



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SEATTLE REIGN FC TO HONOR LEGACY OF THE 85ERS™ AT THE QUEEN'S MATCH ON AUGUST 18

Celebrating 40 years since the first U.S. Women's National Team took the field – and the Seattle queens who started it all

RENTON, WASH. (July 7, 2025) – On August 18, Seattle Reign FC will host The Queen's Match, a marquee celebration of soccer history, civic pride and the enduring legacy of the first-ever U.S. Women's National Team, and partnership with the 85ers™, at Lumen Field.

The Queen's Match will mark the 40th anniversary of the USWNT's historic debut in Jesolo, Italy – a moment made even more meaningful by the Seattle roots of several players on that original roster. From the very beginning, Seattle helped shape the foundation of women's soccer in America, proving what we've always known: this city is built by queens.

"For over a century, Seattle has been home to trailblazing women who have played and shaped the game we love," said Seattle Reign FC Chief Business Officer **Maya Mendoza-Exstrom**. "It's no surprise that almost half of the original USWNT, seven of the 17 that traveled to Italy – and its first head coach Mike Ryan – came from the Puget Sound region. Reign FC is built on that foundation and is proud to celebrate our shared history over the past 40 years, we're not just telling an origin story, we're honoring the legacy of grit, brilliance and passion for soccer. We're proud to stand with the 85ers as they launch their new platform – still united, still leading, still Queens."

Now, four decades later, the 85ers™ are coming home. In partnership with the original members of that pioneering team, Reign FC will celebrate the 40th anniversary of their historic debut with a series of matchday events that pay tribute to their courage, influence and impact on generations of women athletes.

"Seattle has always been part of our origin story," said **Michelle Akers**, original 85er, FIFA Player of the Century, World Cup Champion and Olympic Gold Medalist. "In 1985, we took the field with no roadmap – just belief, love for the game and a commitment to represent our country. 40 years later, to be honored in a city that helped birth the USWNT feels like coming home. The Queen's Match isn't just a celebration of where we've been – it's a statement about where we're headed."

The 85ers™ laid the foundation for what would become one of the most successful women's national teams in history. They competed with determination, vision and heart,



building a legacy that lives on today through clubs like Reign FC and athletes around the world.

“As we launch a new annual match to celebrate Queens, Seattle Reign FC remains committed to uplifting the next generation of game changers who will define the future of global women’s soccer, including the USWNT, while keeping Seattle at the heart of it,” continued Mendoza-Exstrom.

A Tribute to the Original Queens of American Soccer

The Queen’s Match will feature:

- On-field recognition of the 85ers at halftime
- Special storytelling content highlighting Seattle’s role in the early days of the U.S. Women’s National Team
- Commemorative merchandise and fan giveaways
- Community programming and a special legacy announcement

The Queen City. The Queen’s Match.

Seattle has always been a soccer city. Long before trophies and record crowds, this region quietly built the backbone of the American women’s game. Join Reign FC on August 18 to honor the past, celebrate the present and inspire the next generation of queens together. Tickets for The Queen’s Match are available at ReignFC.com/Tickets.

ABOUT SEATTLE REIGN FC

Seattle Reign FC was established in 2012 as a founding member of the National Women’s Soccer League. The fourteen-team NWSL is widely considered to be the most competitive women’s professional soccer league in the world. Over its first 11 seasons, the club captured the NWSL Shield three times, while making three appearances in the NWSL Championship and seven appearances in the NWSL postseason. Reign FC plays its home matches at Lumen Field in Seattle, Washington and trains at Starfire Sports Complex in Tukwila, Washington. The club can be found on the web at www.reignfc.com and on social platforms @ReignFC.

ABOUT THE 85ERS™

The 85ers™ are the seventeen pioneering women who made history as the first U.S. Women’s National Team, taking the field in 1985 without pay, support, or spotlight—only raw talent and an unshakable love for the game. Their play ignited a revolution that turned the U.S. into a global powerhouse in women’s soccer. Now, forty years later, the 85ers are reclaiming their narrative and transforming it into a platform for change—building a business that turns legacy into livelihood. Through storytelling, brand partnerships, and community initiatives, they are championing equity, elevating women’s sports, and

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creating new opportunities for the next generation. They're more than a team. They are the origin story of a movement—and they're just getting started. Follow @the85ersteam on IG and Sign up to follow the movement here: the85ers.kit.com

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