

Ex-US soccer player criticized for supporting Mexico

21st June, 2018



A former U.S. soccer player has justified his support of rivals Mexico at the Russia World Cup. Landon Donovan, 35, played for the USA national team 157 times, scoring 57 goals. He is widely regarded as the best American player ever. However,

his calls for fellow Americans to back rivals Mexico at the World Cup have landed him in hot water. Many of his ex-teammates have further criticized him for accepting payment from the company Wells Fargo in exchange for wearing a Mexico soccer jersey. He tweeted a photograph of himself with a scarf that read: "My other team is Mexico. The tournament is here. USA fans, our team may not be in Russia, but our neighbors to the south are. So join me...to cheer on our other team - Mexico."

Donovan explained why he wanted people to cheer for Mexico. He grew up in California and speaks fluent Spanish. He said: "My heart bleeds red, white and blue and no one should ever question my allegiance to and support of U.S. Soccer and its national teams. That being said, having grown up east of Los Angeles playing with Mexican teammates whose passion...inspired me at a very young age....I always have had a strong connection and respect for our neighbor." Current U.S. player Claudia Soto said: "I don't understand why he is doing this. Actually, I do - money." A Mexican fan said: "There are two guys that Mexico fans love to hate. Donald Trump and Landon Donovan."

Sources: usatoday.com / espn.com / bbc.com

Writing

The FIFA World Cup is the greatest sporting event on Earth. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

former / support / rivals / national team / goals / hot water / criticized / neighbors / cheer / fluent / question / allegiance / teammates / connection / respect / money / fan

True / False

- a) Landon Donovan scored over 150 international goals. T / F
- b) Donovan's fellow Americans poured hot water over him. T / F
- c) Donovan was paid to wear a Mexico football shirt. T / F
- d) Donovan wanted other Americans to join him in his support for Mexico. T / F
- e) Donovan is very proficient in speaking Spanish. T / F
- f) Donovan said his heart bleeds the green and white of Mexico's flag. T / F
- g) A current U.S. player said Donovan wasn't doing it for the money. T / F
- h) A Mexican fan said Mexico fans love Landon Donovan. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. former | a. motivated |
| 2. justify | b. attacked |
| 3. regarded | c. enthusiasm |
| 4. criticized | d. explain |
| 5. cheer on | e. loyalty |
| 6. allegiance | f. link |
| 7. passion | g. ex- |
| 8. inspired | h. supporters |
| 9. connection | i. considered |
| 10. fans | j. encourage |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of the World Cup?
- b) What good does the World Cup do?
- c) What's wrong with supporting a rival team?
- d) What do you think of your country's biggest rival?
- e) Do you understand why people are angry with Landon Donovan?
- f) What's wrong with getting paid to wear a soccer jersey?
- g) Should Mr Donovan be applauded for encouraging good relations?
- h) What advice do you have for Landon Donovan?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. justified his support of | a. to back rivals Mexico |
| 2. widely regarded | b. love to hate |
| 3. calls for fellow Americans | c. on our other team |
| 4. landed him | d. question my allegiance |
| 5. join me to cheer | e. as the best American player |
| 6. He grew up in California and | f. passion inspired me |
| 7. one should ever | g. rivals |
| 8. teammates whose | h. connection and respect |
| 9. I always have had a strong | i. in hot water |
| 10. two guys that Mexico fans | j. speaks fluent Spanish |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Who do you think will win the 2018 World Cup, and why?
- Isn't it better to cheer for many teams?
- How much allegiance do you have towards your country?
- Whose passion has inspired you?
- Who do you love to hate?
- Which is the better word - "soccer" or "football"?
- What questions would you like to ask Landon Donovan?

Spelling

- tiisfjeud his support of rivals Mexico
- widely egdeardr as the best
- teammates have further cizriidect him
- iangctpec payment
- in egacxnhe for
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- speaks fnteul Spanish
- no one should ever question my ceelinagla
- irpdisen me at a very young age
- a strong nonecntico
- ercepts for our neighbor
- entruocr U.S. player

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. j
6. e	7. c	8. a	9. f	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Goals

You think goals are the best thing about football. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): fans, rivalries or penalties.

Role B – Fans

You think fans are the best thing about football. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): goals, rivalries or penalties.

Role C – Rivalries

You think rivalries are the best thing about football. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): fans, goals or penalties.

Role D – Penalties

You think penalties are the best thing about football. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): fans, rivalries or goals.

Speaking – Soccer

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about soccer at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| • Saturday afternoons | • goals |
| • rivalries | • penalties |
| • the skills | • the fans |
| • the passion | • the World Cup |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.