

Reggae Boyz thrash Antigua 4-1

Jamaica's Reggae Boyz have secured their spot in the final round of the World Cup Qualifiers after a 4-1 win over Antigua and Barbuda in the final Group A game at the National Stadium.

Dane Richards scored twice in the final 12 minutes, completing Jamaica's 4-1 victory over Antigua & Barbuda on Tuesday and providing the goals necessary to send the Reggae Boyz into the final round of CONCACAF World Cup qualifying.

Richards volleyed a ball from eight meters in the 78th that was played into the middle by Rodolph Austin, who had worked his way past three defenders on the right side of the penalty area. He added a finale 10 minutes later to assure Jamaica of advancing.

Combined with the United States' 3-1 victory over Guatemala in Kansas City, Kansas, in a match that was played simultaneously, the Americans won Group A with 13 points, three more than both the Chapines and Jamaica.

But Richards' goal gave Jamaica a plus-3 goal difference, two better than Guatemala.

The result leaves Jamaica as the only Caribbean representative in the six-team "hexagonal" round and returns the Reggae Boyz, who qualified for the 1998 World Cup, to the final phase of qualifying after it missed in 2010.

Demar Phillips and Nyron Nosworthy scored first-half goals to give Jamaica a 2-0 lead, but a goal by Antigua's Quinton Griffith in the 61st minute threatened to deny the Reggae Boyz a path to the final round.

Griffith's goal was his second in qualifying for the 2014 World Cup, but was only the fourth in six games for Antigua in the semifinal round.

Jamaica's first two goals came after corner kicks a minute apart.

In the 16th, the ball deflected to 30 meters from goal where Phillips was left alone, and he struck a left-footed drive that skipped once in front of the net and past Antigua keeper Molvin James.

The second goal came when Austin curled the corner into the near post, and Nosworthy ran onto it just inside the six, heading into the far-side netting.

Griffith dampened the mood of the home crowd with his right-footed free kick from 27 meters inside the right post.

But Richards' first goal in qualifying in the 78th saved Jamaica, which won at home in World Cup qualifying for a seventh straight game. He added a second goal in the 88th to ensure the victory.