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Virgin Islands Soccer Team Falls 1-0 in Match Against Grenada

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The Virgin Islands soccer team is off to a less than ideal start in World Cup Qualifiers after losing their first two games which complicates the path out of Group A onto the second round.

Grenada's Saydrel Lewis scored in the 33rd minute to put the host in the lead and victory as it was the only goal scored during the match.

According to USVI head coach Gilberto Damiano, the Grenada goal was scored when the ball took an unfortunate deflection off the back of a defender and dropped in front of Mr. Lewis, who took advantage of the opportunity.

Mr. Damiano said the USVI team played tough defense during the entire first half. "We should be very proud of the first 45 minutes," he told players. "We came with a game plan which was to try and play and to try and win the game and that was the mentality we took back into the second half."

He said in the second half, "We started to get more chances, getting more space to play. They dropped their line a little bit more and the game was open. I really thought a goal was coming in the second half."

The head coach spoke about the future of the Virgin Islands soccer team following the two defeats. "We come out of the game very proud of what we achieved as a team. It's a very young team, it's on average 18, 19, 20 years old — one of the players that came on today is 15 years old. The future is bright," he said.

The latest performance was much better compared to last time the Virgin Islands played Grenada in a World Cup Qualifier in 2008, when the U.S.V.I lost 10-0.

The Virgin Islands starting lineup for the match was Lionel Brown, Joshua Ramos, Kassal Grenne, Grant Farrell, Quinn Farrell, Jett Blaschka, Jake Iller, John Engerman, Timothy Herring, Jimson St. Louis and Ramesses McGuinness.

At the end of the first two games in Group A, Antigua and Barbuda and El Salvador are tied for 1st place, Grenada is in third place with 3 points and Montserrat is in fourth place with 2 points. The Virgin Islands' two losses place the team at the bottom of the group.

Each team will play two matches in June against the teams they haven't played, meaning the Virgin Islands will play Montserrat on June 2 and El Salvador on June 5.

The USVI head coach expects big improvements from his players before those matches. "You can be a hundred percent sure that in June these Virgin Islands national team will be a hundred times better than we were today and we were two days ago."