

# Forge FC



Opposition Analysis Report on: **Santos DG**

**Santos DG 1 vs 0 Plaza Amador**

CONCACAF League

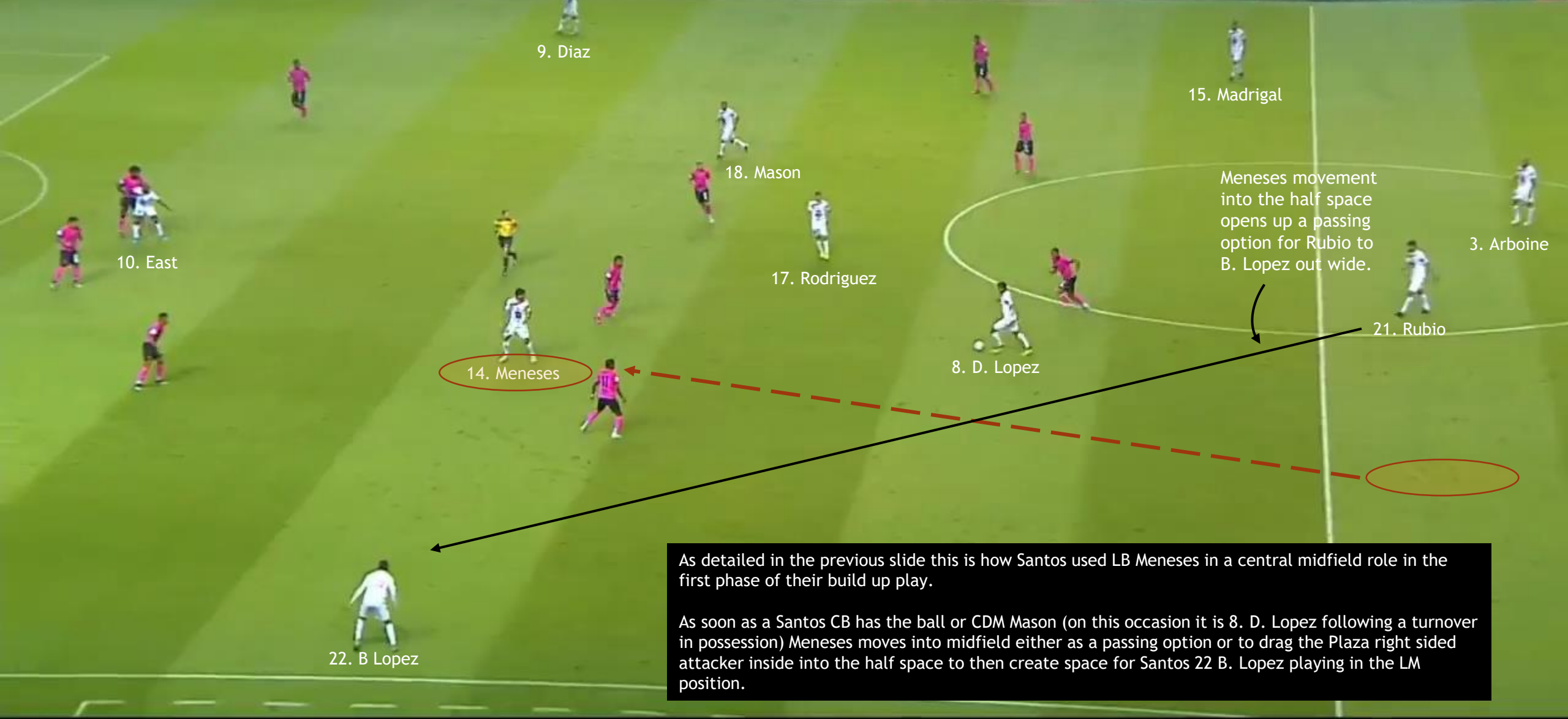
24/9/21

# Santos DG

## In Possession Formation and Tactics

- Santos went with a 4-1-4-1 formation from the start in this game which consisted of a back four of Meneses at left back, Rubio as the left sided center back, Arboine at right center back and Madrigal at right back.
- Mason was the sole CDM with Rodriguez to his left and D. Lopez to his right. B. Lopez was the left sided midfielder and Diaz the right sided midfielder. East was the sole center forward
- This a 4-1-4-1 and not really a 4-3-3 and this was determined by the role of Mason who was mostly in a very deep position when receiving the ball in between the two center backs even receiving the ball from his keeper Ruiz inside his own 18- yard box. He rarely ventured into the Plaza final third as he was the defensive cover in central areas.
- Rodriguez and D. Lopez were interchangeable throughout the first half especially, swapping positions at various times. On a few occasions, when the two had swapped positions, Rodriguez often found himself in the right back position due to Madrigal being, in the early attacking build up phases, positioned over the half-way line and he then acted as a type of quarterback in that he would play long lofted passes up to either East, Diaz or Madrigal.
- In slide no. 4 the following slide the tactic of Santos getting left back Meneses high and central is shown in more detail.





Meneses movement into the half space opens up a passing option for Rubio to B. Lopez out wide.

As detailed in the previous slide this is how Santos used LB Meneses in a central midfield role in the first phase of their build up play.

As soon as a Santos CB has the ball or CDM Mason (on this occasion it is 8. D. Lopez following a turnover in possession) Meneses moves into midfield either as a passing option or to drag the Plaza right sided attacker inside into the half space to then create space for Santos 22 B. Lopez playing in the LM position.

# Santos DG

## Change of Shape on 55 minutes

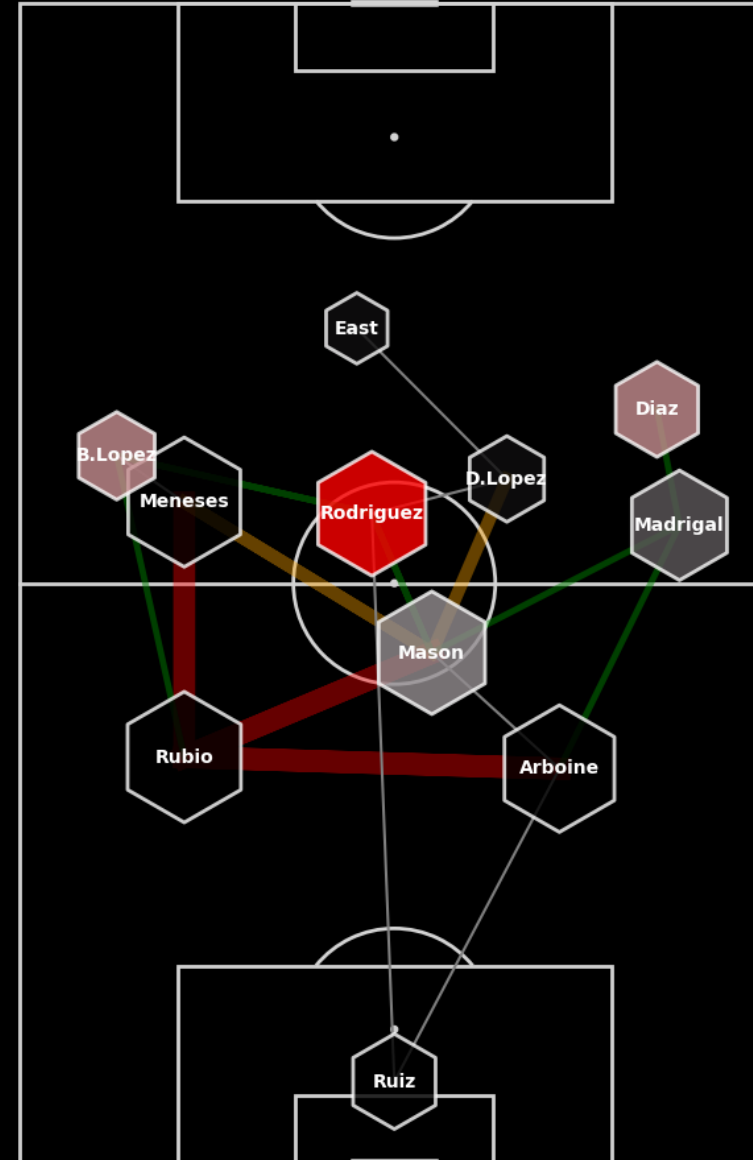
- On the 55<sup>th</sup> minute Santos brought on Mendez in place of D. Lopez, and this meant a change of formation in which they switched to a 4-2-3-1 and this meant Diaz moved from his starting position on the right of midfield to a LCF position with substitute Mendez playing on the right of midfield and these two were defiantly much more attack minded in their roles.
- On 63 minutes Bennett came on to replace Mason and he played in the RCDM position in a defensive midfield two with Rodriguez.
- In the 81<sup>st</sup> minute Barquero replaced B. Lopez and he then played in the AML role on the left of the attacking midfield three.



# Santos DG xThreat Passing Network Minutes 1-55

- 5 Santos players reached 40+ completed passes in the game and these were Rubio (46), Meneses (45), Arboine (43), Rodriguez (41) and Mason (40).
- As detailed in slide 3 it is clear from this graphic also the position, on average, of LB Meneses and the role he was playing in the Santos side. He is positioned in the left half space a great deal with LM B. Lopez operating as more a winger as he had the space to do so as Meneses had created that space for him due to his positioning. It should be noted that Meneses returned to his LB position in the defensive phases.
- Mason, often dropping deep to receive the ball, was the sole CDM with Rodriguez and D. Lopez operating much further forward in both the attacking phases and defensive ones although their defensive work was pretty good as the midfield four created a line 10 yards ahead of Mason in those defensive phases.
- Rubio to Meneses was the highest passing combination with Rubio passing to fellow CB Arboine and Rubio to CDM Mason also higher combinations. A clear triangle appears between Mason, Rubio and Meneses.
- The highest xThreat from passes in the game came from Rodriguez (1 assist from an xA of 0.54) with B. Lopez (3 key passes and 0.32 xA) and Diaz (0.32 xA, 3 key passes and 10 attempted dribbles) also ranking high in the metric.

**Santos DG**  
vs **Plaza Amador**  
CONCACAF League | 24/9/21 | Mins 1-55  
Starting Formation- 4-1-4-1



Highest Player xT  
Rodriguez

Non-Pen xG  
East (0.32)

Highest Pass Combination  
Rubio > Meneses

Ball Recoveries  
Meneses (13)

Shots On Target  
Mendez (2)

Chances Created  
Rodriguez/Mendez (1)

Dribbles  
Diaz (10)

Tackles  
Meneses (10)

Key Passes  
Rodriguez (1)

Team Pass Completion %  
77% (346/450)

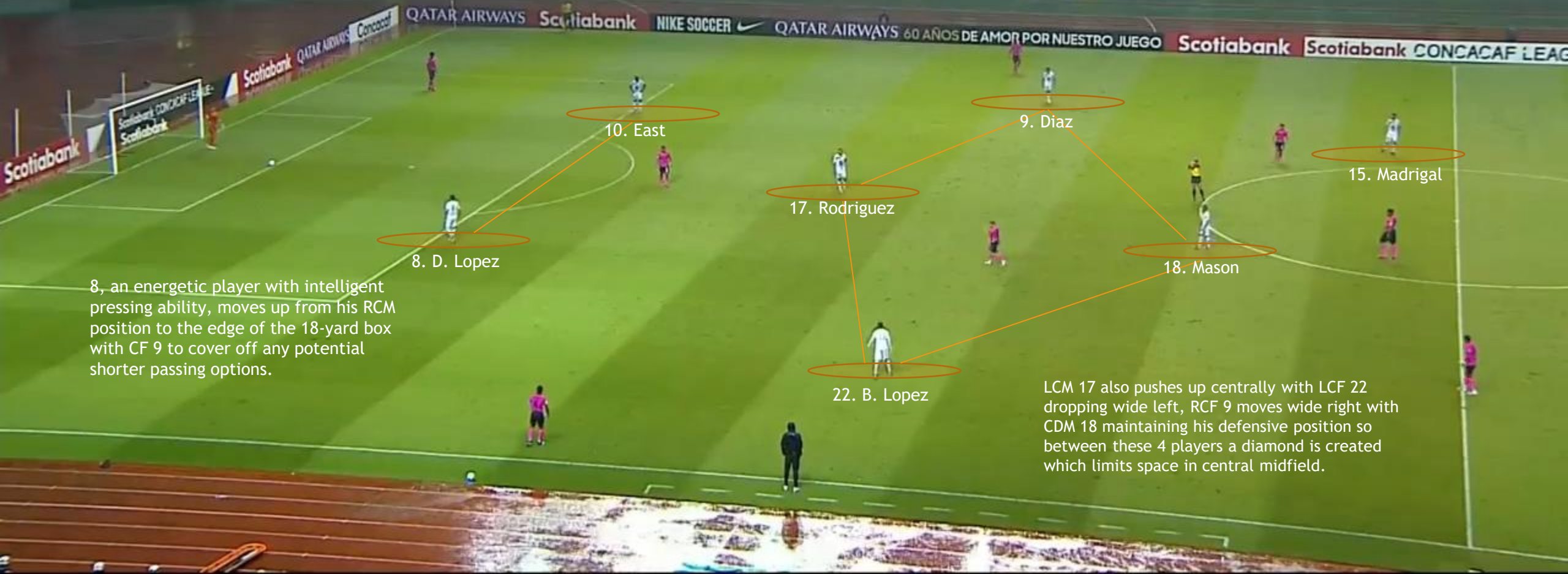


Data: InStat

## Santos Pressing Strategy from a Plaza goal kick

CL 30:47 | SAN 0 | 0 PLA

Santos were set up in a 4-1-4-1 formation in this game and here is an example of Santos' set up when defending a Plaza goal kick. Plaza had to keep playing long from their goal kicks with Santos winning either the first, or the likelier, second ball and therefore regaining possession.



10. East

9. Diaz

15. Madrigal

8. D. Lopez

17. Rodriguez

18. Mason

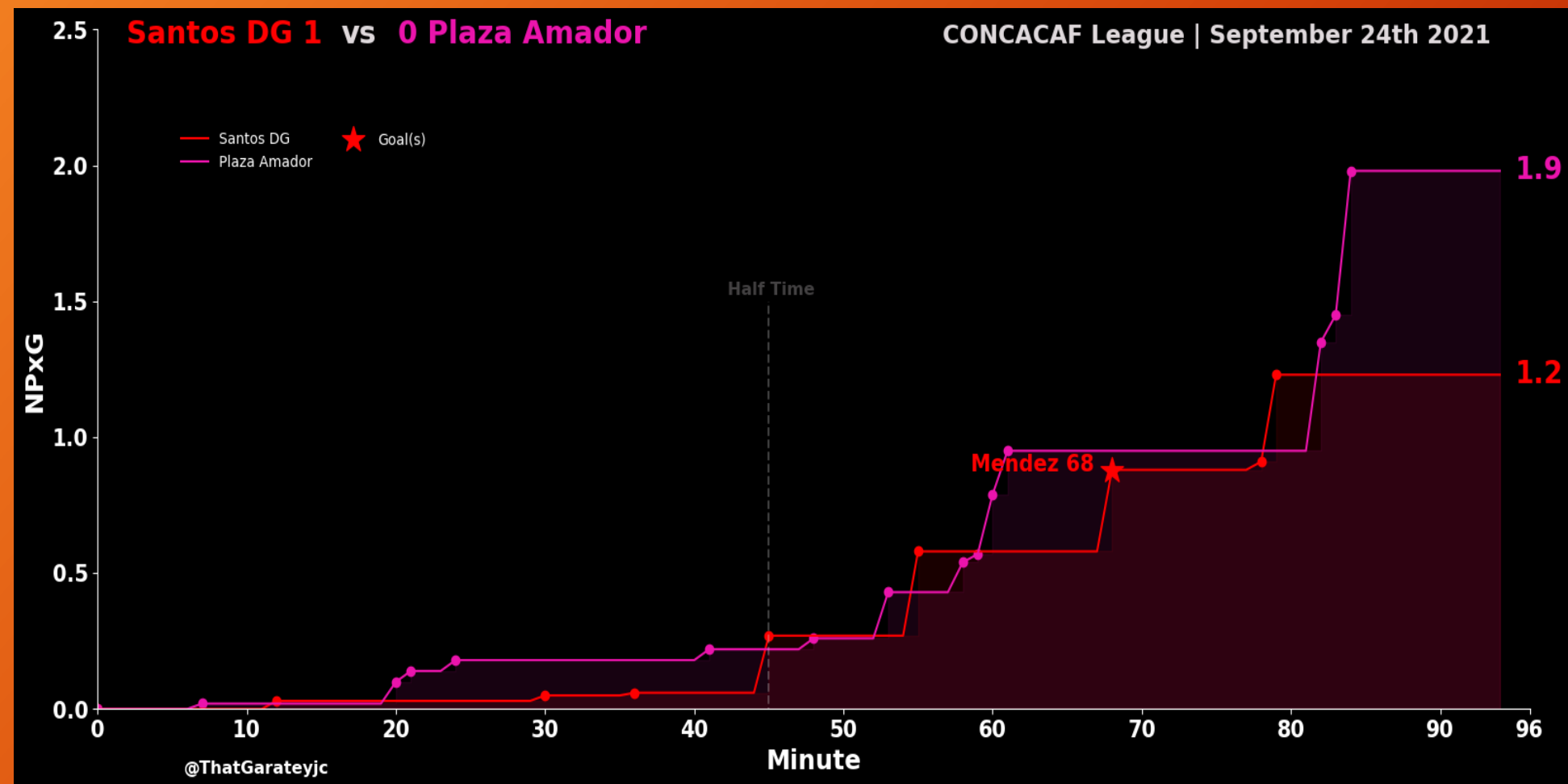
22. B. Lopez

8, an energetic player with intelligent pressing ability, moves up from his RCM position to the edge of the 18-yard box with CF 9 to cover off any potential shorter passing options.

LCM 17 also pushes up centrally with LCF 22 dropping wide left, RCF 9 moves wide right with CDM 18 maintaining his defensive position so between these 4 players a diamond is created which limits space in central midfield.

# Santos DG v Plaza Amador xG Timeline

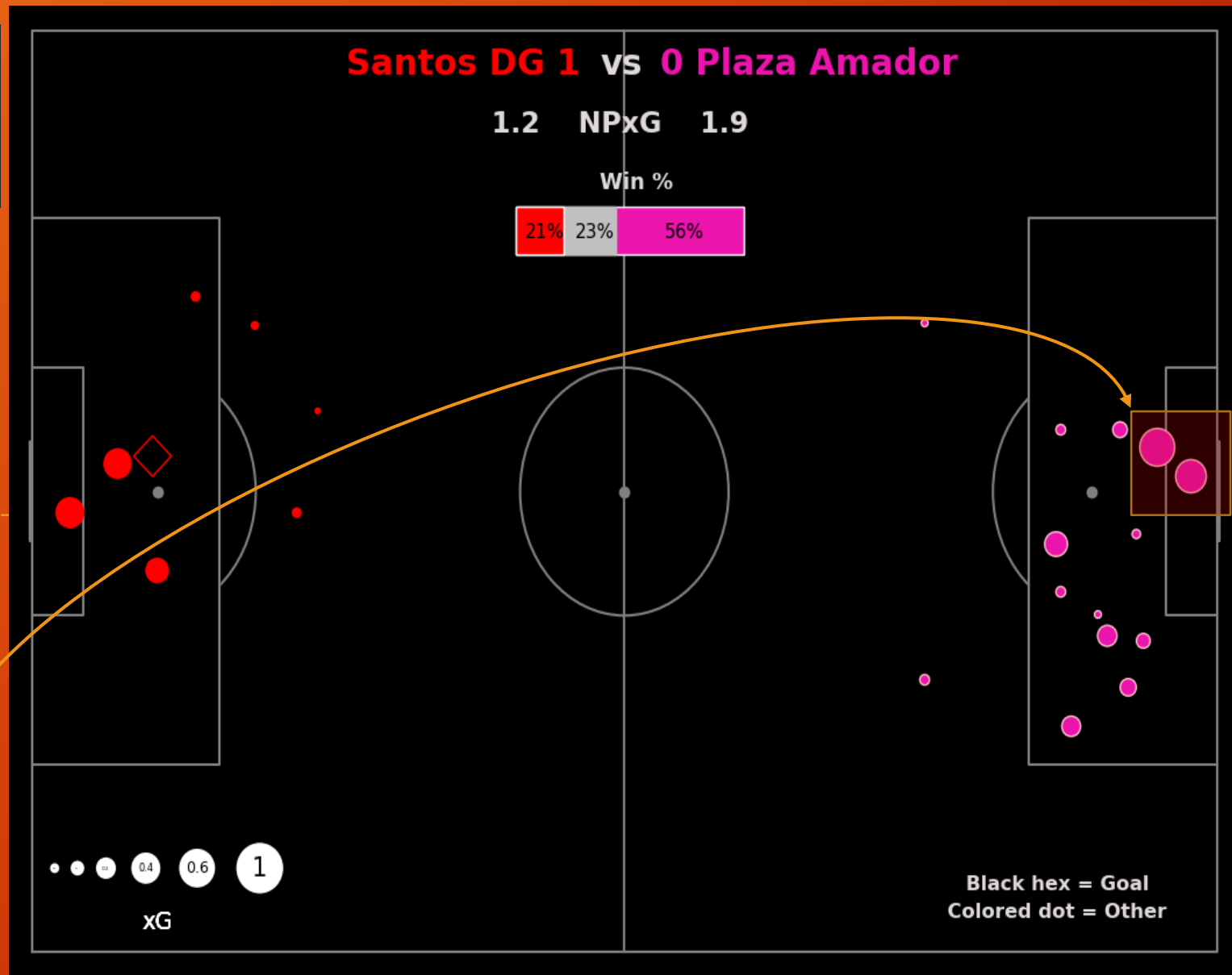
- Santos took 8 shots in the game with 4 ending up on the Plaza goal and with that created an xG of 1.23.
- Santos gave up a rather large total of 14 shots to Plaza with 7 on target. Plaza had a total xG of 1.98 from those chances.



- Santos' matches can be slow burner's in getting going as they feel their way into a game and their opponents therefore chances can be at a premium and this was the case again for them in this game as they had just the 3 shots in the first half with 5 coming from the away side.
- The second half followed a similar pattern to other games with most chances coming in the second period.
- The highest xG for a single shot from Santos was at 0.32 in the 79<sup>th</sup> minute Plaza had a 0.52 xG effort in which Santos were very lucky to not have conceded from.
- Mendez goal was a 0.30 xG chance.

# Santos DG v Plaza Amador xG Shot Map

- Although Santos took just the 8 shots in the game 5 were from inside the 18-yard box and were good chances ranging from 0.21 to 0.31 which includes the only goal in the game.
- Plaza's shot locations were also very good with Santos giving up 12 of the 14 total Plaza shots also coming from inside the penalty area and in truth Santos were very lucky to not have conceded at least twice with Santos' keeper Ruiz having to make quite a few saves throughout the course of the game.
- The two shots here were of a 0.52 and 0.40 xG and were very good opportunities for Plaza and really should have been converted.
- Due to the higher xG total Plaza had a 56% chance of winning this match compared to Santos 21% yet still came away with nothing in this first leg.





# Santos DG

## Overall Summary- Areas to exploit, Passing Combinations, Key Players, Tactics, Formations etc

### Style of play-

- Long balls from the GK from goal kicks and little short passes from them. Santos were more cautious in their build up play with a lot of passing between the back four and into Mason in CM. Emphasis on making the most of the tactic of B. Lopez positioning wide right when LB Meneses moved inside.

### Passing Combinations-

- Mason dictated the play from his CDM position using B. Lopez a lot wide left. Rubio has good passing range and can pick out a threaded pass into CM.

### Areas to exploit-

- The much-spoken Meneses movement into CM can leave them exposed in the transitions as if he is in CM and B. Lopez is further down the left then they are exposed in the LB position as no one comes across to cover him off which is slightly strange given how obvious it was.
- Having watched both Santos number 1 Forvis and now Ruiz they do not instill a great deal of confidence in their defenders as their techniques when facing shots are very dubious. When making a save the ball rebounds into dangerous areas and they don't look comfortable on crosses at all.

### Formations Used-

- Santos started the game in a 4-1-4-1 and not an orthodox 4-3-3 although it could be perceived as this at various points, but they played with a sole CDM in Mason. After the first substitution they switched to a 4-2-3-1.

### Key Players-

- On and off the ball Meneses had a good game and the energy of D. Lopez in CM was very evident. Rodriguez was a threat in the final phases of their attacking play. Mason dictated some of the play from his CDM position.

### Set Piece Takers-

- Rodriguez took all the set pieces for them in this game including the corners from both sides with in swinging and out swinging deliveries.