

2010 USA vs. World NEWS RELEASE

WORLD TEAM FALLS 17-0 TO TEAM USA

SATURDAY, JANUARY, 30 - FORT LAUDERDALE, FL - The world is becoming a smaller place.

At least in football terms, only 17 points separates the game's traditional powerhouse of the United States and the rest of the world following a 17-0 Team USA victory over the World at Lockhart Stadium in Fort Lauderdale.

Assembled as a collective squad of the best under 19 American football players from around the world for the first time, the team representing eight countries and four continents held their own against USA Football's junior national team of 45 players who have committed to some of the nation's top college football programs.

"It didn't surprise me that the game was close," said USA head coach Chris Merritt., whose squad won the first USA Football's Team USA vs. The World Game, Presented by Riddell.

"I'm very proud of how the team came together in about four days. It would be easy for them to think about where they're going to be playing in college but throughout the week it was great to see them become a team."

Team USA built on the psychological advantage of having broken a first half deadlock with a touchdown with only nine seconds remaining and then added a third quarter touchdown and late field goal to edge the contest. The World team was left wondering what might have been.

"Turnovers and the big penalties were our downfall but what hurt the team the most was our truest starter on defense going down on the third play of the game because he has been superb for us all week," explained World team head coach Jan Jenmert.

Canadian quarterback Jeremi Doyon-Roch (Vanier College) was intercepted by Team USA MVP Mike Hull (Canon-McMillan, PA) late in the third quarter with the World team trailing 14-0 and facing a crucial third and seven at the USA 12-yard line. There was to be no comeback once Team USA capitalized, driving into range for kicker Ben Hopfinger (St Thomas Aquinas) to split the uprights from 40 yards out.

The World team lost Australian defensive tackle Jesse Williams (Arizona Western) to injury on the opponent's opening drive, disrupting a line that has impressed during a week of practices, with Williams one of the stars. They then also had to adjust the running game when fullback James Sifakis (Vanier College) also went down.

It was the World team's ground attack that opened brightly with Steven Lumbala (University of Calgary) and Doyon-Roch pounding the ball steadily downfield on the ground, completing three third downs in the process.

Neither team was able to move the ball for the remainder of the first quarter, but to open the second, Team USA sustained a drive that looked likely to put points on the board. Aided by a roughing the kicker penalty that earned a first down after having to punt, Team USA quarterback Mark Myers (St Ignatius, OH), who had been run into when punting, connected with Sam Gagliano (Waxahachie, TX) for a 16 yard gain. He then found Quinton Dunbar (Booker T Washington, FL) and Anthony Creecy (Southern Durham, NC), closing in on field goal range.

A Christian Walcott (Concordia University) tackle on Myers for a loss of seven yards brought out the field goal unit and German defensive end Bjoern Werner (Salisbury School, CT), who has been highly recruited by leading US colleges, blocked a 28-yard field goal attempt by Hopfinger.

That should have left the first half scoreless, but Dunbar produced an elusive punt return, at one point forced back to his own five-yard mark, to take the ball out to within a yard of midfield, a touchdown return denied by the tackle of punter Tyler Crapigna (Ottawa Myers Riders).

Quarterback Tyler Smith (Wilson Area HS, PA) went to work immediately, hooking up on a spectacular 50-yard pass downfield that Josh Reese (Miami Central, FL) would have taken all the way to pay dirt but for a saving tackle by Dylan Hollohan (St Francis Xavier) at the one-yard mark. Reese fumbled and recovered the ball on the play then from a yard out, Ethan Grant (North Broward Prep, FL) scored to earn Team USA a 7-0 halftime lead with only nine seconds left on the clock.

What proved to be the killer blow came at the start of the second half. Team USA drove steadily towards its second touchdown and used the no huddle offense effectively. Dontae Williams (Aldine, TX) gained 11 yards on two carries, Jakhari Gore (Miami Columbus, FL) 21 from three and Myers went to the air for a 25-yard connection with Gagliano.

From five yards out, Williams burst over right tackle to earn a two-touchdown lead after Hopfinger added the extra point.

The World team enjoyed success moving the chains on the ground, with team MVP Hampus Hellermark (Sweden) the most effective rusher with an eventual 64 yards from 12 carries. But the passing game proved less effective, especially on third down.

Team USA closed out the third quarter and the contest with a confident 40yard field goal from Hopfinger.

The World team produced a steady 15-play, 50-yard drive that threatened to break

the shutout late on, but Hellermark lost yards on a swing pass on fourth and goal as Team USA held firm.

Myers led Team USA with 7 of 10 pass attempts completed for 79 yards, while Smith contributed 5 of 10 for 105 yards. Keiwone Malone (Mitchell, TN) had 4 receptions for 41 yards, Gagliano 3 for 46 and Reese 2 for 72. On the ground Gore rushed 11 times for 53 yards, Williams 10 times for 59 yards and a touchdown and Grant 7 times for 11 yards.

Hull and Travis Williams (Lake Taylor, VA) led the Americans with 8 tackles each, with Hull claiming the game's only interception. Steele Divitto (Don Bosco Prep, NJ) had 8 tackles and a sack, while Josh Huff (Nimitz, TX) recorded 2 sacks and 4 tackles.

Hellermark was the World team's most effective offensive weapon with 12 carries for 64 yards, while Lumbala rushed for 28 yards on 7 carries and Doyon-Roch for 32 from 9 runs. The Vanier Prep quarterback completed 5 of 13 pass attempts for 32 yards, with 2 of those going to college teammate Julian Bailey for a total of 14 yards.

Defensively, Walcott led the World team with 6 tackles and a sack and there were also sacks for Jerod McCrory (Western University), Beck Coulter (Trinity, TX), Scott Janz (Western) and Tyler Sawyer (University of Ottawa).

For more about USA Football's "Team USA vs. The World" game, presented by Riddell, visit www.usavworld.com.

For a word document version of this press release or to request general or specific player photos, please contact Lauren Hickey: 781-929-7300 / Lauren@MPrestonSports.com.
