ROWDIES NEWS

Tampa Bay Rowdies
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TAMPA, March 20, 1978
VOLUME 4, Number 12
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FINAL PRE-SEASON MATCH AGAINST THE METROS

The Rowdies' final pre-season match will be played Friday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m. at Dunedin High School against the Toronto Metros. It marks the fourth outdoor exhibition match for Tampa Bay. The Metros, who had some trouble with travel arrangements and arrived late the the Bay Area, will play one game Tuesday against the Kicks before Friday's game with the Rowdies. That will be their first pre-season game. Tampa Bay goes into the match with a 2-1 record.

TORONTO - A TOUGH COMPETITOR

The Rowdies - Metros regular season record is 2-3 over three years. The Rowdies lost their only encounter 3-1 in '75; lost 2-0 and won 4-1 in '76; lost 4-0 and won 2-0 in '77. In playoff action, Tampa Bay defeated Toronto 1-0 in '75 but lost their playoff berth in '76 with a 2-0 defeat to the Metros. That year the Metros went on the take the NASL title.

After a year's absence the '76 championship winning Domagoj Kapetanovic is back as the Metros head coach. He will be assisted this year by Ivan Sangulin, who led the Metros to a 13-13 record in '77, leading the Northern division with 115 points.

Also returning to the Toronto fold are Zeljko Bilecki, who led the league in shutouts in '77 with ten and registered fourth with 1.21 goals against; Ted Polak entering his fifth season with the club; Peter Roe, the Canadian forward who lends scoring ignition to the front line, and Vjekoslav Banovic, a 21 year old goalie that the Metros feel will add depth to their already tight defense.

Tickets for Friday's match can be purchased at the Rowdies Bootique, Wilsons Sporting Goods in St. Petersburg and Suncoast Sports in Largo.

SHOOTOUT DEFEAT OF DETROIT

The Rowdies won their third all time shootout Saturday in Lakeland as the expansion Detroit Express got a taste of the unique American exercise in shell shock. At the end of this second half the score was tied 2-2. Both teams consulted in the center circle and came out with the decision to settle the game with the shootout, passing by the sudden death overtime. Slobodan Ilijevski, the Express' Yugoslavian goalie, stopped the first Rowdie attempt but couldn't cope with driving shots by Alston, Robb and Quraishi in rapid succession. Hammond, back in his first game since early February, made a series of spectacular saves that held the Express scoreless in the tie breaking procedure. It would seem that the injured goalie is well on his way to complete recovery.

Any initial hesitation to kick those long hard balls from goal to goal that Hammond is famous for, disappeared early in the game. The "Boomer" came back playing aggressive soccer, making spectacular saves, and moving the ball downfield with strength and direction.

Game action moved at an almost frantic pace throughout the 90 minutes of regulation time. Reduced playing area and a physical style of play by the Express altered the Rowdies usual style of tactical passing. However, both Tampa goals personified team work and skill. Boris Bandov's 20 yard cannon shot at 58:36 came from a well placed pass from Steve Wegerle, shooting by the Express goalie before he had time to react. Wegerle's goal at 64:13 came from a perfectly timed and placed pass from Rodney Marsh. The Detroit goals were scored by a hustling Keith Furphy and a penalty kick by David Bradford. Bradford scored the only goal against Minnesota with the exact same kick last week.

WEGERLE - PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Steve Wegerle has shown superb skill and hustle throughout the pre-season. His performance Saturday night exemplified the beauty of the outdoor game. Wegerle can and does play both sides of the field with equal skill. His high level of hustle and energy never degenerates to a frantic or sloppy form but always maintains elegance. Wegerle reads the game with calm tactical awareness. His goal and assist Saturday night boost him into the leading scorers category for pre-season, but the real credit is in his excellent playmaking skills. Player of the Week laurels rest well on this young player.

WE DO IT ALL FOR YOU

The Tampa Bay area McDonald's Restaurants and the Rowdies will kick off the pro soccer season in Tampa Bay for the third year in a row with a major promotion sponsored exclusively by McDonald's. When the Rowdies meet the Memphis Rogues on Saturday, April 1 in the season opener, McDonald's and the Rowdies will present a special opening package.

Beginning today, participating McDonald's in the Bay area will have special dollar off discount coupons available to their customers. The Rowdies invite all Bay Area fans to stop by their local McDonald's, pick up a coupon and get tickets in advance for the big opening game festivities. Coupons may be redeemed at Bay Area Maas Brothers, selected Exchange Banks, the Rowdies Bootique and at Tampa Stadium (three days prior to the game).

This major promotion with McDonald's is part of an overall major sponsorship with the Tampa Bay McDonald's co-op that is going into its third exciting season. McDonald's and the Rowdies continue to work together to make soccer that much more accessible to the ever expanding group of soccer enthusiasts in this area.

ROWDIES/COCA COLA INTRODUCE NEW YOUTH CLUB

The Florida Coca-Cola Bottling Company and the Tampa Bay Rowdies have announced a major new Youth Club for 1978 to be known as the "Mr. PiBB/Rowdies Rooters Club". The club is open to youths 18 years of age and under. A key aspect of the club is that special seating in the north end zone of Tampa Stadium will be reserved for "Mr. PiBB/ Rowdies Rooters".

Club benefits include:

- $1.00 discount to all regular season games - seating in an exclusive section in Tampa Stadium. All club members will sit together.

- Official limited edition Club T-shirt, exclusive to club members only.

- Coca-Cola Soccer Tips Guide.

- Rowdies Official 1978 Media Guide.

- Official Membership Card.

This fine program has been in the planning stage for a year and the Rowdies and Florida Coca-Cola Bottling Company are very pleased to bring this exciting youth program to the Bay Area. Applications for the Rooters Club membership will be available at Tampa Stadium this Saturday from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. at the Rowdies' first annual "Soccer Day - Tampa Bay" also sponsored by Coca-Cola.

The Rowdies and Coca-Cola feel a very strong commitment to the area youth and believe that by offering a $23 value package for the nominal cost of only $3 that more and more kids in the area will be able to enjoy the excitement of professional soccer as played by the Tampa Bay Rowdies, one of the most innovative teams in the North American Soccer League.

TORONTO'S ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POSITION	AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	CITIZENSHIP
1	Bilecki, Zeljko	Goalkeeper	26	6-1	185	Canadian
2	Kocijancic, Ivan	Forward	30	5-8	165	Croatian
3	Polak, Ted	Defender	33	6-0	175	Canadian
5	Loparic, Stjepan	Forward	26	6-0	175	Croatian
6	Leighton, Steve	Defender	23	5-6	150	Canadian
7	Smolcic, Vladimir	Forward	25	5-6	155	Croatian
9	Gluic, Josko	Forward	27	5-10	165	Croatian
11	Ferreira, Ivair	Midfielder	33	5-9	150	Brazilian
12	Roe, Peter	Midfielder	22	5-8	150	Canadian
14	Sutevski, Damir	Defender	23	5-8	150	Croatian
15	Jelic, Ivica	Midfielder	28	5-10	145	Croatian
17	Kukuleca, Ivica	Forward	26	5-10	165	Croatian
18	McLoughlin, Jim	Forward	21	6-2	170	Canadian
19	Gallo, Herberth Denis	Defender	18	6-3	165	Uraguain
20	D'Alfonso, Aldo	Forward	21	5-9	165	Canadian
21	Matas, Boris	Midfielder	20	5-7	135	Canadian
22	Paul, Junior	Midfielder	25	6-4	180	Canadian
23	Banovic, Zjekoslav	Goalkeeper	21	6-0	185	Australian
24	Judd, Robert	Goalkeeper	23	6-0	170	Canadian
25	Albuquerque, Oscar	Midfielder	23	5-9	165	Canadian

Head Coach - Domagoj, Kapetanovic Asst. Coach - Ivan Sangulin Trainer - Mike Krijan

General Manager - J.I. Albrecht

Rowdies Hope Initial Visit Not Last By Young Draftees

By JIM HENDERSON
Tribune Sports Writer

Perry Van Der Beck and Sandje Ivanchukov make their first appearance in Tampa today.

The Tampa Bay Rowdies hope it will not be their last.

Van Der Beck and Ivanchukov, drafted by the Rowdies in January, will play for the Under 21 International Youth team against Tampa Bay in a 3 p.m. closed door scrimmage at the University of South Florida.

The Under 21 team, also featuring Rowdies defender Tony Crudo, is Orlando training for a March 21-29 tournament in Switzerland and will play its only exhibition prior to leaving for the tourney.

Van Der Beck and Ivanchukov were two of the top high school players in the country this year and their services were highly sought. The Rowdies, through a series of deals, were able to obtain the two youngsters in the draft.

Now, the tough part, that of getting them to sign, begins.

Although no negiotiations can actually take place until their class graduates in May or June, the Rowdies will show the two players the town during their stay and will honor them and their all-star teammates at tonight's 7 o'clock Center Circle dinner at the Hawaiian Village.

Should Van Der Beck and Ivanchukov sign, the Rowdies will guarantee them their education. If they elect not to sign, they can either go to college in the fall or be re-drafted in August at the North American Soccer League's re-entry draft of high school players.

Neither Van Der Beck nor Ivanchukov have made any public committments as to their future plans.

Ivanchukov particularly could be hard to sign since his older brother, Ken, of Hartwick College, was recently chosen by the Philadelphia Fury in the re-entry draft of collegians. The Fury wants Sandje badly and could try for a package deal.

Van Der Beck is a midfielder and hails from St. Louis while Ivanchukov, a left fullback, calls Hollow Township, N. J. his home.

Today's exhibition begins a busy week for the Rowdies, the next to last week prior to their April 1 home and season opener against Memphis at Tampa Stadium.

Tomorrow, the Rowdies are in Plant City for a clinic at Schneider Stadium benfitting youth soccer in Plant City.

The team will train Wednesday and Thursday, then go to Dunedin High School Friday to face the Toronto Metros in an 8 o'clock exhibition.

The week ends on Saturday with the Rowdies hosting their first "Soccer day" at Tampa Stadium. The team will conduct demonstrations from 2 to 4 p.m. and then from 4:30 to 6, season ticket holders only will be feted at a special reception at the Stadium.

There is no charge for the event.