# Columbus, Philadelphia and LAFC reach Leagues Cup semis

AFP- Reigning MLS champions Columbus Crew will face the Philadelphia Union in the semi-finals of the Leagues Cup after victories in the last eight on Saturday.
Columbus marched into the last four with a 4-3 win on penalties over New York City after the game ended 1-1 while a ten-man Union also needed a shoot-out to beat Mexican team Mazatlan.

Just 14 seconds into the game in Columbus, visitors New York took the lead when Alonso Martinez robbed Crew defender Rudy Camacho and burst into the box before slotting home.

Striker Cucho Hernandez had a great chance to level the game but dragged his shot wide from inside the box and the Colombian forced a fine save from Matt Freese.

But four minutes before the interval, Columbus, who had eliminated Cup holders Inter Miami in the previous round, drew level.

Max Arfsten whipped in a cross from the right and Hernandez met it with a perfectly angled header into the bottom corner.

Chances were rare in the second half and despite plenty of late pressure from Columbus the game went to the shoot-out.

Columbus keeper Patrick Schulte saved from Maxi Moralez, but then Diego Rossi saw his effort saved by City's Freese.

After New York's Santiago Rodriguez blasted his effort high and wide, it was left to DeJuan Jones to clinch the victory with a cool penalty.

Philadelphia found themselves a man down just before half-time when forward Tai Baribo was harshly sent off for a second

yellow card offense.

But two minutes later, Danish forward Mikael Uhre put the Union ahead when he broke down the left and cut inside before finishing with a deft chip over Mazatlan keeper Ricardo Gutierrez.

The Liga MX team drew level in the 59th minute when Alonso Escoboza rose to head in a cross from Ramiro Arciga.

But despite their numerical and possession advantage, Mazatlan were unable to find a winner with Philly keeper Andre Blake ensuring the game went to a shoot-out after a brilliant reflex save kept out a goalbound header from Facundo Almada.

Jamaican Blake was the hero in the shoot-out with two superb saves as Jim Curtin's side won 4-3 to make it to the last four for successive seasons.

Los Angeles FC also progressed after an impressive 3-0 win at the Seattle Sounders.

Ryan Hollingshead slotted LAFC ahead in the 14th minute before veteran Kei Kamara doubled the lead 11 minutes later.

Denis Bouanga wrapped up the win in the 53rd minute with a clinical finish after racing on to a ball over the top from French goalkeeper Hugo Lloris.

LAFC will face the winner of Saturday's last quarter-final between the Colorado Rapids and Mexico's Club America.

AFP