



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA

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PRESENTS

CROATIA-USA IN SPORTS:

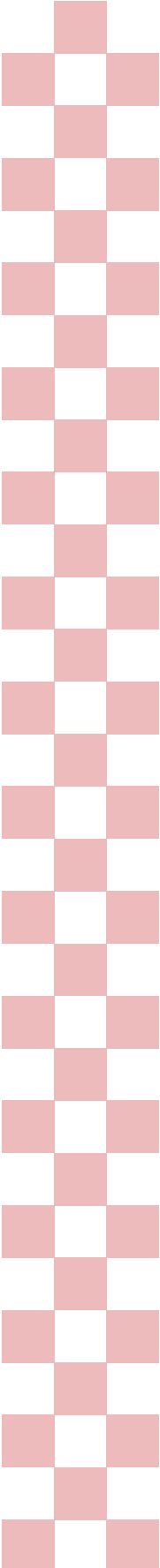
WHERE HISTORY MEETS GREATNESS



EVENT PROGRAM

OCTOBER 19, 2026





WELCOME

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the “*Croatia-USA in Sports: Where history meets greatness*”, organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Washington, D.C.

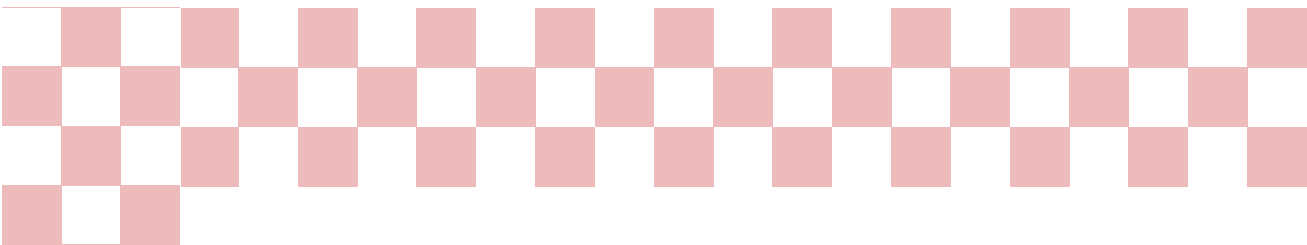
As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of American independence, we are proud to honor the enduring sporting ties between Croatia and the United States. This event brings together the stories of remarkable athletes, shared sporting achievements, and the lasting connections between our two nations.

Through engaging panel discussions and a special exhibition of sports memorabilia, this event celebrates the contributions of Croatian and Croatian-American athletes, reflects on our shared sporting history, and explores new opportunities for cooperation. Above all, it highlights the power of sport to unite people, strengthen friendships, and build bridges between nations.

We are honored to have you with us today.

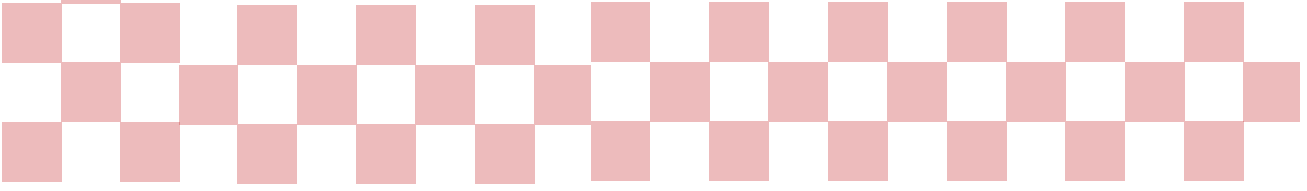
H.E. PJER ŠIMUNOVIĆ

AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



EVENT PROGRAM

9:30 - 10:00 AM	Welcome coffee & Registration
10:00 - 10:15 AM	Opening Remarks
10:15 - 11:00 AM	Panel I. Croatia vs. USA Zagreb 1990 - The Soccer Match That Started Everything
11:00 - 11:10 AM	Coffee Break
11:10 AM - 12:10 PM	Panel II. Croatian American Sporting Legends
12:10 - 1:00 PM	Lunch break & Keynote speech: If You Build It, They Will Come: The Future of Croatian Baseball
1:00 - 1:30 PM	Panel III. World Cup 2026: Alexandria & Osijek
1:30 - 1:35 PM	Coffee Break
1:35 - 3:00 PM	Panel IV. Over the Horizon: LA28 and Beyond



THE PANELS & KEYNOTE SPEECH

I. PANEL

CROATIA VS. USA ZAGREB 1990 - THE SOCCER MATCH THAT STARTED EVERYTHING

Moderator: Pete Radovich
multi-Emmy Award-winning Vice President of Production and Senior Creative Director at CBS Sports

Panelists: Aljoša Asanović
legendary former Croatian midfielder who scored the country's first historical modern international goal

Troy Dayak
American former professional soccer defender and San Jose Earthquakes legend and USMNT player

Mladen Vedriš
Former President of the Croatian Football Federation

II. PANEL

CROATIAN AMERICAN SPORTING LEGENDS

Moderator: Jack Baric
Emmy Award-winning Croatian-American documentary filmmaker

Panelists: David Diehl
two time Super Bowl winner with the New York Giants and current College Football coach

Kevin J. Maris
American baseball coach and former minor leaguer, co-founder of the Florida Hardballers and son of Yankees legend Roger Maris

Pat Miletich

Croatian-American former UFC champion, pioneering mixed martial artist and UFC Hall of Famer

Ante Razov

Croatian-American soccer legend and former USMNT striker, Chicago Fire's all-time leading scorer with over 100 career goals

Steve Rukavina

Croatian-American community leader and co-founder and president of the NFCACF

KEYNOTE
SPEECH

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME: THE FUTURE OF
CROATIAN BASEBALL

Moderator:

Jack Baric

Emmy Award-winning Croatian-American documentary filmmaker

Speaker:

Luke Salas

American entrepreneur, former professional baseball player, and co-founder of the non-profit Baseball for Good who currently serves as the head coach and manager of the Croatian National Baseball team

III. PANEL

WORLD CUP 2026: ALEXANDRIA & OSIJEK

Moderator:

Matthew McGrath

American travel vlogger based in Croatia's Baranja region, promoting local culture, tourism, and wine traditions through digital media

Panelist:

Alyia Gaskins

Mayor of Alexandria

IV. PANEL

OVER THE HORIZON: LA28 AND BEYOND

Moderator: Matthew McGrath

American travel vlogger based in Croatia's Baranja region, promoting local culture, tourism, and wine traditions through digital media

Panelists: Josip Varvodić

President of the Croatian Olympic Committee

Thomas E. Dodig

Board member of Cibona Basketball Club

Ivana Habazin

celebrated former Croatian professional boxer and four-time world champion across the welterweight and middleweight divisions

Mladen Mikolčević

Croatian Olympic Committee Board member

Thomas „Tommy” Park

executive director of the Alexandria Soccer Association

Renee Pea

Consul General of the Republic of Croatia in Los Angeles

Nikola Rukavina

President of the Croatian Basketball Federation

Osvaldo Vavra

President of the Croatian Baseball Federation

Alexandra Végh

President of NK Osijek

Frane Žanić

President of the Croatian Volleyball Federation

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