

SPORTS & LEISURE

U.S. school takes a Flyer on Ctk's Waters

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Making the starting 11 on a team that has won three consecutive conference championships in NCAA Division I soccer would seem like a daunting task for a first-year player.

But soon-to-be Christ the King Secondary School graduate Nicole Waters expects to be in top form when she leaves for the University of Dayton at the end of July to play for the Flyers' varsity women's squad and study exercise science on a full scholarship.

"(Dayton head coach Mike Tucker) told us it doesn't matter what year you're in, as long as you do your best, he'll play the best players and I'm confident that I can start this year," said the 18-year-old Terra Cotta resident, who has spent the past year honing her skills at Canada Soccer's National Training Centre in Vaughan.

A member of the honour roll in all four of her years at Ctk, Waters was also named the school's female athlete of the year last week and in between time plays for the Toronto Lady Lynx of the W-League.

"It seems like we're playing or practising every day and on top of that I received my summer fitness package from Dayton, which is five times a week, and I'm like, when am I going to fit all this in, and I still have high school left to finish."

Joining Waters at Dayton will be fellow midfielder Ashley Campbell of Bradford, good friends and teammates on the provincial squad since winning a national title together in 2008. Flyers' coach Tucker



NICOLE WATERS

was thrilled to have successfully recruited two of the top U.S. college prospects from Canada and has a pretty good idea where Waters will fit into the lineup.

"I'll be disappointed if she doesn't step right in and start right away," Tucker said.

"If we're that good and Nicole's not playing I would be pleasantly surprised, but that's not what we were counting on when she signed with us. At the very least, there's going to be good competition for our returning players. I've come up to Canada to see Nicole play several times in the last couple of years and every time she was the best player on the field. She's a make-a-difference-type player who attacks well, scores big goals, sets up her teammates

and can play anywhere she's asked to. We especially like how she dictates things in the midfield and generally is a handful for anyone to deal with."

Although Dayton loses its defensive core and goalkeeper to graduation this summer, having won three Atlantic 10 Conference titles amongst the likes of UMass, Temple and Xavier has driven up expectations for the women's team on campus and the bar has been set higher than just getting to the NCAA Division I tournament.

"We haven't gotten to the final four yet and that's what we've set our sights on," added Tucker. "We feel that the recruiting class we've brought in will thrive under the challenge we've set for ourselves and that their best soccer is yet to come."

A star point guard for Ctk's basketball team, Waters spent three years with the Burlington Heat club program and was the 2011 Ontario Youth league's West Division leading scorer, as well as Burlington Youth Soccer's player of the year.

No fewer than 11 players from the Burlington Heat lineup that had 1994 birth-dates have earned scholarships south of the border and coach Casey Downey said Waters might be the best of the group.

"When Nicole first joined the Burlington Heat, she was a tremendously skilled and creative player who could score goals," he said.

"A year later she was a force on the field, demonstrating playmaking and scoring abilities like no other in the age group. A team captain, Nicole's leadership, all-around dominance and production on the field were simply unmatched."



'Disco' dances to first

Taylor 'Disco' Hillock of the Halton Hills squirt Hawks beats the throw to first base in the opening game of the recent girls' fastpitch tournament hosted by the Hawks in Hornby (pictured above) and other local-area diamonds. The Hawks won this game over Aurora 16-1, then were eliminated after losing to Mississauga Southwest in the quarterfinals. The Halton Hills mite 'red' Hawks were the only one of the host teams that won its division at the 45-team annual event, defeating Kitchener 1-0 in a thrilling final. For a team photo, see page 35.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Not so fast! Local runner didn't qualify for Marathon

Qualifying for the Boston Marathon is turning out to be a tougher challenge than Acton resident Leanne Monaghan thought.

The 48-year-old registered massage therapist ran in the Mississauga Marathon last month and believed she had qualified for the 26.2-mile Boston event after finishing with a time of just under three hours and 58 minutes.

But the qualifying standard for the 2013

Boston Marathon was actually reduced to 3:55 from 4:00 from the previous year, as pointed out by an *Independent & Free Press* reader.

Monaghan, who said she's very embarrassed about the miscalculation, vows to eventually earn a spot to run in Beantown, although it won't be this year as she's training for a half-Ironman event in Muskoka this September, when the qualifying date for the

2013 Boston Marathon passes.

"You can kick me, but you can't keep me down," laughed Monaghan, who only took up running a year and a half ago.

"It might be a blessing in disguise. This way I can do is as a 50th birthday present to myself. I don't doubt that I can qualify now because this will definitely fuel the fire."

—By Eamonn Maher, staff writer

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