

SPORTS & LEISURE

Solid

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Apparently, they've come to love soccer players of the Canadian variety down in Bayou country and Ballin-fad-area resident Jade Kovacevic feels much the same way about Louisiana State University.

The Canadian international and Acton District High School student is being hailed as one of the Tigers' star recruits signed this year for the women's varsity team, accepting a full scholarship offer in the school's communications program starting in August.

LSU head coach Brian Lee was effusive in his praise of Kovacevic, who he's been keeping an eye on for the last four years. What cemented Lee's decision to pursue the versatile Kovacevic in the recruitment process was a wondergoal she scored for Canada with her left foot from long range in an international friendly in Florida against Japan in June 2010, just two minutes after entering the match as a substitute.

"We touched up into Canada again, which has been a tremendous pipeline for us, and Jade, we feel like, is the number one kid in Canada in the class of 2012," said Lee, who has guided the Tigers to five Southeastern Conference West titles and five NCAA Tournament appearances in the past six seasons.

"She's a multi-dimensional attacking player who could play anywhere up front and anywhere across the midfield. She could even drop back into the



Acton District High School student Jade Kovacevic recently led the Bearcats to a lopsided victory over visiting EC Drury of Milton in a recent Halton AA league match. Usually a midfielder, Kovacevic will soon be wearing the purple and gold of the LSU Tigers after earning a full scholarship.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

back as our attacking outside back but we feel she's got a great career ahead of her, a potential All-American."

Having just turned 18 last month, Kovacevic has already compiled an impressive resume, playing for Canada at the 2010 FIFA Under-17 Women's World Cup while serving as captain for Team Ontario in 2008-09. She was also a Golden Boot finalist at both the 2008 and 2010 Canadian Soccer Association National All-Star Championships, earning MVP honours in the '08 final

victory over Quebec.

Several top U.S. college programs came calling for Kovacevic's signature on a National Letter of Intent, but she says she was blown away by the hospitality and fervent support of anything Tigers on two trips to Baton Rouge.

"I was looking at Miami (Florida) and Wisconsin, but LSU was the obvious choice after I visited twice. Everything about it appealed to me—the people were so welcoming and the team colours—I love purple and gold," she said.

Jade

"The campus is gorgeous, the climate is to-die-for hot and the school spirit is unreal...I don't really understand football, but I can't wait to go to a home game. It's a great sports school and the women's soccer program has done really well over the last few years."

This summer, Kovacevic will play for the Toronto Lady Lynx of the W-League before leaving for school in late July, when LSU's pre-season begins.

She's confident about landing a starting role in a Tigers' lineup that will have just three seniors this fall.

"We feel she's going to be ultra-prepared to step in right away to play," Lee added.

"More importantly, her personality both playing on the field and off the field fits college so perfectly. When you recruit kids, you look for aggressive, self-confident, fun-loving kids who smile on a day-to-day basis and we can't wait to get Jade into first practice because she'll be infectious on the entire team."

Kovacevic is also a prospect for this year's Canadian under-20 squad that will play for the World Cup in Japan later this summer. She nearly jumped out of her boots when reminded that the CSA will host the 2014 Women's World Cup.

"Oh my gosh, we're hosting the 2014 World Cup and that's for my age group, so I'm pretty excited about that. That would be a dream come true to play for Canada in the World Cup."

Bowled over

Margaret Searle recently delivered the first official bowl of the 2012 season at the Georgetown Lawn Bowling Club with some encouragement from husband Clive. The local club, located at the corner of William and Edith Streets, will host its annual open house Sunday (May 27) from 2-4 p.m. and welcomes newcomers to the sport to give it a try. For more info, call Lena White at 905-877-4859.

Submitted photo



CtK headed to OFSAA

Jake Pehiniak, Daryl Hanzelka and Connor Brown scored two goals each for Christ the King's Jaguars Thursday as they earned a spot in the provincial high school boys' field lacrosse championships with a 10-3 triumph over Burlington's Corpus Christi Longhorns in Georgetown.

An early offensive onslaught by the Jags propelled the hosts into a 7-2 half-time lead and they cruised to the four-

team Halton Secondary School Athletic Association league title trophy.

Michael Nicolucci, Adam Charalambides, Teagan Gilian and Adam MacKinnon added single goals to the CtK victory.

This year's OFSAA Lacrosse Festival Boys' AAA/AAAA Championships will take place June 7-8 at Brampton's Creditview/Sandalwood Complex, featuring 16 teams from around the province.

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