

Waters' talent on the soccer pitch runs deep

By EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

If the University of Dayton Flyers are going to be considered among the best teams in NCAA Division I women's soccer, they're going to have to take some lumps along the way.

The Ohio-based Flyers are led by Terra Cotta's Nicole Waters, a third-year star playmaking midfielder who set up more goals than any other Division I player in 2013 with 17 assists.

Dayton narrowly missed out on advancing to the national championship tournament last fall after losing to rival La Salle in the Atlantic 10 Conference final and beefed up the strength of its schedule this year with out-of-conference road games against current number-two-ranked Stanford (an 8-0 loss) in Palo Alto, Calif., fifth-rated Texas A&M (a 4-3 defeat), Ohio State and Indiana.

"This is the first year we've played that many teams in the top 25, the hardest teams we'll probably play in my four years here," said the Christ the King Secondary School grad.

"In terms of the speed of play and the physicality, it was an eyeopener for sure. But I think where we are right now is a lot better than we've been in previous years, so I'm hoping that because we're hosting (the Atlantic 10 tournament) this year will go better for us than it has in the past."

The much-softer Atlantic 10 Conference schedule has begun for the 119th-ranked Flyers and on Sunday, Waters netted the golden goal in overtime in a 3-2 win over George Mason, her sixth tally in the 2014 campaign to go with seven assists in 14 starts for 6-7-1 Dayton.

She has already been named the A-10 player of the week twice this season and has developed a high-octane attacking partnership with striker and fellow Canuck Ashley Campbell of Bradford, who has eight goals thus far.

The 20-year-old Waters was number three on an ESPN-W columnist's pre-season list of '5 Things You Need to Know' about U.S. women's college soccer, suggesting "the composed Canadian" should be a candi-



Christ the King graduate Nicole Waters has twice been named player of the week in Atlantic 10 Conference women's soccer for the Dayton Flyers this season. The junior midfielder also garnered headlines south of the border for her scoring and playmaking abilities. Submitted photo date for the Herrmann Trophy also on penalty kicks.

An exercise science major, Waters didn't take much of a break during the off-season, joining the pro-am W-League's Pensacola, Fla.-based Gulf Coast Texans, who, she painfully recalled, were eliminated in the playoff quarterfinals,

"I want to play pro when school's done and living in Pensacola this summer was a great experience," she added.

"Fitness is so important and I've really learned a lot about the human body. Some of the courses I take require me to do some running and working

out. Staying after practice to take some extra training sessions with the coaches really helps a lot too. We've got a really strong freshmen class, and being a co-captain with Ashley, it's definitely our responsibility to get them ready to play, especially with the out-of-conference games we had at the start."

Waters' progression hasn't been overlooked by the Canadian Soccer Association. She's been invited to three training camps in the past year, including an under-20 tournament in Denmark, where she made her international debut in red and white, along with a knee-knocking exhibition encounter in February in Vancouver.

"We actually played the full senior team while we were there and I was marking (superstar striker) Christine Sinclair for a little bit, so that was interesting," Waters said.

"I know there's an under-23 tournament this year and I'm hoping I get called up for that camp, or even the 2015 World Cup. That's my goal, what I'm working towards."

Midget AA Thunder takes Harvest Cup

The Halton Hills Sunny Acre Farms midget AA Thunder won all five of its games to capture the Harvest Cup championship on home ice at the Best of the Best Thanksgiving Challenge over the long weekend.

In the final against Brampton, the midget AA Thunder built an early 3-0 lead and cruised to a 4-1 victory to complete a perfect weekend.

Preliminary round – Halton Hills 4, Hamilton 1; Halton Hills 1, Barrie 0; Halton Hills 4, Windsor 3; Halton Hills 5, Gloucester Rangers 0
Championship – Halton Hills 4, Brampton 1



A 4-1 victory over Brampton on Sunday clinched the Harvest Cup title for the host Sunny Acre Farms Thunder in the midget AA division at the Best of the Best Thanksgiving Challenge minor hockey tournament. Team members, front, from left, are: Matt Hodgins, goalies Zach Moulton, Andrew Hrycaj. Middle row: Sam Gates, Gareth Marks, Mitchell Tickner, Jeff Brown, Austin Tully, Thomas Garron. Back row: Coaches Tom Sykes, Kevin Brown, Chase Pries, Mackenzie Chalmers, Jacob Harbinson, Nick Molinaro, Patrick Mulhall, Dylan Sargent, Mike Kri, Conor Fiskien, Matt Ormond, coach Craig Nicolucci, trainer Barry Fiskien. Absent: Manager Anna Garron.

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