PORTLAND TIMBERS
PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release: Oct. 26, 2026
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TIMBERS LEGEND DIEGO CHARA TO RETIRE FOLLOWING THE 2027 MLS SPRINT SEASON

Chara to embark on 17th and final season with the Timbers

PORTLAND, Ore. – Portland Timbers captain Diego Chara will retire at the conclusion of the 2027 MLS Sprint Season, he announced today.

Chara, 40, made the announcement in a press conference today, Oct. 26. To hear his full comments from the announcement, his press conference can be viewed and downloaded here.

“Diego Chara has been the heartbeat of the Portland Timbers since we entered MLS in 2011,” Timbers owner Merritt Paulson said. “No single player has embodied our club more than Diego, and I will enjoy every last moment he graces our pitch and before he takes his place in our Ring of Honor.”

Currently in his 16th season with the club, Chara is the team’s all-time leader in games played (450), games started (413) and minutes played (37k+) in MLS play, while recording 50 goal contributions (12G, 38A) throughout his career. Notably, he holds the MLS record for most regular-season appearances for one club all time and is the only player in league history who has played 16 seasons with one team. Chara currently ranks sixth all-time in MLS for games played and fourth most among field players.

“I’m grateful we have the opportunity to enjoy watching Diego for another MLS season and it will be a fitting farewell tour for a true MLS and Club Legend,” said Timbers general manager Ned Grabavoy. “Watching him continue to perform at this level has been a privilege. He exemplifies what it means to be a Portland Timber and we cannot thank him enough for what he has provided this Club and City.”

The Colombian midfielder signed as the club’s first Designated Player in its inaugural 2011 MLS season. He has since helped guide the Timbers to an MLS Cup title (2015), three Western Conference Championship trophies (2015, 2018, 2021), and the 2020 MLS Is Back Tournament championship in his tenure with the club. In 2020, he was named to the MLS Best XI for the first time in his career and was selected to the MLS Is Back Tournament Best XI in the club’s title run. Chara was also named an MLS All-Star in 2019 and was voted Timbers Army Supporters’ Player of the Year twice (2012, 2015).

“Before my arrival to Portland, I was aware of Diego’s legacy with the Timbers. Since being here and working with him, his impact on this club is absolutely unmistakable,” head coach Martí Cifuentes shared. “He leads by example on the field, in the locker room and throughout our community, while setting the standard for determination, consistency and respect. I am grateful to witness a part of his legendary career.”

The 2027 MLS Sprint Season will kick off in February and culminate with the Audi 2027 MLS Cup Playoffs

and 2027 MLS Cup in May. The shortened campaign will see each MLS team play 14 regular season games from February to April. Regular season matches will consist of intra-conference play with teams facing each of their 14 conference opponents once - seven matches at home and seven matches away. At the conclusion of the regular season, the top eight teams in each of the two conferences will qualify for the Audi 2027 MLS Cup Playoffs. In each conference, the postseason will be played in a single-elimination bracket format to determine a conference champion. The Eastern Conference Champion and Western Conference Champion will then meet in 2027 MLS Cup.

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