NORTH AMERICAN SOCCER LEAGUE

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SPORTING NEWS PRESENTS THE 1972 NASL MOST VALUABLE PLAYER, ROOKIE-OF-THE-YEAR AND COACH-OF-THE-YEAR AWARDS:

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER - RANDY HORTON, NEW YORK COSMOS

The 6'2", 200lb. bearded scoring standout of the Cosmos for the past two years, was the 1971-NASL Rookie-of-the-Year and the first NASL player ever to capture the Rookie and MVP awards in successive years. Horton was born in Bermuda, and was a member of the Bermuda National team, playing along side Clyde Best, the talented striker of West Ham United of England.

Horton has been the NASL's leading scorer in his two years in the league with a total of 59 points on 25 goals and 9 assists in 35 games. He was the runner-up to Carlos Metidieri in the 1971 scoring race before garnering the Goalgetter Cup this season.

Before coming to the United States and Rutgers University, where he has just received his A.B. degree in Economics, the 27 year old Horton played for the Somerset Football and Cricket Club of Bermuda, the perennial Champions of Bermuda from 1966-1970. In addition to his successes in the NASL, Horton considers his single greatest thrill in soccer, the day in 1969 when he scored a goal in Bermuda's stunning 2-1 upset victory over Mexico.

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ROOKIE-OF-THE-YEAR - MIKE WINTER, ST. LOUIS

At 20 years old, Winter is one of the finest young goalkeepers in the United States and is a recent graduate of the University of Illinois (Chicago Loop). Prior to joining the St. Louis Stars in April, Winter was selected as the All-Star goalkeeper for the National Soccer League of Chicago on five occasions against such foreign opposition as reknown Santos of Brazil, compiling a record of two wins, two losses and a tie.

Winter was born in Austria but moved to the United States with his parents at the young age of three. The ability of the 5'11", 161 lbs. netminder of the Stars has earned him a place on the United States World Cup team presently trying to qualify for the final sixteen teams which will meet in Munich in 1974. His goals against average of 1.00 per game was second only to the NASL First Team All-Star goalkeeper Ken Cooper and his consistent play was one of the major reasons for the Stars remarkable success this season.

On Saturday Winter will be in goal for the Stars against the New York Cosmos in the NASL Championship Game. He and six of his teammates will then rejoin the U.S. World Cup Team which plays Canada on Tuesday, August 29th in Baltimore before traveling to play Mexico September 3rd at the Aztec Stadium in Mexico City where the World Cup was held, and the return game against Mexico in the Los Angeles Coliseum, September 10th.

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COACH-OF-THE-YEAR - CASEY FRANKIEWICZ, ST. LOUIS STARS

Few early season polls predicted that the St. Louis Stars would win the Southern Division, or reach the NASL Championship Game. After three consecutive years in or around the league basement, even Casey Frankiewicz who had played for the Stars in 1967-1969 and 1970, before being handed the club reins on June 13th of last year, would admit his sincere doubts that such a turnabout was feasible.

Frankiewicz has found success, molding seven industrious American players into a unit with himself and three other established veterans John Sewell, Wilf Tranter and Joe Puls.

At 5'11", 158lbs. the Polish born Striker, who made 18 appearances for the National Youth and under-23 teams of Poland, has proven himself as one of the most talented forwards ever to play in the NASL. He has scored 41 goals and has contributed 18 assists for exactly 100 points in 90 games, which ranks him fourth on the All-Time NASL Scoring List behind Carlos Metidieri and Manfred Seissler of Rochester and Ilia Mitic of the old Oakland Clippers and Dallas Tornado.

Frankiewicz presently a citizen of Holland where he played for Ajax and NEC of Breda in 1969 and 1970, has been named to the NASL All-Star teams no less than three times. His most spectacular performance for the Stars came on June 27, 1968 where he surprized Santos of Brazil with two brilliant goals in the first seven minutes before the Stars finally succumbed 3-2 on a goal by Pele in the waning minutes. He will face his biggest test as a player-coach on Saturday, August 27th when the Stars meet the New York Cosmos for the NASL Championship at Hofstra Stadium at 8:00pm. Frankiewicz scored the tying goal in the last ten seconds of the first Cosmo-Stars meeting this season to climax an incredible comeback from a 3-0 deficit to tie the game 3-3. On July 29th the Stars defeated the Cosmos 1-0 on a goal from linkman Pat McBride to take the season series and set the stage for an exciting Championship Game.