



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **SPORTS COMMISSION LAUNCHES MIAMI SOCCER SERIES**

MIAMI – The Miami-Dade Sports Commission (MDSC) announced the development of the Miami Soccer Series at a press conference today at the Intercontinental Hotel in Miami. A partnership between the MDSC, Guillermo Tofoni, a FIFA Match Agent, and Dr. Fernando Berot, President of MSSE Corp. has been signed that will position Miami to host international friendly and exhibition soccer matches, as well as official games and championships.

Sports Commission and international soccer officials believe that a large soccer fan base, a state-of-the-art facility in Dolphin Stadium, and geography are among the important factors that will help make the Series a success. Initial economic impact models indicate that individual matches and events that are being considered for the Series would generate between \$50 million to more than \$150 million in economic impact for Miami-Dade County for each of the events of the Miami Soccer Series, depending on the particular type of match.

“As Mayor, I am thrilled to join the Miami-Dade Sports Commission in developing the Miami-Dade Soccer Series,” said Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez. “The Series marries the world’s most popular sport – played at its highest level -- with our great international destination. Residents and visitors are in for a real treat, and the economic benefits and worldwide exposure the Series will bring to our community are immeasurable.”

“We believe that this is a great market for the highest level of soccer,” said Mike Sophia, Executive Director of the MDSC. “This is a great opportunity to put Miami on the biggest stage with the world’s most popular game, and we believe that we have developed the right partnership to make this happen.”

As a part of the agreement, Tofoni will represent the MDSC in the international soccer community to secure major matches and tournaments for Miami. The partnership with the MDSC is for five years, with a mutual option for five more.

“Miami is an ideal site for many, many great matches and events,” stated Tofoni. “It is very accessible from Europe and the Americas, it is a wonderful international destination, and it is home to an ideal soccer venue in Dolphin Stadium. We are looking forward to a long partnership between the sport of soccer and Miami-Dade County.”

MDSC Co-Chair and Miami-Dade County Commissioner, Jose “Pepe” Diaz added, “this is a great day for Miami-Dade County and the Sports Commission. Soccer is the most popular sport worldwide and our involvement internationally will generate great exposure for our community, it will help our efforts to promote international tourism, and it will generate a significant amount of economic impact for Miami-Dade County. Not to mention a great deal of excitement.”

Sophia, Diaz, Tofoni and Berot were joined by Larry Gautier, the MDSC's Co-Chair and one of the founding members of the organization, and Tony Tirado, a Miami resident and legendary soccer broadcaster.

While no specific matches or dates were announced, plans are currently being developed that could kick-off early in 2009. The Sports Commission, Tofoni, and MSSE Corp. are working to develop a long-term calendar that would feature a variety of tournaments and matches, including international friendly matches featuring world soccer powers such as Argentina, Brazil, England, France, Italy, and Germany, as examples. Traditional club teams such as Real Madrid, AC Milan, and Manchester United would also be attractive possibilities for the Miami Soccer Series. Additionally, the group pledged to work closely with FIFA, CONCACAF and other international soccer organizations to attract official and championship matches to Miami.

For more information on the Miami-Dade Sports Commission, please visit [www.MiamiSports.org](http://www.MiamiSports.org).

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