

SOCCKER USMNT VS. PORTUGAL PLAYER RATINGS

U.S. shut out before Cup roster finalized

Rob Usry
USA TODAY

The U.S. men’s national soccer team was shut out 2-0 by Portugal in an international friendly March 31 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

Mauricio Pochettino’s final lineup selection before naming his roster for the World Cup was a head-scratching one. He decided to go without a true striker, opting for Christian Pulisic as a false nine.

After a mainly even first half, Portugal capitalized on a midfield turnover and hit the U.S. on the counter in the 37th minute. Vitorinha played creator with a through ball that split the American back line and put Bruno Fernandes on goal, his backheel to Francisco Trincao led to a clinical finish for the opening goal.

After the break, the visitors took over the match and exuded their quality. João Félix extended their lead 15 minutes into the second half after being given acres of space at the top of the box off a corner kick to volley in a rocket off the post. Portugal was able to see out the rest of the match and take home the win.

Let’s take a look back at how the USMNT players fared in second consecutive friendly loss.

GK: Matt Freese – 6
It would be harsh to put him at fault for either goal conceded. He made the saves he should’ve made and added one spectacular one at the end of the match. He’s probably locked down the starting job if it was ever in question.

RB: Alex Freeman – 6.5
He continues to impress both defensively and in attacking sequences. Going up against possibly the best attacking left back in the world, he kept Nuno Mendes quiet while on the field, a task many defenders across the globe cannot

say they’ve accomplished. It’s clear he has a bright future with this team.

CB: Chris Richards – 6
Richards is undoubtedly one of the most important players on this team. His inclusion in the lineup added some much-needed stability in the back. He just provides you with an air of confidence on the defensive side when he’s on the field.

CB: Auston Trusty – 6.5
He’s quietly put in some very respectable showings when he gets the chance. Could he sneak his way into a starting role with the struggles of Tim Ream? It’s certainly possible.

LB: Antonee Robinson – 5.5
He was unable to get involved as much as he did against Belgium. That could’ve been by design after the team was exposed on the wings defensively on March 28. While he wasn’t much of an attacking threat on the left side, he did fine defensively in his shift.

CDM: Aidan Morris – 5.5
A bit sporadic at times, but he’s a constant worker in the midfield who never stops running and pestering the opposing team. He’s an interesting name possibly on the bubble for the final roster. This performance did not move the needle much in either direction.

CDM: Sebastian Berhalter – 4.5
The highlight of the match for him was a very good corner delivery in the first half that found a wide open Weston McKennie for a chance. At the very least, you have to think he makes the roster purely on his set piece abilities.

CAM: Weston McKennie – 5.5
Once again he was asked to roam around the midfield, playing just behind Christian Pulisic in attack. He showed some nice combination moments with Weah and Tillman. He was once again on the end of the team’s best chance during his 45 minutes but couldn’t get a



Portugal’s Vitorinha passes against the USA’s Alex Freeman during their game March 31 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. KEVIN C. COX/GETTY IMAGES

free header off a corner kick on goal. His role continues to evolve, but it’s clear he is a massive part of whatever Pochettino wants to do tactically.

RW: Tim Weah – 5.5
Weah is clearly more effectively as a pure winger with little defensive responsibility than a wingback. He’s at his best when stretching the opposing defense and causing issues with his off the ball movement. This wasn’t his best showing, but it proved he needs to be a real winger instead of someone who needs to worry about defending.

ST: Christian Pulisic – 4.5
Playing in a central forward role, there was a ton of responsibility on his shoulders in the buildup and to lead the attacking line. Unfortunately, his poor form continued despite the change in tactics as he struggled to keep possession in key areas of the buildup and often killed a lot of attacks by hesitating or not making the right decisions.

There are a lot of questions facing this team between now and the start of the World Cup, and his form and role within the team is at the top of the list.

LW: Malik Tillman – 6
Another solid but not spectacular showing from the Leverkusen attacker. He continues to show a good understanding with his fellow forwards in the buildup, but the final product is a bit lacking.

Sub: Tanner Tessmann – 5
Seemed to play in a more advanced role than his usual deep-lying spot. He didn’t have any noticeable errors or contributions.

Sub: Patrick Agyemang – 5.5
Whenever he comes off the bench he always provides at least one moment of positivity. In this match, it was a very nice dribbling sequence where he got past a defender on the end line and set up Balogun for a half-chance. He seems like a good bet for a super sub role on the final roster.

Sub: Max Arfsten – 5
Didn’t have much to do after coming on.

Sub: Joe Scally – 5
Played 23 minutes and only touched the ball eight times.

Sub: Folarin Balogun – 5
Didn’t really impact the match after coming on. He did get a small chance, but scuffed his shot.

Sub: Gio Reyna – 5.5
Helped create a chance as soon as he stepped on the field and didn’t misplace a pass. He’s clearly got the skills to make an impact, but his role within the team is completely up in the air.

Sub: Cristian Roldan – 5
Congrats on another cap! He touched the ball seven times.

Sub: Brenden Aaronson – 5
He’s still such a weird player for this team. He’s a high-energy attacker who lacks a final product. Does he have a purpose on the final roster? Only time will tell.

Sub: Mark McKenzie – NR
Stoppage-time sub.

Turkey wins playoff, will face USA in World Cup

Seth Vertelney
USA TODAY

Turkey defeated Kosovo 1-0 in a World Cup playoff, clinching a berth in Group D alongside the USA.

Kerem Akturkoglu gave Turkey the lead early in the second half March 31, tapping home on the doorstep after a scuffed shot from Orkun Kokcu. That was all the visitors needed as they advanced to the World Cup for the first time since 2002.

Turkey defeated Romania 1-0 in a semifinal March 26 before its victory over Kosovo at Fadil Vokrri Stadium in Pristina, Kosovo.

Turkey is ranked 23rd in FIFA’s world

Turkey’s World Cup group stage schedule

- June 13 vs. Australia, BC Place – Vancouver.
- June 19 vs. Paraguay, Levi’s Stadium – Santa Clara, California
- June 25 vs. USA, SoFi Stadium – Los Angeles

rankings, making it the second highest-ranked team in Group D behind the U.S. (15th). The USMNT and Turkey have faced off five times in their history, with each team winning two games and the other match ending in a draw.

FIFA president ‘will do whatever’ to help Iran play in World Cup

Safid Deen
USA TODAY

FIFA president Gianni Infantino is insistent Iran will play at the World Cup despite the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

“We have only one plan for this team. Iran has qualified for the World Cup, and will play in the tournament,” Infantino told Iranian media after their 5-0 friendly win over Costa Rica in Turkey on March 31. “Personally, I will do whatever I can to make sure everything is in order.”

Iranian officials have said it is up to FIFA and the U.S. to keep the team safe during the World Cup. Iran is scheduled to play its group matches in Los

Angeles and Seattle against Belgium, Egypt and New Zealand.

However, Iran would prefer to relocate its matches to Mexico, citing the United States’ bombing campaign alongside the Israeli military across the region since Feb 28.

President Donald Trump recently said Iran would be welcome at the World Cup while stating: “I really don’t believe it is appropriate that they be there, for their own life and safety.”

“We want them to play; they are going to play in the World Cup. There are no Plans B or C or D – Plan A is the only plan,” Infantino said on Univision.

Infantino seemingly suggested Iran could hold its World Cup training sessions outside of the U.S.

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Request for Proposal (RFP)
E&I Cooperative Services, Inc. invites the submission of sealed proposals for:

RFP# EI00418-2026RFP for Laboratory Assets (Equipment)
Proposals are due by 1:00 PM ET on Monday, April 27, 2026.

Respondents must submit their RFP response using E&I’s Electronic Sourcing Solution which is accessible via <https://www.eandi.org/contract-finder/rfp-development/>.
E&I does not accept hard copy submissions or submissions through any other medium other than its Electronic Sourcing Solution.
E&I is committed to developing mutually advantageous business relationships with minority, women, disabled, veteran and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses.

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Request for Proposals (RFPs) Multiple Opportunities Available Proposal Deadline: Monday, May 11, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CT

The Alliance for Innovation (AFI), acting as the Lead Contracting Agency with Edge Public serving as the National GPO is seeking proposals from qualified offerors for a range of RFPs.

The participating entities, including all, local and state government agencies, higher education institutions, K-12 schools and nonprofit organizations.

AFI-2026122 - Job Order Contracting (JOC) Services
AFI-2026123 - Flags, Flagpoles & Accessories
AFI-2026124 - AI-Driven Translation & Language Access Services
AFI-2026125 - Pest Control Services

Contracts resulting from this solicitation may be awarded to multiple suppliers. All RFPs are subject to the Lead Contracting Agency’s General Conditions & Requirements to Offerors.

Full specifications and proposal documents are available via the AFI’s Procurement Portal at <https://indigo.bonfirehub.com>. Only proposals submitted through this portal will be accepted.

Deadline for submission: Monday, May 11, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CT

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The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS) has posted procurement solicitations at www.tips-usa.com for the following categories:

260401 Food Service Equipment, Chemicals, Supplies, and Services
260402 Food Service Management Tools (Including Software)
260403 Tires and Associated Goods and Services
260404 Fire Trucks, Ambulances, and Other First Responder Vehicles
260405 Fire Truck, Ambulance, and Other First Responder Vehicle Parts, Equipment, and Services

The proposal is due and will be opened on **May 15, 2026, at 3:00 pm local time.**
Call 866-839-8477 for problems with website or questions.

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LOC intends to enter into a master price agreement to procure the following products and services for LOC members and make them available to all members of the national cooperative purchasing program, National Purchasing Partners, LLC (“NPPGov”).

TOTAL ENERGY SOLUTIONS: BACKUP, PRIME POWER GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS #2645 Responses Due May 14, 2026

For information or a copy of the Request for Proposal, contact LOC at rfp@orcities.org or download it from orcities.org.

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Request for Proposal (RFP)
Purchasing Cooperative of America (PCA) is a national public procurement cooperative working with a public agency to provide Requests for Proposals for response by Vendors who can provide the following Products/Services to public sector entities:

1) RFP OD-441-26 Books and Educational Materials;
2) RFP OD-442-26 Energy and Infrastructure with Alternative Funding Options;
3) RFP OD-443-26 Medical and Laboratory Supplies and Equipment;
4) RFP OD-444-26 IT Infrastructure and Related Services;
5) RFP OD-445-26 VOC Free Asphalt Products and Services.

Vendors are invited to respond electronically to RFPs through the PCA website portal at www.pcamerica.org/solicitations.
Proposals are due by 11:00 AM CT on Tuesday, May 5th, 2026.
Please direct inquiries to Elaine Nichols at 844-722-6374.

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