

USA U19 v British Columbia U19
August 3, 2007
Moorpark High Performance Training Center

In the first Test Match of a three match Series, the USA Men's Junior National Team dug itself a 2-0 first half hole against a rambunctious representative team from British Columbia.

The half-time score line was reflective of a team that has not played together since November 2006, and scarcely trained since the USA Field Hockey Junior National Championships in late June 2007.

Coach Ryan Langford offered a calm and considered half time team talk providing the young guns with an opportunity to redeem their poor first half performance.

Langford's half time talk received immediate reward. Within five minutes of the restart the game became tied after two well-taken penalty corner rebound opportunities.

Nick Szoke pounced to halve the Canadian lead with a sharply taken chance offered from the Goalkeeper's pads. Soon thereafter, Kevin Barber leveled the game, intelligently rebounding after having trapped the run down flicked variation penalty corner.

Not to be outdone without a stern fight the Canadian players stuck to their charge and fought hard to retake the lead with a counter-attack opportunity well finished by the pick of the Canadian players, Ethan Kozniuk, from a deft lob over an advancing Andrew Zayak, starting in goal for the Americans.

In a back and forth game littered with cheap turnovers the USA Team reinvigorated their local supporters with a well-taken Raj Sidhu deflected goal with 17 minutes left in the match. A hard and clean cross from right striker given by Amrit Ahluwalia, advancing from his playing position at right half, providing the equalizing opportunity.

In an open game that could have turned either way, the USA was more opportunistic with their counter-attacking chances in the crunch moments at the death. Manny Martinez in particular, provided the necessary touches of class necessary to secure a positive start to the series for the USA Team.

Tackling feverishly, Martinez was twice able to pass productively in the counter-attack, first to Sonu Chana, who was unceremoniously upended by the Canadian Goalkeeper and secondly to Will Holt.

Holt calmly stepped up to convert the Chana won stroke for a 4-3 lead with a rocket into the top left corner and tomahawked his second of the game with a sharp backhand opportunity to seal the points in the 64th minute.

In a match that was statistically won by the British Columbia Team, both teams will be looking for a significantly increased level of performance in Test Match 2 starting at 2PM on Saturday.

Kevin Barber was adjudged as the USA Man of the Match, voted by the Coaching Staff of Mike Whitehead (Manager), Ryan Langford (Head Coach) and Nick Conway (Assistant Coach).

Barber was primarily recognized for the stability he offered in the back field with his timely tackles but also for forcing the Technical Table to etch his name in the scorers column early in the second half.

USA Goals:

1. Nick Szoke
2. Kevin Barber
3. Raj Sidhu
4. Will Holt
5. Will Holt

Scoring Sequence:

USA 0-1 BC
USA 0 -2 BC (Half Time)

USA 1-2 BC
USA 2-2 BC
USA 2-3 BC
USA 3-3 BC
USA 4-3 BC
USA 5-3 BC (Full Time)

Green Cards
Duncan Carnes - BC
Patrick Howell - BC
Amrit Ahluwalia - USA

USA Starting Line Up
GK Andrew Zayak
FB Colin Scally
FB Kevin Barber
LH Corbin Seghers
CH Amrit Ahluwalia - Captain
RH Sean Fleming

IR Will Holt
IL AlexGrassi
RS Jason Kahlon
CS Manny Martinez
LS Raj Sidhu

Bench (all played):
Ryan Sundeen
Evan Lucanish
Ross Gorham
Sonu Chana
Asavir Kalla

Tyson Reeves (Did not play)