

Major Arena Soccer League 2

2023-24 PLAYOFFS



Games of April 5-7



- > AMARILLO BOMBERS
- > ATLETICO ORLANDO
- > EL PASO RHINOS UNO SEIS
- > IOWA DEMON HAWKS
- > IOWA RAPTORS
- > ROCHESTER LANCERS
- > ST. LOUIS AMBUSH 2
- > WICHITA WINGS

MASL 2 QUARTERFINALS

Friday, April 5 10 a.m. CDT
Friday, April 5 1 p.m. CDT
Friday, April 5 4 p.m. CDT
Friday, April 5 7 p.m. CDT

El Paso Rhinos Uno Seis (4) v. Amarillo Bombers (5)
Rochester Lancers (2) vs. Iowa Raptors (7)
Iowa Demon Hawks (1) vs. St. Louis Ambush 2 (8)
Wichita Wings (3) vs. Atletico Orlando (6)



MASL 2 SEMIFINALS

Consolation games will be played at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturday. Matchups will be determined after Friday's results are known; every effort will be made to match teams up that are not in the same division as they played in during the regular season.

Semifinals will be at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday. Saturday,

CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

There will be a consolation final game at 1 p.m. Sunday to determine the league's third place finisher, and the M2 Championship Game will kickoff at 4 p.m. CDT. All playoff games will be played at Hartman Arena, Park City, Kansas, and hosted by the



Wichita Wings. All games will be broadcast live on line, free of charge. Check the M2 social media site or your favorite team's social sites for the latest broadcast information and links.

Eight teams– including some of the most iconic names in the history of indoor soccer – will be vying for the Major Arena Soccer League 2 championship this weekend at Hartman Arena in Park City, Kansas.

Both the Wichita Wings, who are hosting, and the Rochester Lancers, are franchises that date back decades. The Wings, in particular, have a well-storied history that dates back to the early 1980s. Despite remarkable on and off field success – the Wings have led M2 in attendance every year since joining the league – Wichita has never been able to claim a pro indoor soccer championship, setting up a possible historic weekend for the Wings and their fans.

Wichita finished the regular season at 11-0-1, their only blemish coming in an overtime loss to the Amarillo Bombers. But two teams, the Lancers and Iowa Demon Hawks will provide huge tests for whomever they match up against. The Demon Hawks became the fourth team in the seven-year history of M2 to post a perfect 12-0 mark. Several weeks after they did that, the Lancers turned the same trick, completing the fifth M2 regular-season “perfecto”.

The Demon Hawks and Lancers, at least on paper, couldn't be closer. While they each won 12, Iowa scored 156 to 146 for Rochester, with the Demon Hawks recording a goal differential of +104 while the Lancers was +98. They have both the leading scorers and goaltenders in the league on their respective rosters.

But Wichita will have the home field advantage, having won the right to host the playoffs in a competitive bid process last fall. Three teams submitted bids to host M2's championship weekend, with the Wings the overwhelming choice of the league's teams to host.

The Wings themselves scored 122 goals and had a goal differential of +52. They will be looking to turn around a disappointing result at the end of the 2020-21 season when they also hosted the post-season. The Wings advance to the title game before falling to the Cleveland Crunch, 11-6.

Not to be forgotten are the Amarillo Bombers, always entertaining and high scoring, having pumped in 121 goals this year, led by last year M2 Playoff MVP Rene Loya. The Bombers were a final four team last season.

El Paso, in their first season, came barreling down the tracks late in the season to impress onlookers, having won seven of their last eight games by a cumulative score of 96-46. Their lone loss came at Hartman Arena in a tight, tense struggle, 5-4 on March 9.

The Iowa Raptors come in with championship pedigree, having advanced all the way to the M2 Championship Game just last season, with two first-year teams, Atletico Orlando and the St. Louis Ambush 2 will look to play spoiler.

“These eight teams earned their way here, and all eight are great representatives of the game and the league on and off the field,” M2 Commissioner Chris Economides said. “We’ve had highly entertaining and competitive games in our recent playoff history and we don’t think this weekend will be any different. In fact, I don’t think there’s ever been a more wide open field when it comes to the semifinals and finals that we have this year. Wings fans will be out in large numbers I’m sure and will be in for an entertaining weekend.”

The pool of officials for the 10 weekend games include M2 Head of Referees Graeme Florence, along with Drew Klemp, Jeff Johnson, Habeen Hooshmand, Muhammad Kaleia, Kyle Armstrong, Brian Bauer, Brian Auten, Joe Macht, Nick Gurrero, Nate Colling, Troy Manzi, Kelly Story, Willie Tucker, Eric Glover and Stephanie Iwata.

PAST M2 CHAMPIONSHIPS

2017-18 – Chicago Mustangs defeat San Diego Sockers 2, 7-0

2018-19 – San Diego Sockers 2 defeat Cuervos de Juarez, 7-2

2019-20 – Chihuahua Savage regular season champs, no playoffs, COVID outbreak

2020-21 – Cleveland Crunch defeat Wichita Wings, 11-6

2021-22 – San Diego Sockers 2 defeat Cleveland Crunch, 7-4

2022-23 – Chihuahua Savage 2 defeat Iowa Raptors, 10-4.



STANDINGS / STATS

2023-24 Season

(FINAL REGULAR SEASON)

| | GP | W | L | OTL | PTS | RW | GF | GA | DIF |
|--|----|---|---|-----|-----|----|----|----|-----|
|--|----|---|---|-----|-----|----|----|----|-----|

>>East Division

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|-----|----|-----|
| y - Rochester Lancers | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 12 | 146 | 48 | +98 |
| x - Atletico Orlando* | 11 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 15 | 4 | 60 | 98 | -38 |
| Baltimore Arsenal | 11 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 53 | 93 | -40 |
| United Elite Krajisnik FC | 12 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 68 | 88 | -20 |

*Includes two games ruled as forfeit wins for Orlando over United Elite, and one forfeit win over Baltimore

>>North Division

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|-----|-----|------|
| y - Iowa Demon Hawks | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 12 | 156 | 52 | +104 |
| x - Iowa Raptors | 12 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 15 | 5 | 78 | 107 | -29 |
| x - St. Louis Ambush 2 | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 12 | 4 | 77 | 111 | -34 |
| Muskegon Risers | 12 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 64 | 105 | -43 |

>>Midwest Division

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|---|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| y - Wichita Wings | 12 | 11 | 0 | 1 | 34 | 11 | 122 | 70 | +52 |
| x - El Paso Rhinos U. Seis | 12 | 8 | 4 | 0 | 24 | 8 | 128 | 113 | +15 |
| x - Amarillo Bombers | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 20 | 6 | 114 | 91 | +20 |
| Kansas Bandits | 12 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 81 | 135 | -54 |
| New Mexico Runners | 12 | 1 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 90 | 142 | -52 |

x - clinched playoff spot

y - clinched regular season division title and playoff spot

Teams receive three points for a regulation time win (RW), two points for a win in overtime, one point for an overtime loss (OTL), and no points for a loss in regulation time. Teams play a 12-game regular season.

Standings and playoff tiebreakers: POINTS > REGULATION WINS > WINS > HEAD TO GROUP > GOAL DIFFERENTIAL > GOALS FOR > GOALS AGAINST

2023-24 MASL 2 GOAL LEADERS

| <u>Player</u> | <u>Team</u> | <u>Goals</u> | <u>GP</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Angel Lopez | Kansas Bandits | 34 | 12 |
| Rene Loya | Amarillo Bombers | 29 | 12 |
| Ali Alomari | Rochester Lancers | 28 | 11 |
| Bruno Henrique | Iowa Demon Hawks | 26 | 12 |
| Mehrshad Ahmadi | Wichita Wings | 25 | 12 |
| Ricardo Diegues | Iowa Demon Hawks | 24 | 9 |
| David Trevizo | Amarillo Bombers | 22 | 12 |

2023-24 MASL 2 ASSISTS LEADERS

| <u>Player</u> | <u>Team</u> | <u>Assists</u> | <u>GP</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Thiago Frietas | Iowa Demon Hawks | 26 | 12 |
| Bruno Henrique | Iowa Demon Hawks | 24 | 12 |
| Kevin Ten Eyck | Wichita Wings | 19 | 12 |
| Jake Schindler | Rochester Lancers | 18 | 11 |
| Ricardo Diegues | Iowa Demon Hawks | 16 | 9 |
| Eduardo "Benji" Monreal | Amarillo Bombers | 14 | 8 |
| Miguel Reyes | Amarillo Bombers | 13 | 9 |

2023-24 MASL 2 TOTAL POINTS LEADERS

| <u>Player</u> | <u>Team</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>GP</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Bruno Henrique | Iowa Demon Hawks | 50 | 12 |
| Thiago Freitas | Iowa Demon Hawks | 46 | 12 |
| Ali Alomari | Rochester Lancers | 40 | 11 |
| Ricardo Diegues | Iowa Demon Hawks | 40 | 9 |
| Angel Lopez | Kansas Bandits | 39 | 12 |
| Rene Loya | Amarillo Bombers | 38 | 10 |
| Mehrshad Ahmadi | Wichita Wings | 36 | 12 |
| Joao Vitor | Iowa Demon Hawks | 33 | 12 |

2023-24 MASL 2 GOALS AGAINST AVERAGE LEADERS

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|------|
| Jacob Mitchell | Rochester Lancers | 3.52 |
| Rainer Hauss | Iowa Demon Hawks | 3.80 |
| Jose Ocampo | Wichita Wings | 5.29 |
| Jorge Ortiz | Atletico Orlando | 8.02 |

Alejandro Sosa Baltimore Arsenal 8.23

2023-24 MASL 2 GOALKEEPER WINS

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----|
| Rainer Hauss | Iowa Demon Hawks | 12 |
| Jose Ocampo | Wichita Wings | 8 |
| Jakeb Mitchell | Rochester Lancers | 8 |
| Fredo Chavez | Amarillo Bombers | 7 |

2023-24 MASL 2 GOALKEEPER SAVES PERCENTAGE

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|------|
| Rainer Hauss | Iowa Demon Hawks | .825 |
| Jose Ocampo | Wichita Wings | .756 |
| Jakeb Mitchell | Rochester Lancers | .741 |
| Alejandro Sosa | Baltimore Arsenal | .647 |
| Jorge Ortiz | Atletico Orlando | .637 |
| Nate Yeager | New Mexico Runners | .590 |

>> *Note: Goalkeepers must have appeared in at least 50 percent of their team's games to qualify for GK category leaders*



>> **2022-23 RECORD:** 7-5 (20 points)

>> **GOALS FOR:** 128 (3rd in league)

>> **GOALS AGAINST:** 112 (11th)

>> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL:** +16 (5th)

>> **COACH:** Chad Webb

>> **WEBSITE:** www.amarillobombers.com

>> **FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/amarillobombersfc/

>> **MOST RECENT:** Once again, the Bombers finished 2023-24 with a

winning record, and are back in the playoffs for a second straight season. Their 7-5 mark



this year was good for third in the Midwest Division. They finished the season with two road losses in El Paso, one by just one goal, which snapped a three-game win streak prior.

>> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** This is the fifth year of pro indoor soccer in Amarillo as the Bombers have been near the top of the M2 standings in each of their five campaigns, and have finished with a better than .500 record every season. They played in the M2 championship weekend in Wichita in the summer of 2021, falling to the Cleveland Crunch who eventually won the M2 title, 12-6 in the semi-finals, Last season, the Bombers playoff appearance included two losses, including a semi-finals loss to the Iowa Raptors, 10-6. 21 goals as well. Amarillo scored the game's first goal, but Iowa ripped off nine straight to take the suspense out of things in the third quarter after leading 4-1 at intermission. Amarillo outshot the Raptors, 32-24. Miguel Reyes had three goals and one assist. David Trevizo added two goals and an assist. In the consolation finals last year, the Bombers fell to the Wichita Wings, 13-5 at Mesquite Arena in Texas. Again, Amarillo had more shots on goal than their opponents, 27-26, but Wichita had a 5-2 lead at the break and rolled from there. Jorge Gonzalez and Kevin Alvidrez had two goals each.

| Season | GP | W | L | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------|----|----|---|------|-----|-----|---|
| 2023-24 | 12 | 7 | 5 | .571 | 128 | 112 | (No. 5 seed in playoffs) |
| 2022-23 | 12 | 10 | 2 | .833 | 146 | 91 | (No. 1 seed in playoffs, lost in semis) |
| 2021-22 | 12 | 7 | 5 | .571 | 121 | 111 | (Did not qualify for playoffs) |
| 2020-21 | 11 | 6 | 5 | .545 | 80 | 86 | (Lost in semifinals) |
| 2019-20 | 12 | 7 | 5 | .583 | 92 | 92 | (No playoffs due to pandemic) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

>> **December 22, Wichita 8, Amarillo 5:** The Bombers were in tough in their opener, having to travel to Wichita to open against the Wings. Amarillo was as close as 6-4 late in the third quarter, but could get no closer. Amarillo outshot Wichita 41-29. Kevin Machado was the only multi-point scorer for the Bombers with a goal and one assist.

>> **January 6, Amarillo 10, Kansas 8:** Amarillo has always been very good at the Amarillo Civic Center, and opened their home schedule with another win, albeit a nail biter. Lansas scored four straight goals in the fourth quarter to pull within one, but could not find the equalizer. Rene Loya had four goals and one assist, while Alan Valenzuela had a hat trick.

>> **January 6, Amarillo 14, New Mexico 7:** Despite a quick turnaround, Amarillo still found plenty of offense in Albuquerque to conquer the Runners. As close as New Mexico could get was two goals in the first minute of the fourth quarter as Amarillo held a 28-26 edge in shots on goal. Vince Aragon led the attack with three goals and two assists.

>> **January 20, Amarillo 8, New Mexico 7:** One again, the Runners proved very tough, but the Bombers got their second straight home win, out shooting New Mexico 30-25. David Trevizo had the hat trick while Pablo Magallanes had a goal and three assists.

- >> **January 27, Wichita 13, Amarillo 11:** Wichita went to Amarillo to get the win, out shooting the Bombers 35-33. Amarillo led 6-3 at the break, but gave up 10 second half goals. Rene Loya had four goals and one assist while David Trevizo had two goals and two assists.
- >> **January 28, Amarillo 13, Wichita 12:** The Bombers turned the tables on the back end of the weekend doubleheader, winning in overtime. It was Wichita's only loss of the season. Rene Loya got the game winner less than four minutes into OT. David Trevizo forced overtime by scoring with three seconds to go in regulation. Once again, Loya had four goals and one assist while Eduard "Benji" Monreal contributed a goal and five assists, including his last one on the game winner. Alan Valenzuela and Trevizo each had hat tricks. Wichita outshot Amarillo 37-32.
- >> **February 3, Kansas 12, Amarillo 11:** A late rally – two goals within 90 seconds of each other late in the fourth – fell short for Amarillo at Hartman Arena in Park City, despite outshooting the host Bandits 53-28. Miguel Reyes had a hat trick and Alan Valenzuela had two goals and three assists.
- >> **March 8, Amarillo 16, Kansas 5:** Back home in Texas, the Bombers had their way with the Bandits in this one, scoring the game's first five goals, and nine of the game's first 10, outshooting Kansas 35-27. Rene Loya had a big game with four goals and three assists. David Trevizo had four goals and one assist.
- >> **March 9, Amarillo 12, Kansas 5:** Amarillo secured a home doubleheader sweep behind the efforts of Rene Loya again who had four goals and one assist. Amarillo peppered 42 shots on goal.
- >> **March 11, Amarillo 14, New Mexico 11:** B The Bombers closed out the home portion of their schedule with an entertaining win, outshooting New Mexico 38-24. . Five unanswered goals in the first – after the Runners had opened the scoring – set the tone for the rest of the night. David Trevizo led the offense with five goals and seven assists.
- >> **March 17, El Paso 13, Amarillo 7:** Jorge Gonzalez and Rene Loya each had two goals and one assist, but it was not enough to overcome the Rhinos Uno Seis. El Paso held the edge in shots at 33-21.
- >> **March 18, El Paso 8, Amarillo 7:** In what would prove to be a preview of one of this weekend's quarter-final matchups, El Paso hung on for a one-goal win. Amarillo scored four straight goals, the last of which came with 9:17 to go to pull within a goal, but they never could find the tying goal. Both teams had 20 shots on goal. Rene Loya had three goals and Jorge Gonzalez two for Amarillo.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

- >> **RENE LOYA:** A gifted finisher, Loya also has impressive championship pedigree. He was last year's Chico Borja M2 Playoffs MVP award winner in leading the Chihuahua Savage 2 to the league crown last year. He netted 34 goals and had 10 assists in 12 starts this season, No less than five times he scored four goals in a game, and he also had two hat tricks. IN two playoff games for Chihuahua last year, he had six goals and two assists after getting 19

goals and five assists in 10 games in the regular season ... had four-game winning goals this year.

>> **MIGUEL REYES:** He was tied for lead league in total points with 48, second in league scoring with 25 goals a year ago, and followed that up with 11 goals and 13 assists in 10 starts in 202-24... A native of Canyon, Texas .. In five years, has exactly 60 goals and 40 assists in 48 regular season games played ... Has three goals and two assists in three playoff games ... Best game can January 7th against New Mexico with three goals and two assists.

>> **DAVID TREVIZO:** Second leading scorer with 23 goals and eight assists, which looks remarkably similar to his 2022-23 regular season when he was also the team's second leading scorer with 22 goals and 13 assists ... native of Chihuahua, Mexico, played three games for Savage in 2019-20 season ... Had five goals and two assists in a March 7 win over New Mexico .. Had seven multi-point games in 2023-24

>> **EDUARDO 'BENJI' MONREAL:** Has been the team's best playmaker this year with 19 assists to go along with eight goals ... Has played in 12 games for the MASL Kansas City Comets with four goals and three assists ... Native of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico ... Has also played M2 with the Wichita Wings and Chihuahua Savage 2 ... In 29 career M2 games, has 29 goals and 33 assists ... Had five assists in a game this season against Wichita on January 28.



>> **RECORD:** 6-6

>> **GOALS FOR:** 67 (11th in league)

>> **GOALS AGAINST:** 102 (7th)

>> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL:** -35 (9th)

>> **COACH:** Alex Torres

>> **WEBSITE:** www.atletico-orlando.com

>> **FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083269686022>

>> **MOST RECENT:** This is Orlando's first season in M2.

>> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** Atletico Orlando were M2 road warriors this season, playing all 12 of its games on the road while it readies a home field for the 2024-25 season. This arrangement was approved unanimously by all the teams in the East Division ... They



clinched the No. 6 seed with a 7-4 win on March 30 at Towson Arena in defeating the Baltimore Arsenal, another first-year M2 team. .. Victor Rada has proven to be their most dangerous offensive threat, with 15 goals on the year ... Eduardo Cruz had two shorthanded goals this year ... Gianpaolo Sirizzotti led the defensive effort with 13 blocks ... Rada's best game this season came on March 16 in Utica where he scored five goals and added one assist ... Regular season record includes three forfeit wins. Two were against United Elite, who it was learned after the games, had inadvertently played an ineligible player. Stats from those two games, however, were counted. Orlando also got a 1-0 forfeit win over Baltimore on March 29 because of arena issues in Baltimore.

| Season | GP | W | L | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|
| 2023-24 | 11 | 6 | 6 | .500 | 67 | 102 | (No. 6 seed in playoffs) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

- >> **January 6, Orlando 9, United Elite 7:** Orlando won it's first ever M2 start, getting hat tricks from Eduardo Ruiz and Lucas Pietrolunogo.
- >> **January 7, United Elite 6, Orlando 5:** Victor Rada had his best game of the season, scoring four times, but it wasn't quite enough.
- >> **February 2, Rochester 12, Orlando 4:** Orlando actually jumped to a 2-0 lead in the first 10 minutes, but the host Lancers scored 12 of the games next 13 goals to pull away. Rochester outshot Orlando, 47-24. Juan Reyes led the offense with two goals.
- >> **February 3, Rochester 10, Orlando 4:** Rochester left little doubt in this one, racing to a 5-0 lead by early in the second quarter, outshooting Orlando in the game 41-29. Rodrigo Kauffman and Juan Reyes each had a goal and an assist.
- >> **March 8, Rochester 15, Orlando 2:** Off for over a month, the rust showed in a lopsided loss to Rochester, who led 11-1 at intermission. Rochester had 51 shots on goal, to 31 for Orlando.
- >> **March 9, Rochester 16, Orlando 3:** The second half of the double dip was no better as Orlando fell by 13 for the second straight night. It was actually a 2-1 game after 15 minutes, but Rochester scored five unanswered in the second quarter to pull away. Daniel Aular had two goals for Atletico.
- >> **March 16 and March 17:** Two games against Utica's United Elite were declared forfeit wins for Orlando after it was determined after the games had finished that Utica had inadvertently used an ineligible player. However, the stats from both games counted for each individual player. On March 16, United Elite won in overtime 14-13. Orlando was led by Victor Rada with five goals and one assist. On March 17, Orlando turned the tables, grabbing a 5-4 triumph. Eduardo Cruz got the game winner in overtime, less than four minutes in. Juan Reyes led Orlando with two goals.
- >> **March 24, Orlando 8, Baltimore 5:** Despite being outshot 35-27, Orlando never trailed in picking up the win. Eduardo Cruz and Jose Reyes each scored twice for Orlando. Reyes also picked up an assist

>> **March 25. Baltimore 9, Orlando 7:** Another weekend split, as the Arsenal rallied after giving up the first two goals of the game. Rodrigo Kauffman led the way for Orlando with a hat trick. Victor Rada scored twice.

>> **March 29 and March 30:** Orlando was scheduled again to play in Baltimore, but arena issues led Friday's game to be decided as a forfeit win for Orlando. On Saturday, Orlando secured the sixth seed for the 2023-24 playoffs with a 7-4 win. Baltimore blasted 36 shots on goal, with Orlando netminder Ricardo Atencio earning first-star of the game honors with his 19 saves. Rodrigo Kauffman, Charly Vargas and Eduardo Cruz each had a goal and one assist.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

>> **EDUARDO CRUZ:** Has dominated on offense, with 15 goals to lead Orlando ... A veteran of 42 regular season games in the Major Arena Soccer League with the Orlando SeaWolves, scoring 11 goals and adding 10 assists ... Attended Bellhaven University from 2012-2014, scoring 15 goals and adding 12 assists in 48 games played for the Blazers, winning an NAIA championship in 2012 ... Is an assistant soccer coach at Palm Beach Atlantic University Also played eight games for the Central Florida Crusaders of the National Indoor Soccer League, scoring 18 goals and adding nine assists ... has appeared in seven games for Orlando this year. The defender has seven goals and four assists. Two of his goals have been shorthanded.

>> **VICTOR RADA:** Leads all Orlando scorers with 15 goals this year, including a five-goal performance March 16 against United Elite ... Had a four-goal game Jan. 7 in Utica against United Elite ... Has appeared in six Major Arena Soccer League games with the Milwaukee Wave and Orlando SeaWolves, scoring one goal.

>> **JUAN REYES:** Has been a steady offensive contributor, netting eight goals and chipping in with seven assists ... Has scored one power play goal and added five blocked shots, had a long and successful career in the Major Arena Soccer League, playing in 98 regular season games with the Rochester Lancers, Syracuse Silver Knights, and most recently for six seasons with the Florida Tropics. He has 82 career blocks and 12 points. He also has appeared in eight MASL playoff games.

EL PASO RHINOS UNO SEIS

>> *Second Place Midwest Division*



- >> **RECORD:** 8-4
- >> **GOALS FOR:** 118 (5th in league)
- >> **GOALS AGAINST:** 79 (4th)
- >> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL:** +39 (9th)
- >> **COACH:**
- >> **WEBSITE:** https://twitter.com/RhinoFC_MASL2
- >> **MOST RECENT:** This is El Paso's first season in M2.
- >> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** The Rhinos Uno Seis come



in on a hot streak, and as the number four seed, will provide some stiff competition this weekend in Wichita. They won back-to-back games over Amarillo to close the season in a pair of games played in El Paso, and come in as the fifth leading scoring team in M2, while allowing the fourth fewest goals. El Paso comes in having won seven of its last eight games, with the lone loss coming by a single goal at Wichita on March 9. They have reached double digits in goals five times this year and were a perfect 6-0 at La Frontera Indoor Soccer, their home field in El Paso.

HOW THEY GOT HERE

- >> **December 30, El Paso 13, New Mexico 8:** The Rhinos showed they would be a tough out in M2 this year, defeating New Mexico on the road, 13-8. The Runners led 4-2 midway through the second, but it was pretty much all El Paso from there, including five unanswered goals in the fourth quarter to snap a 7-7 tie. El Paso led in shots, 35-20. Edgar Perez had four goals and two assists while Mario Arietta chipped in with three goals and one assist.
- >> **January 6, Wichita 10, El Paso 3:** El Paso's first trip to Hartman Arena wasn't one to remember, as the Wings scored six times in the first quarter. Wichita outshot El Paso 40-39.
- >> **January 13, Wichita 7, El Paso 2:** Wichita put the defensive clamps on El Paso for a second straight weekend at Hartman Arena, as the Wings took a 6-0 lead into the fourth quarter before Edgar Perez broke up the shutout bid of Jose Ocampo. Wichita outshot the Rhinos, 30-29.

- >> **January 14, Kansas 8, El Paso 6** Hartman Arena continued to be a hostile field as Kansas scored five straight after the Rhinos had taken a 3-1 lead early. El Paso outshout Kansas, 42-24. Alvaro Luevano had two goals to lead El Paso.
- >> **January 20, El Paso 11, Kansas 3:** El Paso finally got to enjoy some home cooking, and won their home opener in relatively easy fashion. Alvaro Luevano had a big night with four goals and three assists. Javier Rodriguez added three goals and two assists.
- January 21, El Paso 16, Kansas 6:** El Paso led 8-2 at the break and was never threatened. Mario Arietta and Luevano each had hat tricks.
- >> **February 8, El Paso 8, New Mexico 3:** El Paso continued its turn around in Albuquerque, taking a 5-0 lead to the second half. Pedro Castaneda had three goals and one assist while teammate Javier Cordoza added two goals.
- >> **February 24, El Paso 17, New Mexico 8:** El Paso's offensive resurgence continued with six goals in the first quarter and an 11-2 lead at intermission. Mario Arietta had five goals and Jamie Romero had a hat trick.
- >> **February 25, El Paso 17, New Mexico 7:** Another big offensive show by the Rhinos, led by their eight goals in the second quarter. Elmer Portillo had a hat trick while Mario Arietta added four goals for a nine-goal weekend.
- >> **March 9, Wichita 5, El Paso 4:** This one was a tight, tense battle from the start, with El Paso holding an edge in shots, 33-28. The Wings took an early 3-1, but El Paso battled back to tie the game 4-4 on a goal by Edgar Mercado with just over 11 minutes to play. However, Wichita got the game winner from Colin Lawler with 5:20 to go. Wings netminder Aaron Parrott was the game's first star with 22 saves.
- >> **March 16, El Paso 13, Amarillo 7:** The Rhinos outshot Amarillo, 33-21, and took a 7-4 lead at the half, Amarillo never got closer than two goals the rest of the way. Mario Arietta led the way with a hat trick.
- >> **March 17, El Paso 8, Amarillo 7:** El Paso never trailed in this one, and had to hold on late as the Bombers scored the game's last four goals, the last with more than nine minutes to go in the fourth, but there was no more scoring. Edgar Perez had three goals while Diego Salas and Jose Moreno had two goals each.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

- >> **MARIO ARIETTA:** Is El Paso's biggest offensive threat he has 21 goals in 10 games, including a nine-goal weekend against New Mexico. He played one game for the El Paso Coyotes of the MASL in 2016.
- >> **ALVARO LUEVANO:** Another productive player, he has appeared in six games with 15 points on nine goals and six assists ... He is a veteran of 24 games with the Major Arena Soccer League's Chihuahua Savage where he scored 15 points (seven goals, eight assists) over two seasons.

>> **EDGAR PEREZ:** Although he only appeared in eight games, he scored 10 goals, including a hat trick against Amarillo on March 17, bookended by a four-goal game in El Paso's season opener against New Mexico ... Has the distinction of scoring the first goal in team history.



- >> **RECORD:** 12-0
- >> **VENUE:** Buccaneer Arena, Des Moines, Iowa
- >> **COACH:** Tiago Coutinho
- >> **GOALS FOR 156** (1st in league)
- >> **GOALS AGAINST: 52** (2nd)
- >> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL: +104** (1st)
- >> **WEBSITE:** www.wichitawingsoccer.com
- >> **FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/WichitaWingsSoccer
- >> **CONTACT:** Darwin Salas, owner, at darwinsalas@aol.com
- >> **MOST RECENT:** Moving to their home city of Des Moines, the Demon Hawks recorded the fourth perfect regular season in M2's seven-year history, and led the league in scoring and goal differential.
- >> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** The Demon Hawks are making their first trip to the post-season – after last year when they played their home games at the Alliant Energy Powerhouse in Cedar Rapids. Relying on a handful of star Major Arena Soccer League players from the past and present, the Demon Hawks math works out pretty well as they were first in goals scored, second in goals allowed, and first in goal differential for all M2 teams ... Demon Hawks were 7-4-1 last year and missed out of the then four-team playoff in 2022-23 .. Former MASL Florida Tropics standouts Ricardo Diegues, Thiago Freitas, Bruno Henrique and goalkeeper Rainer Hauss have backstopped the Hawks this year. Henrique led the league in scoring with 50 points, including 26 goals and 14 assists. In two M2 seasons, he has 47 goals and 36 assist in just 23 games. IDiegues, who also played for the MASL Baltimore Blast in 2023-24, appeared in nine games and scored 24 goals to go along with 16 assists, tied for fourth among all scorers in M2 with 40 points. In two M2 seasons, he has appeared in 17 games with 39 goals and 28 assists. Freitas is a top level playmaker, and led



the team in assists this year with 26, also tops in M2. Along with his 20 goals, he was second in the league in points with 46. In his two years with Iowa, he has played in 21 games with 28 goals and 43 assists. Goalkeeper Rainer Hauss is also in his second year with Iowa, and has a career goals against average of 4.70 and saves percentage of .820. This year, he won all 12 of the Demon Hawks games, posting a 3.80 goals against average, second in the league, and .829 saves percentage, first in the league ... Deadly on the powerplay, having converted at a staggering 96 percent rate. ... Team hit double digits in goals in 10 of their 12 wins.

| Season | GP | W | L | OTL | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------|----|----|---|-----|-------|-----|----|--------------------------------|
| 2022-23 | 12 | 7 | 4 | 1 | .583 | 94 | 76 | (Did not qualify for playoffs) |
| 2023-24 | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0 | .1000 | 156 | 52 | (No. 1 playoff seed) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

- >> **Dec. 8, Demon Hawks 11, Iowa Raptors 7** : This was the season opener for M2, with the Demon Hawks riding four consecutive goals in the second quarter to the win. Rainer Hauss makes 33 saves as the Raptors outshoot the Hawks, 62-31. Diego Pantuza leads the way with three goals and two assists.
- >> **Dec. 22, Demon Hawks 15, Muskegon 5**: The Hawks scored nine times in the second quarter as Ricardo Diegues finishes with three goals and four assists. Gustavo Souza adds three goals and one assist.
- >> **Dec. 23, Demon Hawks 11, Muskegon 2**: The Risers led 1-0 after the first, but five unanswered goals in the second sent the Demon Hawks in flight. Bruno Henrique nets four, Diego Pantuza had three goals and one assist. Joao Vitor had four assists.
- >> **Dec. 30, Demon Hawks 18, St. Louis 8**: This was the second highest goal total in one game for Iowa, as they got huge contributions from their stars. Henrique has a seven-point game with four goals and three assists as did Thiago Freitas with three goals and four assists while Diegues added four goals and two assists.
- >> **Dec. 31, Demon Hawks 13, St. Louis 4**: Playing the last of five straight home games in December, the Hawks get two goals and three assists from Ricardo Diegues, and three goals and one assist from Thiago Freitas. Rainer Hauss makes 26 saves in the win.
- >> **Jan. 20, Demon Hawks 16, Raptors 2**: The Raptors led 2-1 with six minutes to go in the first, but the Demon Hawks go on a tear, scoring 15 unanswered goals in their first road game. Ricardo Diegues sets the high water mark for points in a game this season in M2 play with nine on seven goals and two assists. Joao Vitor had a hat trick.
- >> **February 2, Demon Hawks 9, Muskegon 3**: Only one of two games Iowa did not reach double digits in scoring. Nonetheless, Thiago Freitas gets four points on a goal and three assists. Rainer Hauss is games first star with 16 saves.
- >> **February 3, Demon Hawks 8, Muskegon 6**: Risers hold Hawks to single digits for second straight day, and Iowa has its smallest margin of victory all year at just two goals. Hauss

makes 37 saves as Muskegon outshoots the visitors 45-27. Diego Pantuza and Bruno Henrique get two goals each.

>> **February 10, Demon Hawks 10, St. Louis 5:** At the Family Arena in suburban St. Louis, Lucas Silva led the attack with three goals and one assist. Thiago Freitas also chipped in with a pair of scores.

>> **February 25, Demon Hawks 11, Raptors 3:** Returning to Cedar Rapids Luan Silva had a hat trick and Bruno Henrique had three goals and one assist. The game was tied 3-3 early in the second before Hawks closed with eight unanswered.

>> **March 8, Demon Hawks 14, St. Louis 5:** The Hawks led 8-1 at intermission and cruised from there. Bruno Henrique had three goals and four assists while teammate Thiago Freitas had four goals and one assist. Hauss makes 35 saves as St. Louis has a big edge in shots, 48-32.

>> **March 16, Demon Hawks 20, Raptors 2:** Hawks closed out the season with their highest goal output of the season, led by Ricardo Diegues and Joao Vitor with four each. Bruno Henrique had the hat trick, and Thiago Freitas had a goal and six assists.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

>> **BRUNO HENRIQUE** – Has appeared in 23 career games in the Major Arena Soccer League, part of the big Demon Hawks connection with the Florida Tropics who played seven seasons in the MASL. Scored 14 goals and has 12 assists. Was an All MASL Rookie Team selection in 2020-21 ... Played collegiately at Southeastern University, Grandview University and Lindsey Wilson College.

>> **RICARDO DIEGUES:** Is the most decorated MASL veteran on the Demon Hawks roster ... has played for the Baltimore Blast, Brownsville Barracudas, Utica City FC and Florida Tropics (five seasons), appearing in 102 regular season games, scoring 122 goals and adding 53 assists ... Also has played in 14 MASL playoff games with 11 goals and 10 assists.

>> **THIAGO FREITAS:** Also a MASL stalwart, in his career has played for the Florida Tropics, Harrisburg Heat and Orlando SeaWolves. Played in 72 games with 42 goals and 62 assists ... In five career MASL playoff starts, has five goals and three assists ... Winner of 2023-24 M2 Offensive Player of the Year award.

>> **RAINER HAUSS:** Backstopped the Florida Tropics to the MASL Finals in 2021-22, and was sensational with a 3.81 goals against average and .822 saves percentage in five starts ... In his MASL career, has played with the Cedar Rapids Rampage, Orlando SeaWolves and Tropics, appearing in 36 games with a 5.96 goals against average and a .713 saves percentage.



- >> **RECORD:** 5-7
- >> **COACH:** Curt Lewis
- >> **GOALS FOR 78** (8th in league)
- >> **GOALS AGAINST: 107** (8th)
- >> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL: -29** (7th)
- >> **WEBSITE:** www.iowaraptorsfc.com
- >> **FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/iaraptorsfc/>
- >> **CONTACT:** info@iowaraptorsfc.com
- >> **MOST RECENT:** Second straight appearance in M2 playoffs, reaching the finals last year ... 5-7 regular season in 2023-24 good for second in the North Division.



>> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** Although this is the Raptors second season of play in Major Arena Soccer League 2, the pro indoor game is no stranger in Cedar Rapids. The Rampage played in the Major Arena Soccer League for three seasons from 2015-2018, compiling an overall record of 28-34 while playing at U.S. Cellular Arena, which is now the Alliant Energy Power House. The Raptors organization first debuted in 2019, with a men's team in the United Premier Soccer League ... Advanced to the M2 Championship game last season where they fell to the Chihuahua Savage 2 by a 10-4 final at Mesquite Arena. It was a 1-1 game after 15 minutes, but five unanswered goals in the second and third quarters was too much for Iowa to overcome as they were outshot 35-15. ... Won the East Division last year with a 7-5-2 mark; were second in the North Division this year ... Come into this year's playoffs having lost four in a row.

| Season | GP | W | L | OTL | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------|----|---|---|-----|------|----|-----|----------------------|
| 2022-23 | 12 | 7 | 3 | 2 | .639 | 82 | 89 | (Advanced to Finals) |
| 2023-24 | 12 | 5 | 7 | 0 | .417 | 78 | 107 | (No. 7 playoff seed) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

- >> **Dec. 8, Iowa Demon Hawks 11, Iowa Raptors 7:** : This was the season opener for M2, with the Raptors falling behind 9-3 at intermission in Des Moines. Angelo Oquendo had a pair of goals as did teammate Sergei Wawrzyniak.
- >> **Dec. 22, St. Louis Ambush 12, Iowa Raptors 9:** The Ambush spoiled the Raptors home opener, despite two goals from Nico Williams as well as a pair from Sarrive Rukakiza for the Raptors.
- >> **Dec. 23, Iowa Raptors 7, St. Louis Ambush 2:** The Raptors broke through with a big defensive effort while Angelo Oquendo and Isiah Thomas each scored twice.
- >> **Dec 28, Iowa Raptors 9, St. Louis Ambush 1:** The third of three straight at Alliant Energy Powerhouse gave the Raptors the rubber game, cruising in another good defensive effort. Haakon Utesch gave up a goal 10 minutes into the first quarter, but nothing the rest of the way. Angelo Oquendo had a goal and three assists while Nico Williams had two scores.
- >> **Jan. 6, Iowa Raptors 12, Muskegon Risers 5:** The Raptors hit the road for a third straight victory as Iowa led just 2-1 at intermission before exploding for six unanswered goals in the third quarter. Bobby Hurwitz led the way with four goals while Nico Williams had two.
- >> **Jan. 20, Iowa Demon Hawks 16, Iowa Raptors 2:** The Raptors actually led 2-1 10 minutes into the game on two goals by Patrick Kelly, but the Demon Hawks rolled from there with 15 straight goals.
- >> **Feb. 9, Iowa Raptors 8, Muskegon Risers 3:** Seven straight goals after conceding the first goal of the game to Muskegon was more than enough for the Raptors, who were led by Nico Williams with two goals and Pat Kelly with a goal and two assists.
- >> **Feb. 10, Iowa Raptors 10, Muskegon Risers 7:** Iowa broke a second quarter 3-3 tie with four of the game's next five goals to sweep a weekend home doubleheader from the Risers. Ian Kearney had two goals to lead the offense.
- >> **Feb. 25, Iowa Demon Hawks 11, Iowa Raptors 3:** Even home cooking couldn't help the Raptors in this one, as the Demon Hawks continued its march to a perfect season, as they scored seven straight to break a 3-3 tie one minute into the second quarter.
- .>> **March 8, Muskegon Risers 6, Iowa Raptors 5:** A furious rally fell just short as the Raptors scored four unanswered in the fourth quarter, within a span of less than 10 minutes, but ran out of time to finish the comeback. Five different Raptors scored the goals.
- >> **March 15, Iowa Demon Hawks 20, Iowa Raptors 2:** The Raptors surrendered the most goal of any game in the 2023-24 season in this one. The Hawks led 6-0 at intermission and poured it on from there. Enrique Homo broke the Hawks shutout bid five minutes into the third quarter at Buccaneer Arena.
- >> **March 17, St. Louis Ambush 12, Iowa Raptors 4:** Iowa was withing 4-3 five minutes into the third quarter, but the host Ambush 2 rallied for six unanswered to pull away. Matteo Anzallo and Merci Ngiriuseneza had two each for the Raptors.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

>> **ANGELO OQUENDO** – Has appeared in 14 regular season games over the past two years for Iowa with 17 goals and 12 assists ... Leads the team in scoring this year despite only dressing in seven games with seven goals and six assists ... Debuted with Raptors in late January, 2023, with four goals against Muskegon ... Appeared in 17 games scoring 28 goals for Triton College (NJCAA) in 2022.

>> **NICO WILLIAMS**: Is the team leader in goals with nine, and is second overall in points with 11, appearing in eight games.

>> **PATRICK KELLY**: Always a threat, and a veteran of the indoor game at the Major Arena Soccer League level ... Has nine points in eight games this year ... In two years with Raptors, has appeared 16 games with 14 goals and 11 assists ... Native of Kansas City, is an electrical engineer. Has played in the MASL with the Kansas City Comets and Cedar Rapids Rampage, appearing in 60 games in total with 21 goals and 16 assists.

>> **BOBBY HURWITZ**: Also a MASL veteran, Hurly appeared in 86 career regular season Major Arena Soccer League games with the Tacoma Stars, St. Louis Ambush, Orlando SeaWolves and Cedar Rapids Rampage. He scored 29 goals and added 16 assists ... Has appeared in 13 games for Iowa over the past two years with eight goals and seven assists ... He also has six appearances for the U.S. National Indoor Team ... Serves an assistant coach as well.



>> **RECORD**: 12-0

>> **COACH**: Jake Schindler

>> **GOALS FOR**: 146 (2nd in league)

>> **GOALS AGAINST**: 48 (1st)

>> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL**: +98 (2nd)

>> **WEBSITE**: www.rochesterlancers.com

>> **FACEBOOK**: <https://www.facebook.com/RLancers>

>> **CONTACT**: kayla@rochesterlancers.com

>> **MOST RECENT**: After missing out on the postseason last year

in a tiebreaker, Rochester left little doubt they are one of the teams to beat in 2023-24 by recording the fifth perfect regular season in league history at 12-0. It is the first Lancers



team ever – indoors or outdoors dating back to 1967 – to go undefeated in a regular season. They did it at both ends, allowing the fewest goals in M2 this year and scoring the second most in the league. Jakeb Mitchell in goal finished first in goals against (3.52), third in saves percentage (.741) and tied for second in wins (8).

>> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** The Lancers brand goes all the way back to 1967 when they debuted in the American Soccer League before moving to the North American Soccer League between in 1970. In 1995, “SoccerSam” Fantuzzo purchased the rights to the Lancers brand. In January, 1975, The Lancers hosted the New York Cosmos, Boston Minutemen and Hartford in an NASL regional indoor tournament, with more than 5,200 fans attending the two days of games. They also participated in four games of the 1976 NASL indoor tournament, winning three and advancing to the finals where they lost to the host Tampa Bay Rowdies. The Lancers have the distinction of playing before the largest crowd ever for a Rochester sporting event when 20,500 fans showed up in 1977 for a match against the New York Cosmos. Later that same season, the played before the largest crowd ever to watch a Rochester based team play when 74,000 Cosmos fans packed Giants Stadium for a Lancers visit. The Lancers returned to pro indoor soccer in 2011 finishing second in the Major Indoor Soccer League’s eastern division and played through the end of the 2014-15 season, with a combined four-year record of 37-53. The returned in 2018-19 to Major Arena Soccer League 2, going 8-4 and finishing third overall in the league. They moved up to the parent Major Arena Soccer League in 2019-20 when the season was cut short and playoffs canceled because of the Covid pandemic. Because the team’s arena was used a Covid vaccination site and other pandemic related matters, the team did not return to play until the 2022-23 M2 season, where they went 8-4 and tied for the regular season title in the East. However, the playoffs last year were only a four-team affair, and the Lancers missed out on a chance to go on a tiebreaker ... Reached double digits in goals 10 times this season, failing to reach that mark in their last two games after they clinched the East division title.

| Season | GP | W | L | OTL | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------|----|----|---|-----|-------|-----|----|--------------------------------|
| 2022-23 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 0 | .667 | 82 | 89 | (Did not qualify for playoffs) |
| 2023-24 | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0 | .1000 | 146 | 48 | (No. 2 playoff seed) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

>> **Jan. 13, Rochester 14, Baltimore 6:** The Lancers jumped to a 6-2 lead at the half and the Arsenal got no closer. Joey Tavernese, another MASL veteran, had three goals and one assist while Taner Bay added a hat trick.

>> **Jan. 21, Rochester 11, United Elite 4:** In Utica, Joey Tavernese (who was injured three games into the season) and Ali Alomari each had hat tricks as the Lancers built up a 7-2 lead at intermission.

>> **Jan. 28, Rochester 11, United Elite 6:** In a second straight trip to Utica, the Lancers spotted United Elite a four-goal lead in the first-half, only to rally with a nine-goal second half.

Taner Bay led the comeback from a 4-2 halftime deficit with three goals while Ali Alomari finished with two goals and three assists.

>> **Feb. 2, Rochester 12, Orlando 4:** Outshooting Orlando 47-24, the Lancers won their home opener by spotting Orlando an early 2-0 lead before scoring 12 of the game's next 14 goals. Tamas Nagy, Taner Bay, Konrad Zydowicz and Davinson Diaz all had two goals each.

>> **Feb. 3, Rochester 10, Orlando 4:** Rochester raced to a 5-0 lead in the first half and were never threatened. Ali Alomari had four goals and Ryan Curtis had a hat trick to lead the offensive attack.

>> **Feb 23, Rochester 12, Baltimore 3:** Home for a second weekend in February, Rochester led just 4-2 at intermission before scoring the first eight goals of the second half and outshot the Arsenal 50-26. Ali Alomari and Matt D'Amico both banged in three to lead the Lancers attack.

>> **Feb. 24, Rochester 15, Baltimore 5:** Rochester took 54 shots on goal (allowing 37), and scored five goals in the game's first eight minutes to take any suspense out of this one. Ali Alomari had four goals and Davinson Diaz had three goals.

>> **March 8, Rochester 15, Orlando 2:** Rochester scored 11 times in the first two quarters, outshooting Orlando 51-31 on the night. Eduardo Figueroa and Matt D'Amico scored four each.

>> **March 9, Rochester 16, Orlando 3:** Finishing off another home doubleheader sweep, Rochester led 7-1 after two quarters. Orlando was outshot 56-38. Ali Alomari had four goals and August Finn a hat trick.

>> **March 16, Rochester 14, Baltimore 7:** At Towson Arena, the Lancers didn't have any problem with the small field there, as Aidan Miller, Joe Balls and Taner Bay all scored twice.

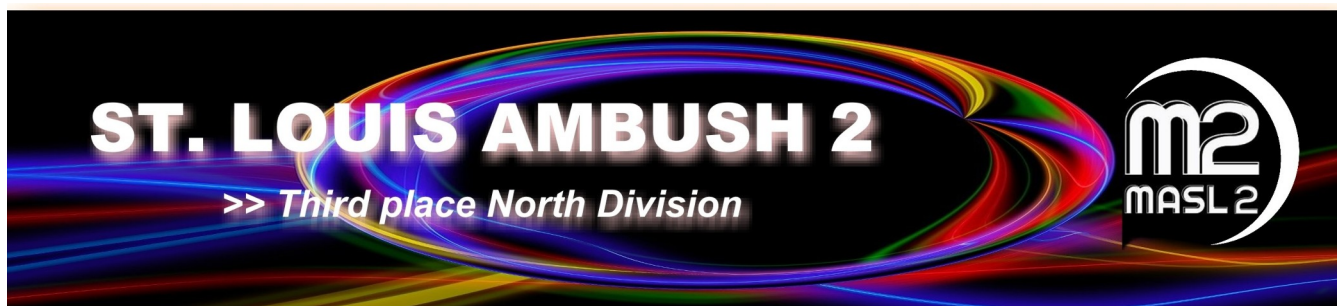
>> **March 22, Rochester 7: United Elite 3:** For the first time all year, Rochester failed to hit double digits in goals, but still outdistanced Utica's United Elite behind goal from seven different Lancers in the lineup.

>> **March 23, Rochester 9, United Elite 1:** For the second straight game, Rochester was held to single digits in goals, despite outshooting United Elite 60-20. Jakeb Mitchell lost his shutout try by allowing his only goal with five minutes to go in the third quarter. Jake Schindler and Taner Bay each scored twice.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

>> **JAKE SCHINDLER** – Serves as player/coach, and has an extensive Major Arena Soccer League background ... Named 2023-24 M2 Coach of the Year ... Appeared in a whopping 206 MASL games with the Lancers, Syracuse Silver Knights, Florida Tropics, Utica City and the Baltimore Blast. Scored 41 goals and added 63 assists to go along with 177 career blocked shots ... Has appeared in 11 games this year with four goals and 18 assists, third overall on the team in points ... Over the past two years, has played in 23 games for Rochester with seven goals and 27 assists.

- >> **ALI ALOMARI:** Burst onto the pro indoor soccer scene in spectacular fashion this season, making 11 starts with 28 goals and 12 assists ... Is a native of Yemen where he trained in futsal ... family moved to suburban Buffalo when he was nine .. became a standout at Lackawanna High School, being named the 2019 Western New York boys high school player of the year and earning All New York State first team honors before attending Niagara University. Appeared in 45 games for the Purple Eagles, scoring four goals and adding five assists. Last year he received an opportunity to play for the Yemen men's national team. The 5-11 Alomari made his international debut in the 85th minute of a 2-0 loss to Saudi Arabia in a group stage match of the Asian Gulf Cup of Nations tournament in Basra, Iraq on Jan. 6, 2023, and came on in the 83rd minute of a 5-0 defeat to the hosts six days later.
- >> **DARREN TOBY:** A longtime defensive standout in the MASL, starting in 2011, Toby is in his second season with Rochester, appearing in 18 games with five goals and 10 assists, including four goals and six assists this season ... Dressed for 198 Major Arena Soccer League games for the Syracuse Silver Knights and Utica City FC, scoring 36 goals and adding 35 assists. More importantly, he had 205 career blocked shots ... Also appeared in 15 MASL playoff games, scoring six times and blocking 23 shots
- >> **ANDREW HOXIE:** Signed late in the season, he did not play in a regular season game, but has had an illustrious MASL career. He played in 202 regular season games for the Wichita Wings, Syracuse Silver Knights, Florida Tropics, Utica City FC, Rochester Lancers, Harrisburg Heat and Baltimore Blast, scoring 138 goals and adding 83 assists. In MASL postseason play, he has made 29 appearances with 20 goals and 11 assists.



- >> **RECORD:** 4-8
- >> **COACH:** Donnie Alberty
- >> **GOALS FOR:** 77 (7th in league)
- >> **GOALS AGAINST:** 111 (10th)
- >> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL:** -34 (2nd)
- >> **WEBSITE:** www.stlouisambush.com
- >> **FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/stlouisambush/
- >> **CONTACT:** info@stlambush.com



>> **MOST RECENT:** This is the first season of play for the Ambush 2, recording a 4-8 record, good for third place in the North Division.

>> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** While the Ambush 2 may be in their first season, pro indoor soccer has an illustrious past in the Gateway City, going all the way back to the original St. Louis Steamers who debuted in the original Major Indoor Soccer League on Dec. 14, 1979 when more than 17,000 fans showed up for the Steamers first game at the historic Checkdome, The Steamers were popular for a number of years, with average attendance exceeding 12,000 for each season from 1980-81 through 1984-85, and outdrawing the NHL's St. Louis Blues for four consecutive seasons from 1980-81 through 1983-84. They continued play in the MISL through the 1987-88 season. The St. Louis Storm then played in the MISL from 1989-92, and were eventually replaced by the first iteration of the St. Louis Ambush in the National Professional Soccer League from 1992-2000. A second iteration of the Steamers played in the World Indoor Soccer League and the MISL from 1998-2006. The current version of the Ambush are now in their 11th season, having debuted in 2013 in the MISL which evolved into the MASL ... Have been good with the man advantage this season, converting at 50 percent.

| Season | GP | W | L | OTL | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| 2023-24 | 12 | 4 | 8 | 0 | .333 | 77 | 111 | (No. 8 playoff seed) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

>> **Dec. 9, Muskegon Risers 5, St. Louis 2:** The Ambush 2 debuted on the road in Michigan – and in fact played nine of their 12 games on the road by mutual agreement of the Ambush, M2 and all teams in the North Division – and struggled to find the back of the net. M2 veteran Miguel Torres scored four times to lead the Risers, who held the edge in shots 27-21.

>> **Dec. 22, St. Louis 12, Iowa Raptors 9:** MASL veteran Lucas Almeida made the trip to Cedar Rapids, and that paid off in a big way for the Ambush as he scored a hat trick as did teammate Tristan Austin.

>> **Dec. 23, Iowa Raptors 7, St. Louis 3 :** The Ambush couldn't get the weekend sweep only getting goals from Tristan Austin, Louie Perez and Luyanda Nogenga.

>> **Dec. 28, Iowa Raptors 9, St. Louis 1:** The offensive struggles continued as Iowa took the rubber game of the three-games in six days series in Cedar Rapids. Aamahn Murvin got the lone St. Louis score.

>> **Dec. 30, Iowa Demon Hawks 18, St. Louis 8:** Continuing a long road trip in Des Moines, St. Louis did score eight, but still dropped their fourth straight. Tristan Austin had a big night with two goals and two assists while Louie Perez also scored twice.

>> **Dec. 31, Iowa Demon Hawks 13, St. Louis 4:** The Ambush 2 rang in the new year in Des Moines, but couldn't muster much offensively again. Kyle Swanner, son of longtime pro

indoor soccer goalie Jamie Swanner who is an assistant coach for the MASL Ambush, has one of the St. Louis goals.

>> **Jan. 19, Muskegon 12, St. Louis 8:** Louie Perez scored twice, and Luyanda Nogenga had a goal and one assist as the host Risers scored four straight in the fourth after St. Louis had pulled withing 8-6 on a goal from Brennon Austin with 8:23 to play.

>> **Jan. 20, St. Louis 6, Muskegon 5:** The Ambush got the weekend road split in a tight affair, with neither team having more than a two-goal lead. St. Louis scored the game's first two goals, and the Risers came back to take a 3-2 lead before Aamahn Murvin banged in the game winner with 3:56 to play. Niall Torricelli led the Ambush attack with two goals.

>> **Feb. 10, Iowa Demon Hawks 10, St. Louis 5:** The Demon Hawks spoiled the Ambush 2's home opener, Aamahn Murvin scored with two seconds to go in the third quarter to put the league on upset alert, pulling the Ambush to within 6-5. But Iowa scored four unanswered in the fourth to eventuall pull away. Iowa held the edge in shots, 32-21. Brennon Austin and Murvin each had a goal and an assist for the Ambush.

>> **Feb. 25, St. Louis 11, Muskegon 5:** St Louis led 4-0 four minutes into the second quarter, and the Risers never got closer than two the rest of the way, despite winning the shots battle 28-26. Louie Perez had a big night with four goals and one assist. Mateo Morales and Aamahn Murvin each had two goals.

>> **March 8, Iowa Demon Hawks 14, St. Louis 5:** The Ambush actually outshot Iowa 48-32, but five unanswered goals in the second quarter by the Hawks was too much for St. Louis to overcome. Skylar Funk and Louie Perez each had a goal and an assist.

>> **March 17, St. Louis 12, Iowa Raptors 4:** Skylar Funk, who showed great promise as a rookie with the MASL Florida Tropics, netting four goals and adding two assists to help St. Louis end the regular season on a high note. Tristan Austin added a hat trick and Niall Torricelli added a pair of goals.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

>> **SKYLAR FUNK:** Only appeared in two regular season games for the Ambush 2, but had five goals and two assists ... A speedy forward with good finishing skills ... played in 16 regular season games for the parent MASL St. Louis Ambush, scoring seven goals ...

Appeared in nine games his rookie season with the Florida Tropics of the MASL, getting three goals and two assists ... Funk is a St. Louis area native who hails from Alton, Illinois. Funk was the number one draft pick (eleventh overall) by the Florida Tropics in the 2022 MASL college draft. Funk played collegiate soccer at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida and at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey, Illinois

>> **LOUIE PEREZ:** Dressed for two games with the MASL Ambush this past season, but did not record a point. Is the Ambush 2's leading scorer with 16 goals and six assists ... Had four multi-goal games this year, with a season best four goals at home against Muskegon on Feb. 25 ... Is dangerous with the man advantage scoring four times on the power play ... Prior to joining the Ambush organization, Perez played semi-pro soccer in 2022 with the St.

Louis Lions in the USL2 Heartland Division ... He spent his collegiate career at Missouri Baptist University where he earned All-AMC Honorable Mention four years, broke the University's single-game record for points with nine, and collected numerous other accolades ... Perez played prep soccer at Pattonville High School In Maryland Heights, Missouri, where he won a district title in 2017 and was Impact Player of the Year for his team, followed by team MVP in 2018. Also in 2018, Perez set a school record for most goals in a season with 33.

>> **AAMAHN MURVIN (mur-win):** Aamahn Murvin was called up by the Ambush in March 2024 from their Ambush 2 team. In ten games with the A2 squad, Murvin scored seven goals and led the team in assists with seven ... Had two goals and three assists on Feb. 25 in a win over Muskegon ... Appeared in three MASL games with St. Louis, with no points ... Before joining the Ambush organization, Murvin played collegiate soccer at Webster University, where he was player of the year three times. He spent his prep career at Walden Grove High School in Sauarita, Arizona, where he was MVP his last two years.

>> **TRISTAN AUSTIN:** Played in 13 games for the MASL Ambush, scoring three goals and collecting four assists. In 35 career games in the MASL, all with St. Louis, has seven goals and nine assists ... This year with the Ambush 2, had eight goals and 10 assists ... Austin was signed by the Ambush in October 2021. .. Austin hails from Wheat Ridge, Colorado. He played prep soccer at Broomfield High School in Broomfield, Colorado where he won two state championships (2015 and 2017). Austin went on to play collegiate soccer at Sheridan College in Wyoming, where his team placed second in the NJCAA Regional Championship in 2018 .. Prior to joining the Ambush, Austin spent one season (2019-20) with the Colorado Rumble in the MASL's M2 development league. Austin also received a call up to the USA Men's National Arena Soccer Team in 2021.



- >> **RECORD:** 11-0-1
- >> **COACH:** Roger Downing
- >> **GOALS FOR:** 122 (4th in league)
- >> **GOALS AGAINST:** 70 (3rd)
- >> **GOAL DIFFERENTIAL:** +52 (3rd)
- >> **WEBSITE:** www.wichitawingsoccer.com

>> **FACEBOOK:** https://www.facebook.com/WichitaWingsSoccer/?ref=embed_page

>> **CONTACT:** info@wichitawingsoccer.com

>> **MOST RECENT:** This has been the best season for the Wings since they launched in M2 five years ago, missing out on a perfect season with just an overtime loss to Amarillo on the road earlier in the year.



>> **FRANCHISE NOTES/ HISTORY:** In October 2019, the Wichita Wings were announced as an expansion franchise in the Major Arena Soccer League 2, honoring the legacy of previous indoor soccer franchises in the area: the original Wichita Wings of the MISL and NPSL, the second Wichita Wings from the third version of the Major Indoor Soccer League, and the Wichita B-52s of the Professional Arena Soccer League/Major Arena Soccer League. They played eight home games in its first season, then moved to M2 the following season ... Wichita is one of the most iconic indoor soccer cities in the country, especially with its passionate fan base known as the “Orange Army.” Despite all the on and off field success, the Wings have never won an pro indoor soccer championship ... The Wings were admitted to the Major Indoor Soccer League as an expansion team on August 21, 1979., playing at the Kansas Coliseum. ... When the MISL (which had since been renamed the Major Soccer League) folded in 1992, the Wings moved to the National Professional Soccer League. At the time the Wings folded, after the 2000–2001 season, they were the oldest professional soccer franchise in the United States. ... A new team named after the Wichita Wings began play in the 2011–12 season and shut down after the 2012–2013 season. They were in turn replaced by a new team called the Wichita B-52s who played in the Major Arena Soccer League ... Wings reached the M2 championship game in 2020-21, also at Hartman Arena, and fell to the Cleveland Crunch, 11-6 ... Kevin Ten Eyck had two goals in that title game ... Have scored 122 goals in each of the last two seasons ... lost in last year’s semifinals to the Chihuahua Savage 2 who went on to win title ... Beat Amarillo in the consolation final for third place overall last spring. Final was 13-5; Guilherme Oliveira, Taylor Henry, David Lucio and Bransyn Felty all scored twice.

| Season | GP | W | L | OTL | WPCT | GF | GA | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 2019-20 | 13 | 10 | 2 | 1 | .808 | 132 | 64 | (No playoffs, COVID) |
| 2020-21 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 | .727 | 81 | 71 | (Lost in Finals) |
| 2021-22 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0 | .583 | 107 | 84 | (Lost in quarterfinals) |
| 2022-23 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 0 | .806 | 122 | 77 | (Lost in semifinals) |
| 2023-24 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 1 | .944 | 122 | 70 | (No. 3 playoff seed) |

HOW THEY GOT HERE

>> **Dec, 22, Wichita 8, Amarillo 5:** The Wings opened on a high note, and set a tone for the regular season to come, by building a 5-2 lead into the third quarter and never allowing the

Bombers to get within less than two the rest of the way. Amarillo held the edge in shots, 41-29. Kevin Ten Eyck had the hat trick and Jose Ocampo made 19 saves.

>> **Dec. 30, Wichita 14, Kansas 5:** Wichita raced to an 8-1 lead in the second quarter to leave little doubt about this one. Mehrshad Ahmadi, David Lucio, Jared Robbins, Alvaro Quezada and Caique Trivelato all had two goals each.

>> **Jan 6, Wichita 10, El Paso 3:** The third of five straight home games to open the season, the Wings came out red hot, scoring six times in the first quarter, en route to a 6-2 lead at intermission. Alvaro Quezada had a hat trick, while Caique Trivelato had two goals and one assist. Mehrshad Ahmadi also had a two-goal game. Wichita outshot El Paso just 40-39.

>> **Jan. 7, Wichita 11, Kansas 5:** Wichita broke a 2-2 tie with 10 minutes to go in the first half, getting five of the game's next six goals, outshooting the Bandits 40-34. Caique Trivelato had a hat trick while Kieran Laking and David Lucio had two goals each.

>> **Jan. 13, Wichita 7, El Paso 2:** Jose Ocampo made 12 saves as Wichita outshot the Rhinos just 27-26. Mehrshad Ahmadi scored three goals and Colin Lawter a pair.

>> **Jan. 27, Wichita 13, Amarillo 11:** In their first game away from Hartman Arena, the Wings won a wild one, rallying from a 6-3 halftime deficit. Caique Trivelato got the game winner with just under six minutes to play, part of a two goal, three assist effort. Jared Robbins had a hat trick as well.

>> **Jan. 28, Amarillo 13, Wichita 12:** The only blemish on the Wings regular season came in this overtime loss. And they came oh so close to a win, giving up the game tying goal with just three seconds to play in regulation. In what was maybe the game of the year in M2, the score was tied on seven different occasions, with Amarillo battling back from a four-goal deficit late in the third quarter. Caique Trivelato and Mehrshad Ahmadi each scored three times. Wichita outshot Amarillo, 37-32, with the Bombers getting the only two shots on goals in the overtime.

>> **Feb. 3, Wichita 13, New Mexico 3:** Returning to the friendly confines of Hartman Arena, Caique Trivelato again had a big night with four goals and an assist. David Lucio had three goals and two assists while Mehrshad Ahmadi chipped in with a hat trick.

>> **Feb. 9, Wichita 10, Kansas 5:** The Wings were outshot, 33-28, but steadily pulled away from the Bandits on two goals each from Juan Zamora and Mehrshad Ahmadi.

>> **March 3, Wichita 11, New Mexico 8:** The Runners gave their home fans a big effort, but it wasn't quite enough. The Wings scored six in a row after New Mexico opened the scoring, and the Runners cut their deficit to just two in the fourth quarter before falling. Guilherme Oliveira and Mehrshad Ahmadi both had hat tricks.

>> **March 9, Wichita 5, El Paso 4:** The improving Rhinos almost spoiled the Wings perfect home mark in 2023-24, but the Wings – who were outshot 38-28 – won their 11th. Colin Lawter broke a 4-4 tie with 5:20 to go for the game winner. Mehrshad Ahmadi scored twice for the Wings.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

>> **MEHRSHAD AHMADI:** Has been one of the leagues best players the last two years. Last year with New Mexico, was tied for the league lead in points with 48, and signed with the Wings as a free agent this past offseason ... Scored 25 goals and had 10 assist in 12 starts for Wichita ... In three M2 seasons, including two with New Mexico, has appeared in 31 games with 81 goals and 23 assists ... Last year with runners had 38 goals and 10 assists ... This will be his first postseason games in M2 ... A native of Afghanistan ... Is a graduate of Sandia High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

>> **KEVIN TEN EYCK:** Given his quality of play, and longevity of service, M2's Defensive Player of the Year in 2023-24 has earned his spot in the pantheon of Wichita Wings greats ... Played in 92 career games in the Major Arena Soccer League with the Kansas City Comets, Missouri Comets, Wichita Wings and Wichita B 52's, scoring 41 goals and adding 19 assists. He also had 112 career blocked shots ... Since joining the newest iteration of the Wings five seasons ago, he has played in 59 regular season games with 46 goals and 64 assists .. This year, was team's second leading points getter with nine goals and 19 assists ... Ten Eyck was an NAIA All-American selection in his playing career for the Friends Univeristy Falcons. He graduated from Friends in 2009, and currently is an assistant coach there.

>> **CAIQUE TRIVELATO:** Is a dangerous finisher with 17 goals scored in just nine games ... In two years with Cowley College Tigers, he appeared in 35 games, scoring 28 goals and adding nine assists ... The native of Brazil has had at least two goals or more in seven of his nine appearances, including a four-goal game against New Mexico on Feb. 3.

>> **DAVID LUCIO:** Like Ten Eyck, a Wings veteran who has a nose for the net. Was third overall in scoring this year, with both 12 goals and 12 assists in 11 games ... Has played all five seasons since the Wings rebirth, has played in 52 games with 59 goals and 50 assists ... Best season was 2019-20 with 19 goals in 13 games. Had 15 goals in 12 games last season ... Kansas Class 6A All-State First Team selection as a senior in 2011 at Wichita's Northwest High School ...Member of 2011 state championship team...Scored the game-winning penalty kick in the last minute of 1-0 state championship match...Finished senior season with 20 goals and five assists. Played collegiately at Fort Hays State. Played in 76 games with seven goals and 10 assists.

**>> ALL M2 PLAYOFF GAMES WILL BE BROADCAST
LIVE AND FREE OF CHARGE ONLINE. CHECK
YOUR FAVORITE TEAM'S SOCIAL MEDIA SITES
FOR THE LATEST BROADCAST INFORMATION, OR
LEAGUE SOCIAL SITES AS WELL. <<**

ABOUT M2



Major Arena Soccer League 2 was established for the 2017-18 season, and works in close contact with its parent league – the Major Arena Soccer League – which features some of the most iconic professional indoor soccer franchises including the San Diego Sockers, Baltimore Blast and Milwaukee Wave, whose lineage all go back to the 1970s and 1980s.

M2 serves as a second-level of the MASL’s three-level pyramid approach to develop professional indoor soccer throughout the United States and Mexico. The league is a mix of development teams fielded by MASL squads such as the St. Louis Ambush 2 and Baltimore Arsenal, and franchises in mid-level markets with in almost all instances arena capacities from approximately 2,000 to 5,000 seats like Wichita, Rochester N.Y., Amarillo, Texas, and Albuquerque, New Mexico. Expansion franchises approved for 2024-24 already include the Minnesota Blizzard (Minneapolis/St. Paul), Spice City FC (Danbury, Connecticut) and the Wisconsin Conquerors (Central Wisconsin). Spice City will have the same owner as the Newtown Pride who won last summer million dollar winner-take-all “The Soccer Tournament” which captured the fancy of the America soccer public.

Working in close conjunction with the MASL leadership triumvirate of Commissioner Keith Tozer, Chairman Shep Messing and President of Communications/Media J.P. Dellacamera, M2 has its own leadership team of Commissioner Chris Economides and Deputy Commissioner Andrew Ross based in Tampa, Florida.

“As our now direct affiliation with the MASL continues to grow and strengthen, we will have more exciting announcements in the summer about relationships that will grow the sport as we have intended all along,” Economides noted.

Major Arena Soccer League 2 now has its owner’s meeting at the same time and place as the MASL, Economides noted, and all M2 teams have been invited to have general managers and coaches at the last two MASL Combine even – the most recent one in Utica, N.Y. -- where over 100 potential players put their talents on display.

“It’s exciting the MASL is taking a more active role and interest in being even greater partners. Allowing our M2 owners, coaches and general managers to be part of their events opens opportunities for more dialogue and cooperation for growing the sport together,” Economides added. “At the top level, the sport’s leaders recognize the quality of play and positive commitment to the sport that each M2 franchise exudes.”

Major Arena Soccer League 2

LATEST NEWS



2023-24 Season

Minneapolis/St Paul, Danbury, Connecticut, and Central Wisconsin all approved for 2024-25 season

TAMPA, Florida -- A number of new franchises are expected to return or debut for the 2024-25 season, including a return to pro indoor soccer to Minnesota's Twin Cities, a team in Danbury, Connecticut, and a third in Central Wisconsin.

The Minnesota Blizzard will be playing their home matches in St. Paul at the 5,000 seat Warner Coliseum on the State Fairgrounds. The team will be owned by local businessman Chad Hendricks, a Twin Cities native who went to the University of Minnesota for engineering and also later got a degree in accounting from Rasmussen college. He is the founder and owner of Clear Choice Consulting in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.



The Twin Cities has been without pro indoor soccer since the Minnesota Strikers played their final season at “the Met” in 1988 in the original Major Indoor Soccer League.

“I go back to, as a kid in the 1980s, we had the Minnesota Strikers with Tino Lettieri and Hector Marinaro and Coach Alan Merrick,” he recalled. “My Dad and I used to go to all the games, and like so many, fell in love with the action, the high scoring. I have a strong passion for the sport. I was hooked after my first game.”

Hendricks played high school soccer at Wayzata, a western suburb of the Twin

Cities, and remains active in the sport as both a player and long time coach. The Blizzard is an expansion on other amateur teams managed by Hendricks. The teams that laid the found for the Blizzard were the Wolverines FC, The Storm and most recently Lakeville United. These teams play in the two Minnesota amateur soccer associations, the MRSL and MASL.

“Chad is all about excellence in everything he does which makes the Blizzard a great addition for M2,” Commissioner Chris Economides said. “As a highly successful business person and lifelong soccer enthusiast, he fully understands what it takes and is fully committed to making the Blizzard a model M2 franchise.”

Danbury, Connecticut, will welcome Spice City FC, an expansion M2 team owned by the same owners of that state’s Newtown Pride, a team that captured the imagination of the American soccer public last summer by winning the million dollar winner-take-all “The Soccer Tournament”.



The team will play seven home games on turf at the Danbury Ice Arena in Connecticut beginning in winter of 2024-25.

The organization will add to the existing ice arena offering of Hat Tricks hockey while celebrating Danbury’s multicultural flavor and delivering family friendly, affordable entertainment. The Danbury Ice Arena, like most arenas across the country, is preparing an operations team that will flip the switch from ice to turf overnight to bring soccer to the forefront of the 3,000 seat arena.

Mayor of Danbury, Roberto Alves, stated, “Bringing an M2 team to Danbury is an exciting time for our city. As a big soccer fan myself, you will see my family in those seats cheering on Spice City FC. This partnership has our attention and support – and we’re confident the residents of the City of Danbury will get behind this team like they have every team that has called the Arena home. We’re excited to also welcome more people downtown to experience all we have to offer.”

Matt and Adriana Svanda, also owners of Newtown Pride FC in Newtown, Connecticut, have spearheaded the effort in Danbury.

“Bringing a fast paced, energy driven brand of soccer to Danbury is something we think is a perfect fit for this city,” said owner and general manager Matt Swanda. “The game of soccer is a true passion of ours and we try and use it as a catalyst of good. We’re confident that in

partnership with the Danbury Ice Arena, we will be able to bring an incredible experience and different brand of soccer to fans both new and old.”

In 2023, it was Newtown Pride FC who took America by surprise creating an instantly iconic national soccer memory with their win in the inaugural million-dollar winner-take-all TST tournament. The Pride will be partaking in this year’s TST tournament in June to be aired on ESPN.

Economides said Newtown's next big soccer move to join the league speaks volumes for where the second tier of the American indoor soccer pyramid is headed.

“We’re excited and proud to welcome Spice City FC to our M2 family. There are some incredible teams in the East Division, and we’re anxiously awaiting their first goal in Danbury this winter,” Economides said. “We’re more intrigued to see how their front office puts together a team that’s competitive in a league that boasts organizations like the Rochester Lancers, Utica, Baltimore and Orlando. We know that Spice City FC is committed to excellence both on and off the field, and couldn’t be more thrilled that they’ll be strong stewards of our league.”

The Wisconsin Conquerors will provide a natural geographic rival for the Blizzard, since their two arenas will be a little more than two hours apart.

The Conquerors are based out of Marshfield, Wisconsin, but will play their home games in nearby Weston at the Greenheck Fieldhouse.



That facility is currently undergoing a \$35 million expansion. The new space will include a full-field indoor soccer component as part of the 130,000 square foot project, initiated by DC Everest. Work on the arena is scheduled to be completed in time for the 2024-25 season.

“This is a great ownership group with an existing program, and a brand new facility coming on line next summer which is the perfect combination and exactly the type of expansion opportunities we continue to identify and support,” Economides said.

Dr. Alexander Eddo -- who along with his wife Cerene will be co-owners of the team -- said Milwaukee is only about three hours from Weston, and that the Milwaukee Wave -- the longest continually operated professional sports franchise indoors or out in the United States -- has already been supportive of placing an M2 team in the state.

“They are very open and said they’d be happy to help in any way they can,” Dr. Eddo said. “Of course, if we can learn and grow with the help of one of the best franchises in all of indoor soccer -- they literally have 40 years of experiences that we can draw on -- that can only be a positive.”