Fire held their annual Kick-off Luncheon last Monday at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Chicago. The proceeds from the Luncheon benefit the Chicago Fire Foundation, which is the club's charitable arm. For the 17th consecutive year, the Byki were part of the fun and festivities. Byki players and alumni in attendance included: **Eric Muehlbauer, Steven Pedlow, Vitaly Tsipris, and James Vlahakis.**

All of the Fire's players and coaches are a part of the event and the Byki always look forward to the opportunity to have a player or coach join them at their table for lunch. This year, Fire Assistant Coach **Marko Mitrovic** sat with the Byki. It was the second year in a row where the Fire paired the Byki with Marko.

"We were very lucky to have lunch with Marko in 2016," noted Byki President **George Gorecki.** "Marko is obviously very passionate about his role with the Fire and that was evidenced by the honesty and candor of his answers to our many questions.

"This year, Marko ran into our group in the lobby during the reception prior to the luncheon.

He recognized us immediately and we got right into it, talking about all of the new players on the roster and providing us with excellent insight."

After two consecutive last-place finishes, the Fire clearly have no place to go but up and Marko was confident that the competitive level will be higher all around than it has been recently. Marko then turned the tables on the Byki and asked what they would suggest to improve the Fire. This turnabout elicited a wide range of replies and only further fueled the debate about players, positions, and future acquisitions.

Now that Marko has sat with the Byki twice, he appears to have become a fan and requested that George provide him with a Byki schedule for the upcoming outdoor season. "We are always happy to welcome another fan to the Byki family," said George. "We can only hope that our performance on the field does not make Marko cringe as he watches us play."

Marko extended the discussions when he joined the Byki for a post-luncheon drink. It was very gracious move by a very classy guy.

For more photos, visit the [Byki Facebook page.](#)



NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE STANDINGS

February 24, 2017

www.nslchicago.org

CHAMPIONS DIVISION

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Albanian Stars	13	10	3	0	58	33	33
CKS Warta	13	9	3	1	55	34	30
Deportivo Guerrero	13	8	1	4	48	31	25
Bosnia-Herzegovina A	13	7	1	5	54	47	22
Vikings AA	13	5	1	7	50	47	16
SAC Wisla A	13	4	2	7	40	52	14
Real Michoacan	13	1	2	10	25	49	5
Czarny Dunajec	13	1	1	11	35	72	4

MAJOR DIVISION

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Berber Stars	13	10	2	1	61	25	32
FC Tryzub	13	9	1	3	63	42	28
SAC Wisla B	13	9	0	4	75	45	27
AAC Winged Bull	13	8	1	4	63	42	25
Albania FC	13	5	1	7	51	56	16
HDS Eagles	13	5	1	7	43	57	16
Urahan FC	13	5	0	8	51	63	15
Jagiellonia	13	5	0	8	47	50	15
SC Unia Chicago	13	3	0	10	30	58	9
Stal Mielec	13	3	0	10	36	82	9

FIRST DIVISION

Red Section	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts	Blue Section	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
FC United	13	11	1	1	86	32	34	Chicago Dynasty FC	13	11	1	1	72	22	34
Vikings AA Over 30	13	11	1	1	64	25	34	Matehuala FC	13	7	2	4	59	49	23
FC Kosova	13	7	0	6	71	58	21	HNK Primorac	13	6	2	5	62	61	20
Bosnia-Herzegovina B	13	5	1	7	64	64	16	Chicago Blast	13	6	1	6	62	52	19
Chicago Inter Blue	13	4	1	8	34	59	13	SAC Wisla C	13	2	1	10	50	84	7
Stare Byki FC	13	2	1	10	45	66	7	Chicago Inter Yellow	13	0	0	13	22	119	0