 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:

April 25, 2022 Dr. Eric Lamberg, President & Head Coach

American Amputee Soccer Association (AASA)

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**TEAM USA QUALIFIES FOR 2022 AMPUTEE SOCCER WORLD CUP**

(Houston, TX) – Team USA has begun preparing for this fall’s Amputee Soccer World Cup in Istanbul, Turkey, and plans to train in five locations across the country in the coming months, including Houston.

The Americans qualified for the 24-team World Cup, to be held Sept. 30-Oct. 9, by placing second at a North and Central American qualifying tournament in Jalisco, Mexico last month. That competition — the region’s first-ever Amputee Soccer World Cup qualifying event — included national teams from the U.S., Costa Rica, El Salvador, Haiti and Mexico, with three spots available in Turkey. Playing four games in as many days, Team USA secured a 2-1-1 record to finish behind only Haiti and ahead of Mexico, which placed fourth at the 2018 World Cup. Team captain Nico Calabria, of Boston, Mass., was named the tournament’s Most Valuable Player.

With its qualification, the U.S. — which also played in the 2018 World Cup, in Mexico — joins 23 other nations from six continents in amputee soccer’s premier global event. Head Coach Dr. Eric Lamberg, an associate dean at Stony Brook University and president of the American Amputee Soccer Association (AASA), said: “This is by far the best group of athletes to compete as the US Amputee Soccer Team. The team bonded and played beautiful soccer. A well-deserved ticket to the 2022 Amputee World Cup.”

Team USA includes players and staff from California, Colorado, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and Texas. With such a geographically diverse roster, the U.S. has scheduled training camps in five locations before the World Cup, starting with Houston (April 29-May 1). Details on the other four camps, as well as two exhibition matches against international opponents, will be released later. Those sessions will allow the coaching staff to evaluate the American players before finalizing a 15-man roster by mid-July, while also offering an opportunity to grow the ranks of amputee soccer.

Invented in 1980 by Seattle native Don Bennett, amputee soccer is played on a ¾-size pitch with seven players to a side. Field players use forearm crutches and may play the ball with only one leg. Goalkeepers defend a 7’x16’ net and may use only one arm. Each member of Team USA has their own, unique story of limb difference and of remarkable athletic achievement in the face of that adversity.

The AASA believes everyone should have access to play soccer. Our mission is to 1) promote, develop and provide access to the sport of amputee soccer for all people living with limb difference and 2) to develop and train elite amputee soccer athletes to represent the United States in international competition. Amputee soccer is growing quickly in the U.S., with regional teams in New York, New England, Texas, southern California, Seattle/Portland, Chicago and the Delaware/Philadelphia areas.

Sponsors can help send Team USA to Turkey via [donations@usampsoccer.org](mailto:donations@usampsoccer.org). Donations are welcome [online](https://usampsoccer.networkforgood.com/projects/158224-american-amputee-soccer-association).

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