**MEXICO** 

***Guillermo OCHOA (Goalkeeper) 13/07/85 América***

Tall, athletic build, right-footed, goalkeeper. He stayed alert despite being largely untroubled and made a couple of good saves when called upon, displaying good handling and agility when saving from distance, and showing bravery when diving at the feet of opponents to mop up loose balls. Despite punching with authority on occasion, he was reluctant to come off his line to deal with crosses as he allowed his defence to get dominated unnecessarily at attacking set pieces. He was quick to sweep up behind the defensive unit though and confidently cleared the danger under pressure, whilst his kicking was long and accurate towards the front. He got his head up quickly to spot the opportunity to launch quick counter attacks and threw the ball out quickly to the wide player whenever possible.

***Jonny MAGALLON (Centre Back) 21/11/81 Chivas***

Average height, athletic build, right-footed, central defender. He read the game well and provided good coverage for the other defenders, as he made a number of important interceptions once a team mate was bypassed. He marked effectively and was quick to close down in the defensive third, where he competed well in the air and tackled strongly on the floor. He was positive in possession and always looked to develop the play, as he played a number of incisive passes to release team mates into space but lacked control when playing the ball long.

***Ricardo OSORIO (Centre Back) 30/03/80 Stuttgart (Germany)***

Average height, athletic build, right-footed, central defender. Normally a right full back, he struggled playing in middle of a back three as he was dominated in the air by opponents and was unable win the ball consistently in the tackle. His marking and positional sense were also poor, as he regularly got caught out of position and was unable to cope with the clever off the ball movement of his direct opponent, constantly relying on team mates to help out and clear the danger. Despite showing decent mobility, he was beaten for pace on a couple of occasions when defending 1-v-1 situations and was particularly vulnerable when forced to chase balls played into space behind the defence. When in possession, he passed the ball progressively into midfield to keep the ball moving forward quickly, whilst he cleared his lines emphatically when required.

***Carlos SALCIDO (Centre Back) 02/04/80 PSV Eindhoven (Holland)***

Average height, strong build, left-footed, central defender. He showed good positional sense and tactical awareness to stifle the attacking threat of his direct opponent throughout, as he closed down sharply and marked tightly in the final third. He was good in the air and tackled strongly for the ball on the floor, as he made a number of important interceptions with well-timed tackles. He showed good mobility when covering and chasing into the channels, displaying an astute reading of the game. He moved out wide when his side where attacking and provided good support to the left midfielder, displaying a wide passing range with both feet and confidence on the ball when closed down quickly.

***Efrain JUAREZ (Right Midfielder) 22/02/88 Pumas***

Smallish, lean build, right-footed, right back. An energetic and enterprising midfielder, he caused problems for defenders with his quick and direct running down the right side, compensating for his lack of trickery with a quick burst of acceleration that allowed him to speed past defenders and get to the byline to deliver a series of inviting crosses. He looked composed in possession and his passing was swift and accurate into supporting players. Defensively, he was at fault for the first goal as he failed to track his opponent effectively and allowed his man to break behind the defence and score. However, he recovered as the game wore on and showed great determination when challenging for the ball and tracking back, as he dived into tackles and regained possession on numerous occasions to start quick counter attacks.

***Gerardo TORRADO (Central Midfield) 30/04/79 Cruz Azul***

Smallish, athletic build, right-footed, central midfielder. Playing an anchorman role, he competed with dogged determination throughout as he closed down quickly in his own half and tackled strongly to break up the play consistently. He showed good tactical awareness to track the runs of the opposition midfielders and provided excellent coverage after defensive breakdowns, as he quickly seized upon loose balls and cleared the danger quickly. His passing was efficient over short range and he seemed content to retain possession with safe passes into the feet of supporting players, showing no real creative intent. He seldom ventured forward and preferred to stay deep and protect during a highly effective individual display.

***Israel CASTRO (Central Midfield) 20/12/80 Pumas***

Average height, athletic build, right-footed, central midfielder. Adopting a defensive role, he provided astute coverage for the defence and showed good desire when tracking back and challenging for the ball, denying space expertly and snapping into tackles quickly inside the defensive third. He worked hard to cover a lot of ground in midfield and was quick to push forward and support the attack, where he scored with a superb 25 yard strike into the roof of the net after running onto a lay off. He looked assured in possession and passed the ball swiftly and accurately into supporting players, preferring to direct the play down the flanks whenever possible.

***Andres GUARDADO (Left Midfield) 28/09/86 Deportivo La Coruna (Spain)***

Small, athletic build, left-footed, left-sided midfielder. A dynamic winger with good stamina and desire, he looked to take on defenders whenever possible and consistently beat the first defender with his quick acceleration and nimble footwork. He cleverly spun out of tight situations and consistently found space to create in the final third, showing poise and control with his final ball but lacking consistency with his crossing. Defensively, he worked very hard to track back and was highly competitive when closing down and challenging for the ball, tackling tenaciously and competing gamely in the air despite his diminutive stature.

***Cuauhtemoc BLANCO (Central Midfield) 17/01/73 Chicago Fire (USA)***

Average height, stocky build, either-footed, central midfielder. Adopting a playmaker role with license to roam behind the forwards, he thrived when coming deep to receive possession and always looked to dictate the play, showing good trickery to evade defenders and a wide passing range with both feet to create a number of promising attacking situations. He showed clever off the ball movement when running into the channels and linked up intelligently with the wide players close to the byline, whilst he delivered a number of inviting crosses when given the opportunity. He tired quickly and his influence waned considerably as the game wore, as he seldom looked to track back and placed a heavy burden on his team mates with his lack of defensive effort when possession was lost.

***Giovani DOS SANTOS (Forward) 11/05/89 Tottenham Hotspur (England)***

Smallish, lean build, left-footed, forward. Displaying flair and imagination in his play, he was thorn in the side of defenders throughout with his dynamic movement and individual trickery, as he beat multiple defenders with ease and constantly opened up space for his team mates to exploit. He linked up intelligently with his strike partner in and around the penalty area but his final ball lacked quality and control when passing from deeper positions. He showed clever movement when chasing into the channels and evading defenders inside the penalty area, as he created a number of goalscoring opportunities when beating the offside trap and running onto through balls played behind the defence, during a bright display.

***Guillermo FRANCO (Forward) 03/11/76 Unattached***

Tallish, athletic build, right-footed, forward. He failed to impose himself and was marked out of the game for long periods, as he struggled to compete effectively against a physically assertive opponent and was dominated in the air. His link up play was generally tidy although he conceded possession a couple of times when attempting audacious and unnecessary flicks. He created a couple of goalscoring opportunities from defensive breakdowns inside the penalty area but lacked composure and poise with his finishing, during a largely unimpressive display.

***Substitutes***

***Carlos VELA (Forward) 01/03/89 Arsenal (England)***

Average height, lean build, left-footed, left midfielder. Coming on midway through the second half, he displayed good pace and individual trickery to advance past defenders in tight situations, showing a preference to cut inside and run diagonally up field to drag defenders out of position. He was always available to receive possession and he showed creativity with his passing into the forwards, although his crossing was inconsistent and frequently over hit. Defensively, he tracked back and closed down quickly to put pressure on opponents without being able to regain possession.

***Nery CASTILLO (Forward) 13/06/84 Shaktar Donetsk (Ukraine)***

Smallish, athletic build, left-footed, forward. Coming on for the last 20 minutes, he showed positive intent when travelling forward quickly to commit defenders but lacked a clinical end to his fine approach play, as he often lost possession when trying to take on too many defenders and was outmuscled too easily in tight situations. His passing and link up play where intelligent but he was unable to create any goalscoring opportunities, as he failed to have a significant impact off the bench.

***Miguel SABAH (Forward) 14/11/79 Morelia***

Average height, athletic build, right-footed, forward. Coming on very late in the game, he provided a genuine goalscoring threat with his intelligent movement in and around the penalty area, creating a number of goalscoring opportunities and showing poise and control to smash the ball home from 8 yards for the game winner. He also competed effectively against much taller opponents on the air and went close with a couple of close range headers from set pieces. He worked hard to chase down lost causes and was highly impressive during his match-winning cameo.