

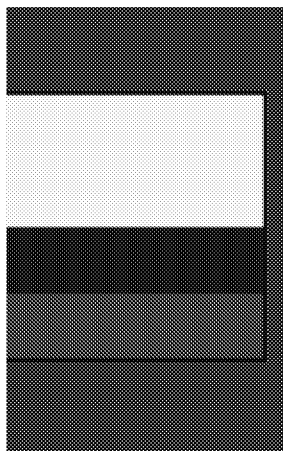


Carlos Bacca (12) James Rodríguez (30)  Víctor Ayala (71)  
 Óscar Romero (81)

2016 Copa América, Group Stage



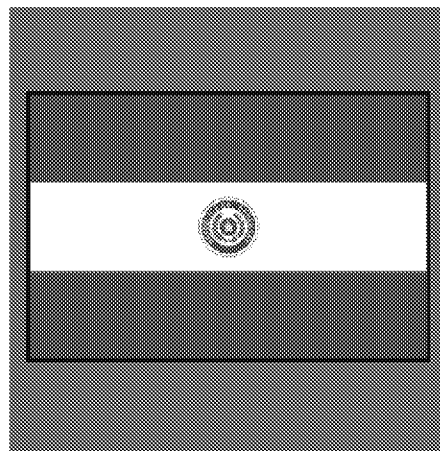
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# Colombia and James Rodríguez hold on to beat Paraguay



Associated Press

Jun 7, 2016

PASADENA, Calif. -- James Rodríguez scored a goal and set up another in the first 30 minutes, and Colombia clinched a berth in the Copa America quarterfinals with a 2-1 victory over Paraguay on Tuesday night.

Colombia became the first team to secure a spot in the knockout stage of the tournament with stellar goaltending from David Ospina and another dynamic performance from Rodríguez, who shook off a shoulder injury that made his availability a game-time decision at the Rose Bowl.

The Real Madrid midfielder propelled Colombia to their second win in two matches, following a 2-0 victory over the United States last week.

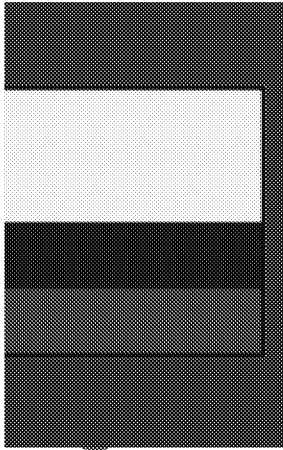
Victor Ayala scored Paraguay's first goal of the Copa America in the 71st minute on a long shot past Ospina, who made a handful of jaw-dropping saves to keep Colombia ahead.

Despite a few defensive struggles, the world's third-ranked team has lived up to its billing so far stateside with a fluid, attacking game built around Rodríguez, who played despite hurting his shoulder last week.

Carlos Bacca scored on a header from Rodríguez's corner kick in the 12th minute. Rodríguez then scored with an exceptional shot after a long scramble in the box in the 30th minute. Colombia missed on several chances to score in a back-and-forth second half, while Ospina stopped everything except Ayala's exceptional long strike.



2016 Copa América, Group Stage



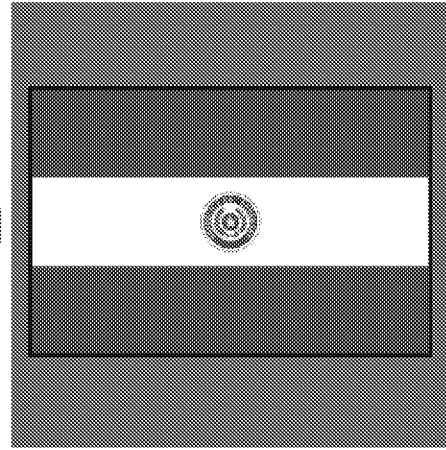
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*Los Cafeteros* wrap up group play against Costa Rica in Houston on Saturday, while Paraguay travels to Philadelphia to face the Americans. Paraguay must beat the home team to stay in contention for advancement.

Paraguay tested Colombia's defense throughout an entertaining game, but *La Albirroja* don't have a player with the skills of Rodriguez -- or the goaltending reflexes of James' brother-in-law, Ospina.

After Bacca put Colombia ahead with another goal in his strong run of recent play, Rodriguez showed off his skill with his team-leading 16th goal for *Los Cafeteros*. Surrounded by defenders, Edwin Cardona tipped the ball outside to the charging star, and Rodriguez slotted a pinpoint shot into the far corner of the net.

Ospina, the Arsenal backup, made a fingertip save in first-half injury time to deflect Dario Lezcano's short free kick off the crossbar. He was even better in the second half with a flying, one-handed deflection of a header in traffic.

But Ospina could do nothing against Ayala, who trimmed Colombia's lead and made the final minutes uncomfortable.

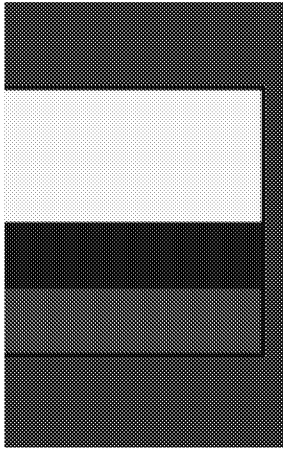
Paraguay's task became tougher when Oscar Romero was sent off in the 81st minute, getting his second yellow card in three minutes after a defensive sequence in which he pulled roughly on Rodriguez's jersey and wrapped both arms around Guillermo Celis.

The Rose Bowl crowd of 42,766 was dominated by yellow-clad fans from Los Angeles' vibrant Colombian community and beyond. They gathered in Arroyo Seco several hours before kickoff for food, music and a celebration of a serious championship-contending team.





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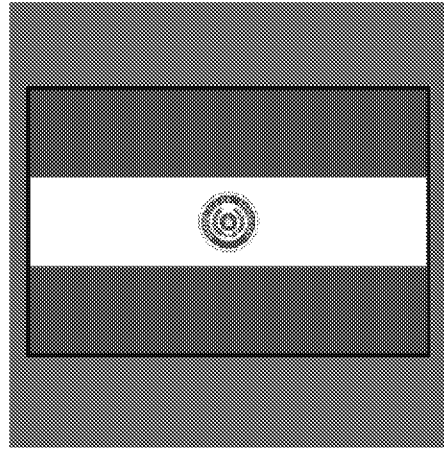
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**Copa America Standings**

POS	TEAM	GP	GD	PTS
1	Brazil	0	0	0
2	Peru	0	0	0
3	Venezuela	0	0	0
4	Bolivia	0	0	0

[Full Table](#)

**Copa America News**

**Will Brazil lure Fernandinho back for redemption at Copa America?**

He was appointed the villain of last year's World Cup exit, but Fernandinho might get to end his international career on a high at the Copa America.



**Tite: I want Messi & the best players at Copa America**

Brazil manager Tite says he wants the likes of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and the best players available to play in the Copa America.



**Copa America hosts Brazil favourites under pressure of a nation**

As hosts of the 2019 Copa America -- and with a winnable group -- Brazil are clear-cut favourites, but that tag comes with the pressure of a nation.



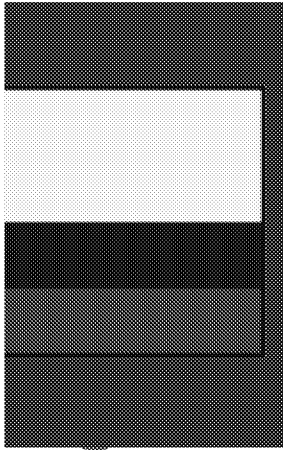
**Copa America: Brazil draw Peru, Venezuela; Argentina to face Colombia, Paraguay**

Hosts Brazil have been drawn to face Peru, Venezuela and Bolivia in the



2019 Copa America that kicks off in Sao Paulo in June.

2016 Copa América, Group Stage



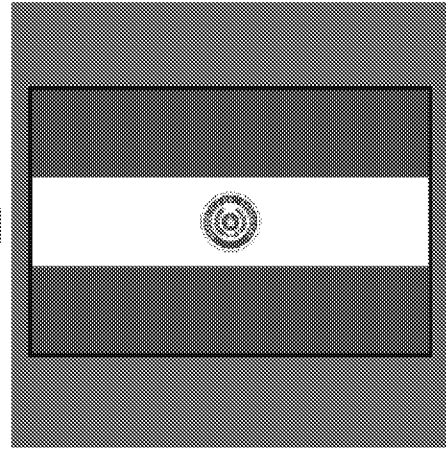
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