

2005 Challenge Cup Selects

Last week I was asked by an avid soccer fan if I would do an article on choosing an NLSA Challenge Cup Select Team.

After giving this question some considerable thought, I gave her my answer and in this article I will share with you my Coach's Corner 2005 Select Team.

STRIKERS

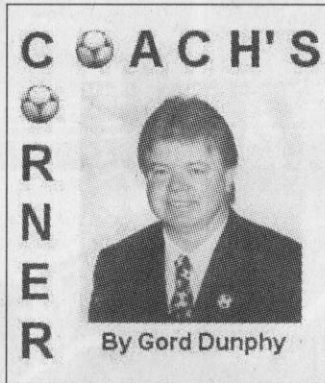
Richard Kelly (Left Striker): A natural soccer player and the league's most gifted goal scorer. Kelly's great vision and play-making ability are, at times, overshadowed by the goals he scores. Richard is as good as any striker presently playing for any senior club across this country.

Matthew Wilkins (Right Striker): Again this guy is a speedster and I would love to have a guy of Wilkins' speed and ability to pair up with Richard. This duo would cause great havoc for opposing back-lines. Can you imagine trying to defend against Richard's talents and against Wilkins' speed?

MIDFIELDERS

Rudy Norman (Right Center Mid-field): I would place Rudy in center mid-field on my select team. He is big and strong, super fit and loves to win. Rudy's speed and hard shot would allow him to contribute offensively from this position. Rudy always has had strong defensive abilities.

Shane Antle (Left Center Mid-field): This may surprise a number of you, but despite the fact Shane may not be playing at his



By Gord Dunphy

full potential this season I would definitely have this guy on my team. He's got the abilities. He has good vision, great talents and with a push and a bit of motivation I think Antle could be the guy that could very well be the center-midfielder to lead my team.

Darrell Stewart (Right Mid-field): Darrell, for the past two seasons, has been playing his game at a very high level. He has great defensive skills and can contribute offensively. Stewart thinks the game and patrols the midfield area extremely well.

Paul J. Slaney (Left Mid-field): Paul may be a very quiet individual, but at this point of his career he is very experienced. He reads the game extremely well and has great play-making skills. Slaney generally puts the defensive element of his game first, but can contribute offensively.

FULLBACKS

Vince MacDougall (Center Back): After watching him perform for the last number of years, it was only last year I came to

really appreciate Vinny's talents. He is a very aggressive player and natural leader. No doubt at times he may antagonize the opponent and he may not always play by the rules of the game, but, in my opinion, his talents and leadership abilities are unparalleled by that of any other player in this province. Actually, I would love to have him as my team's captain.

Clinton Edwards (Sweeper): Clinton is the most talented, versatile soccer player in the province. He is also the best sweeper combining talent, speed, vision and natural abilities with character. As a soccer player he has it all. He can play up front, in the mid-field or center back. In other words he is the complete package.

John Kelly (Right Wing Back): I have seen this guy play mid-field, sweeper and from the right wing back position. It's the right wing back position I feel John plays his best soccer and that's exactly where I would use him. This guy is a big and strong player that uses his head well in the game and uses it well in the air. He is a great marksman who has super speed for a big man.

David Manning (Left Wing Back): David's desire to become a great soccer player has won him a starting position as left wing back. He has a great level of fitness, anticipates the play well and appears to have increased his speed with the ball. He knows the defensive side of the game and plays the left side extremely well.

GOALIE

Matthew Prim: Selecting a starting goalie was my most difficult task. Seeing Matthew Prim play constantly and viewing his athleticism this season makes me realize Matthew is the best goalie in Newfoundland and Labrador today. Prim has the physical structure of a great goalie - he is tall, slim and has cat-like reflexes. His abilities alone could allow a club to steal a victory but it is his concentration he must work on.

COACHES

Jack Simms (Head Coach): Selecting a head coach was a very easy decision. It would be Jack Simms. Jack is presently a co-coach with the St. Lawrence Laurentians and is, in my opinion, the top coach in Provincial Challenge Cup today. His record with the Laurentians, both today and in the past, speaks for itself. Simms previously coached the Laurentians to six provincial championships. It was under his leadership during the 70s the Laurentians were named the 'Team of the Decade'. He is presently a member of the St. Lawrence Soccer Hall of Fame, Burin Peninsula Soccer Hall of

Fame and the Newfoundland and Labrador Soccer Hall of Fame.

Walt Mavin (Assistant Coach): Mavin's coaching record would make him a great contributor to a select team as the assistant coach. Walt is presently the head coach of Mount Pearl.

Bernard (Fox) Reddy (Assistant Coach): One of the province's all-time great soccer players, he would be an excellent addition to develop the talents of a young team. Fox is presently the head coach of Holy Cross.

BENCH (ALTERNATES)

12. Steven Croft: A great center back that, given a group of bona fide soccer players to play with, could rise his level of play to that of stardom.

13. Jon Hawco: A little young yet, but a natural goal scorer who reads the game well and has good speed.

14. Chad Parsons: A big strong boy that brings a physical element to the game when required. He is very strong in the air.

15. Ryan Slaney: Maybe the league's most underrated player. Can play the duties of an offensive role or a defensive position.

16. Shaun Manning: A kid that has turned the corner this season. He has super speed, good

venison and he knows where the net is.

17. Jeremy Babstock: A very versatile solid player that could be used in mid-field or fullback position. He brings a very positive attitude to the field.

18. Gerald Connolly: My backup goalie Connolly is one of two active goalies that has earned a Challenge Cup Championship. He plays the game with a big heart.

19/20. Dr. Paul Slaney & Patty Kennedy: Championship teams are built around veteran character players and these are the two individuals that, because of their past contributions, and their present involvement with the game, I would add both of them to the Challenge Cup Select Team. Their presence alone could be a great asset to the other 18 players.

Dunphy's Details: Predictions for Round 2

Tier 1: 1st - St. Lawrence, 2nd - Mount Pearl, 3rd - Holy Cross
Tier 2: 1st - Marystown, 2nd - Feildians, 3rd - Harbour Grace

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