



Wednesday, November 27, 2024

Real Estelí (NCA) vs. LD Alajuelense (CRC)

Estadio Independencia, Estelí, NCA

Real Estelí and LD Alajuelense will face off for the third time in a Central American Cup final. In the first, LD Alajuelense won 4-1 on aggregate.

Real Estelí 0-3 Alajuelense (Joshua Navarro, Michael Barrantes, Freddy Góndola), First Leg, Final, Estadio Independencia, Estelí, NCA (29-NOV-2023).

Alajuelense 1-1 Real Estelí (Joel Campbell; Byron Bonilla), Second Leg, Final, Estadio Alejandro Morera Soto - Alajuela, CRC (5-DEC-2023).

All-Time Series:

LD Alajuelense leads the historical series against Real Estelí FC with W-8 D-1.

LD Alajuelense 8-0 Real Estelí, Group B (First Round) - Concacaf Champions Cup 1998, Estadio Alejandro Morera Soto - Alajuela, CRC (14-FEB-1998).

Real Estelí 1-3 Alajuelense, Group B (First Round) - Concacaf Champions Cup 1998, Palmares, Alajuela, CRC (17-FEB-1998).

Real Estelí 0-1 Alajuelense (Allen Guevara), Group 6 (Third Round) - Concacaf Champions Cup 2012/13, Estadio Independencia, Estelí, NCA (28-AUG-2012).

Alajuelense 1-0 Real Estelí (Álvaro Sánchez Alfaro, penalty), Group 6 (Third Round) - Concacaf Champions Cup 2012/13, Estadio Alejandro Morera Soto, Alajuela, CRC (26-SEP-2012).

Alajuelense 2-1 Real Estelí (Bryan Ruiz and Alonso Martínez; Juan Barrera), Quarterfinals (single match) - Scotiabank Concacaf League 2020, Estadio Alejandro Morera Soto, Alajuela, CRC (2-DEC-2020).

Alajuelense 6-0 Real Estelí (Essinho, Luis Antonio Marín, Harold Medina, Alexander Castro, Alejandro Alpízar, Pablo Izaguirre), Group A, UNCAF Interclub Cup (First Round), Estadio Alejandro Morera Soto, Alajuela, CRC (3-FEB-2000).

Real Estelí 1-2 Alajuelense (Carlos Alonso; Heriberto Quirós x2), Group A, UNCAF Interclub Cup (First Round), Estadio Independencia, Estelí, NCA (13-FEB-2000).



Real Estelí FC (NCA)

Real Estelí FC returns for the second consecutive time to the CCAC final after defeating Club Sport Herediano of Costa Rica by the away goals rule following a 2-2 aggregate draw in the semifinals. The 2023 runners-up started the 2024 edition in Group D and completed the group stage with a record of 2 wins, 1 draw, and 1 loss. Subsequently, the Nicaraguan team eliminated CD Águila of El Salvador in the quarterfinals before overcoming Herediano in the semifinals.

The Nicaraguan team is the second club with the most points (31) and wins (8) in CCAC history (also, they have 8 clean sheets in 18 matches over 2 editions).

The 2023 CCAC runner-up lost only 1 of their last 9 matches (1-0 vs. AD Guanacasteca in Group D of 2024). They have 3 consecutive draws. They earned 22 out of 27 possible points at home in the CCAC and 81.5% of their points as hosts. Their only home defeat was a 0-3 loss in the 2023 final against Alajuelense.

Real Estelí played 8 matches in the Central American Cup against Costa Rican rivals, achieving 2 wins, 4 draws, and 2 losses. They faced Alajuelense, Saprissa, AD Guanacasteca, and Herediano. Their 2 victories were at home against Deportivo Saprissa in both editions (1-0 in the 2023 quarterfinals and 2-1 in Group D of 2024).

International Titles: none.

Best result in the CCAC: Runner-up in the 2023 edition.

Record: GP-18 W-8 D-7 L-3 (GF-22 GA-16).

Top scorers: Byron Bonilla (NCA) 4, Juan Vieyra (ARG) 2, Juan Barrera (NCA) 2, Harold Medina (NCA) 2, Bancy Hernández (NCA) 2, Arley Bonilla (COL) 2, Iván Ochoa (MEX) 2.

Assists: Byron Bonilla (NCA) 3, Harold Medina (NCA) 3, Bancy Hernández (NCA) 2, Abel Méndez (ARG) 2, Henry García (NCA) 1, Leyvin Balanta (COL), Agenor Báez (NCA), Josué Quijano (NCA), Henry Niño (NCA) 1.

Players with most appearances in the CCAC: Ebert Martínez (18 matches), Byron Bonilla (17), Marvin Fletes, Josué Quijano, Harold Medina (16), Óscar Acevedo (15), Bancy Hernández (12).

Saves: Douglas Forvis (NCA) 27, Jason Vega (NCA) 12 (12 in 2024).

Record in the 2024 CCAC: GP-8 W-3 D-4 L-1 (GF-10 GA-6).

Top scorers: Byron Bonilla (NCA) 3, Iván Ochoa (MEX) 2, Juan Vieyra (ARG) 2, Harold Medina (NCA) 1, Josué Quijano (NCA), Óscar Acevedo (NCA).

Assists: Bancy Hernández (NCA) 2, Agenor Báez (NCA) 1, Byron Bonilla (NCA), Josué Quijano (NCA), Harold Medina (NCA), Henry Niño (NCA).

Scoring opportunities (79). Shots on target (34).

Youngest scorer in the CCAC: Harold Medina (NCA) - 21 years and 190 days (vs. Olimpia - Group B 2023).

Oldest scorer in the CCAC: Juan Barrera (NCA) - 34 years and 105 days (CD FAS - Group B 2023).

Scorers in finals: Byron Bonilla (NCA) 1.

Players to watch:

Byron Bonilla (NCA). In the 2024 edition, he has scored three goals, provided one assist, and made 21 shots. In 17 CCAC matches, he has scored 5 goals and provided three assists, with two of the goals being from free kicks.

Iván Ochoa (MEX). He was the hero of the qualification for Real Estelí with his double in just 11 minutes. The Mexican midfielder is the leader in passes (415). In the second leg of the semifinal against CS Herediano, he completed 97% of his passes.

Josué Quijano (NCA). He was the player with the most shots (7) in the semifinals against CS Herediano. Four of those shots were on target, and three were off. The defender has 16 appearances in the CCAC.

Ebert Martínez (NCA). He completed 92% of his passes in the 2024 edition and is the top ball-retriever on the Nicaraguan team (16). He is the only player to have been on the field for all (16) CCAC matches. Overall, he has recovered 38 balls in the 2 CCAC editions he has played.

Óscar Acevedo (NCA). He was the player with the most ball recoveries in the 2023 final (8). Additionally, along with Marvin Fletes and Óscar Acevedo, Real Estelí players had the best passing records in that final (86 and 80, respectively).



LD Alajuelense (CRC)

Liga Deportiva Alajuelense advanced to the final after defeating Antigua GFC 1-0 on aggregate in the semifinals. The 2023 champion started the 2024 tournament in Group B and completed a perfect group stage with a record of 4 wins. Alajuelense then eliminated Comunicaciones of Guatemala in the quarterfinals before their victory against Antigua (GUA) in the semifinals.

LD Alajuelense remains undefeated in the CCAC after 18 matches (W-13 D-5). For the third consecutive year, they are in a final in Concacaf club tournaments (Scotiabank Concacaf League 2022, Central American Cup 2023 and 2024). The defending champion secured 5 wins and 5 draws in the knockout phase of the current edition.

LD Alajuelense scored in 17 of their previous 18 matches (the only match they did not score in was against Antigua GFC in the first leg of the 2024 semifinals). They are the team with the most goals scored in CCAC history with 39. Additionally, the defending champion is the team with the most points (20), goals scored (15) – tied with FC Motagua – and assists (11) in the 2024 edition.

They have played 3 matches against Nicaraguan clubs in CCAC history. They remain unbeaten with 2 wins and 1 draw after facing Real Estelí in the 2023 final. Alajuelense has won 4 of their last away matches in CCAC history: 3-0 vs. Real Estelí (2023 final), 4-3 vs. LA Firpo, 2-1 vs. Alianza FC (Group B - 2024), and 2-1 vs. Comunicaciones FC

(2024 quarterfinals). They achieved 23 out of 27 possible points when playing away (W-7 D-2).

International Titles: Concacaf Champions Cup (1986, 2004), UNCAF Interclub Cup (2002, 2005), Central American Giants Tournament (1996), Scotiabank Concacaf League (2020), and Central American Cup (2023).

Best result in the CCAC: Champion in the 2023 edition.

Record: GP-18 W-13 D-5 L-0 (GF-39 GA-15).

Top scorers: Diego Campos (CRC) 6, Aarón Suárez (CRC) 5, Johan Venegas (CRC) 3, Michael Barrantes (CRC) 3, Joshua Navarro (CRC) 3, Freddy Góndola (PAN) 3, Joel Campbell (CRC) 3, Alexander López (HON) 2, Anderson Cardoso (BRA) 2, Rahir Parkins (CRC).

Assists: Carlos Mora (CRC) 4, Joshua Navarro (CRC) 4, Aarón Suárez (CRC) 4, Anderson Cardoso (BRA) 3, Johan Venegas (CRC) 2.

Players with most appearances in the CCAC: Celso Borges (17 matches), Leonel Moreira (16), Joshua Navarro, Aarón Suárez (14), Alexis Gamboa, Carlos Martínez, Ian Lawrence (13), Alexander López (10).

Saves: Leonel Moreira (CRC) 55 (23 in 2024), Miguel Ajú (CRC) 6.

Record in the 2024 CCAC: GP-8 W-6 D-2 L-0 (GF-15 GA-8).

Top scorers: Diego Campos (CRC) 5, Anderson Cardoso (BRA) 2, Rahir Parkins (CRC) 2, Aarón Suárez (CRC) 1, Jonathan Moya (CRC), Santiago Van Der Putten (CRC).

Assists: Aarón Suárez (CRC) 4, Anderson Cardoso (BRA) 3, Iago Falqué (ESP) 1, Diego Campos (CRC), Celso Borges (CRC), Creichel Pérez (CRC).

Goal opportunities (100). Shots on target (56).

Youngest scorer in the CCAC: Santiago Van Der Putten (CRC) - 20 years and 63 days (vs. Comunicaciones - Group B 2024).

Oldest scorer in the CCAC: Michael Barrantes (CRC) - 40 years and 56 days (vs. Real Estelí 2023 final).

Penalty shootouts: (1) Victory (5-4) vs. Herediano (2023 semifinals). The score was tied 4-4 on aggregate (2-2 in both legs).

Scorers in finals: Joshua Navarro (CRC) 1, Joel Campbell (CRC), Michael Barrantes (CRC), Freddy Góndola (PAN). *Joel Campbell scored the fastest goal in a Central American Cup final: 4 minutes, 16 seconds (vs. Real Estelí FC - 2023 second leg final).

Players to watch:

Diego Campos (CRC). He is the top scorer of the 2024 edition (6 goals scored vs. CD Marathón - double, LA Firpo, Alianza FC - double, and Comunicaciones). He also has 1

assist and leads in shots (23) and shots on target (11). He was the player with the most shots in the semifinals against Antigua GFC (7).

Rashir Parkins (CRC). He scored the goal that sealed LD Alajuelense's qualification to the 2024 final and was the player with the most shots (4), passes (42), and ball recoveries (4) in the last match against Antigua GFC.

Celso Borges (CRC). He is the only member of the defending champion's roster who has been on the field in all 17 CCAC matches. The team captain is also the leader in passes in CCAC history with 915.

Aarón Suárez (CRC). He is the leader in assists (4) for LD Alajuelense in 6 matches in the 2024 edition, in which he scored a goal after 9 shots.

Leonel Moreira (CRC). His outstanding performances in the 2023 final were crucial for winning the title with 13 saves and three clearances. Moreira has 23 saves and two clean sheets in 8 appearances in the 2024 edition.