Nat Walker Corporate Public Relations (914) 773-2758 RJRT 83-03/ /83

WASHINGTON -- One of the nation's largest corporate supporters of special events activities will be the major sponsor of a series of outdoor soccer games played by Team America, a Washington, D.C.-based team formed to develop a solid entry for the United States in the 1986 World Cup.

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. will sponsor the Winston Team
America Series, a schedule of matches for Team America in the
North American Soccor League as well as games against foreign
clubs, through its Winston cigarette brand.

Winston is also funding a Host Valuable Player point fund leading up to a \$10,000 cash award at the end of the 1983 season for Team America's most valuable player. \$5,000 for the player ranked second and \$2,500 for the player ranked third.

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A Host Valuable Player will be selected by sports reporters at the end of each Team America NASL game. The Winston HVP for each game will receive \$500. The year-end winners will be selected based on points accumulated throughout the season.

"Team America brings together America's best soccer players to compete in the NASL and train as the United States' national team for World Cup competition," said James W. Johnston, executive vice president of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, manufacturers of Winston cigarettes.

"We are excited about the prospects for Team America and pleased that we are able to help make this national effort possible," he said.

"The Winston Team America Series provides an excellent training ground for developing a national soccer team to compete internationally against some of the best teams in the world. The games this season with the other teams in the NASL and foreign clubs will help shape Team America as a major international force in soccer." Johnston said.

Robert K. Lifton, president of Team America, welcomed the sponsorship of Winston cigarettes. "I know no professional sports team can survive on gate alone; you must have corporate sponsorship. Winston is helping to make Team America possible.

"We know the contribution Winston has made to other sports in our country, and now we are looking forward to having their involvement with us."

Warner Hodgdon, a California businessman with interests in other sports activities, is among the owners of Team America.

Team America will play its home games at RFK Stadium in Washington. Team America's first home game is May 8 against the Tulsa Roughnecks.

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