

#75 Costa Rica vs. Panama

Estadio Nacional, San José, CRC.

They will clash for the fifth time in the Concacaf Nations League, with Panama having won all four previous encounters. Among these matches, two took place in Group B of League A. The first on February 6, 2022, saw Panama secure a 2-0 victory, with goals from Ismael Díaz (52') and Cecilio Waterman (76') at the Rommel Fernández Stadium in Panama City. The second came on March 28, 2023, during the final matchday of Group B, when Panama edged Costa Rica 1-0 at the National Stadium in San José, thanks to an early strike by José "La Pantera" Fajardo (2'). That win earned Panama the top spot in the group with 10 points, followed by Costa Rica with 6 points, while Martinique finished with just one point.

Their most recent encounters were in the quarterfinals of the 2023/2024 edition, where Panama cruised to two wins with a 6-1 aggregate score.

In the first leg, played on November 16, 2023, at the Ricardo Saprissa Stadium in San José, Panama triumphed 3-0 with goals from Michael Murillo (4'), José "La Pantera" Fajardo (29'), and Cecilio Waterman (60'). The second leg took place on November 20, 2023, at the Rommel Fernández Stadium in Panama City, where the hosts secured another victory, 3-1. José Fajardo (20'), José Luis Rodríguez (23'), and Édgar Bárcenas (43' penalty) were on target for Panama, while Francisco Calvo (52') pulled one back for Costa Rica.

Throughout these four meetings, José "La Pantera" Fajardo emerged as the top scorer, netting three goals – one in the group stage and two in the quarterfinals.

Panama currently enjoys a five-match winning streak over Costa Rica across all competitions, the longest in their history against this rival. Besides the four victories in the Nations League, Panama also beat Costa Rica 2-1 in Group C of the Gold Cup on June 26, 2023, at Chase Stadium in Fort Lauderdale. In that match, José "La Pantera" Fajardo (23') and Édgar Bárcenas (68') found the net for Panama, while Aaron Suárez (90+1') scored for Costa Rica.

From 1992 to 2005, Costa Rica had dominated Panama, securing 10 consecutive wins. These victories included three in FIFA World Cup qualifiers, two in the UNCAF Nations Cup, two in the Gold Cup, and three in friendly matches.

All-Time series record: 56 Games

27 wins for Costa Rica

14 draws

15 wins for Panamá

109 Goals for Costa Rica

53 Goals for Panamá

Costa Rica (CRC)

Costa Rica Dominates Group A in the 2024/25 CNL Edition.

Costa Rica emerged as the unbeaten leader in Group A of the 2024/25 edition, competing against Suriname, Guatemala, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Guyana (W-2 D-4). Their best result in CNL history was a fourth-place finish in the 2019/20 edition after a penalty shootout loss to Honduras.

In the 2024-25 edition, Costa Rica won both home games (3-0 against Guadeloupe and Guatemala). Their only two home losses in CNL history came against Panama (0-1 in 2022/23 and 0-3 in 2023/24).

CNL Record: GP-16 W-5 D-7 L-4 (GF-18 GA-16).

Top Scorers: Francisco Calvo (7), Warren Madrigal (3), Joel Campbell (2), Johan Venegas (1), José Guillermo Ortiz, Aarón Suárez, Anthony Contreras, Orlando Galo, Jefferson Brenes, Josimar Alcócer, Kenneth Vargas.

Top Assists: Manfred Ugalde (3), Johan Venegas (2), Joel Campbell (2), Randall Leal (1), Bryan Oviedo, Óscar Duarte, Dylan Flores, Ricardo Blanco, Suhander Zúñiga, Álvaro Zamora, Juan Pablo Vargas, Adrián Martínez.

Saves: 44. **Goalkeepers:** Patrick Sequeira (11), Keylor Navas (10), Kevin Chamorro (9), Leonel Moreira (6), Esteban Alvarado (4), Aarón Cruz (4).

Players to Watch

- **Francisco Calvo:** Costa Rica's top scorer in the CNL with seven goals. The Tico captain has scored in all four editions (three in 2019/20, one in 2022/23, one in 2023/24, and two in 2024/25). In the 2024-25 edition, he made four shots and led the team in passes with 154.

- **Warren Madrigal:** Scored in both of Costa Rica's wins in Group A this edition, both home games with identical 3-0 scores against Guadeloupe and Guatemala. He also led the Tricolor in shots with seven.

- **Patrick Sequeira:** A key figure in Costa Rica's previous three matches in the 2024/25 CNL with 11 saves, six clearances, and three clean sheets in the group stage over four matches.

Panamá (PAN)

Panama Secures Back-to-Back 4th Place Finishes in Recent CNL Editions

Panama finished in fourth place in the last two editions, losing to Mexico in the third-place match of the 2022/23 edition and to Jamaica in 2023/24. The Canaleros arrive at this stage following two consecutive CNL losses – 3-0 against Mexico in the semifinals and 1-0 to Jamaica in the 2023/24 third-place match. However, they won their last two away games (2-1 vs. Curaçao and 3-0 vs. Costa Rica in Group A of League A and the 2023/24 quarterfinals).

CNL Record: GP-18 W-9 D-2 L-7 (GF-28 GA-18).

Top Scorers: Édgar Bárcenas (4), José Fajardo (4), Gabriel Torres (3), Cecilio Waterman (3), Éric Davis (2), Adalberto Carrasquilla (2), José Rodríguez (2).

Top Assists: Alberto Quintero (3), Édgar Bárcenas (3), Adalberto Carrasquilla (3), Ismael Díaz (2), Freddy Góndola (1), Éric Davis, Cristian Martínez, Fidel Escobar.

Saves: 44. **Goalkeepers:** Orlando Mosquera (25), Luis Mejía (9), José Calderón (6), César Samudio (4).

Clean Sheets: (8).

Results by Edition: 2019/20 (League A), 2022/23 (League A - 4th place), 2023/24 (League A - 4th place).

Players to Watch

- **José Fajardo:** Scored five goals in his last eight matches for Panama, including friendlies, Concacaf World Cup Qualifiers, and Copa América. He was the top scorer in the 2023/24 edition with three goals, finding the net in three of the four games against Costa Rica in the CNL.

- **José Rodríguez:** Scored twice and, along with Ismael Díaz, led Panama in shots with 11 in the 2023/24 CNL. The midfielder completed 136 accurate passes in the last edition.

- **Adalberto Carrasquilla:** Scored one goal and provided three assists in his eight appearances in the 2023/24 CNL. The 2023 Gold Cup Golden Ball winner contributed 379 passes and 18 recoveries in the latest CNL.