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All-Area Boys Soccer team

Dan Farrand STAFF WRITER

Article Last Updated: 11/28/2007 06:23:24 AM EST

Scott St. Cyr

Senior

Midfielder

Joel Barlow



The senior captain led Barlow to a SWC title and a share of the Class L crown this year and nearly missed being selected to the All-American team. St. Cyr earned his second straight All-New England selection and finished his season with 11 goals and 25 assists. The tenacious and tireless midfielder scored with just two seconds left in the Class L semifinals against Wethersfield to send the game to overtime. He then won the game with an amazing goal in the extra session. His late game heroics were a prime example of St. Cyr's skill and composure no matter the circumstances. All-SWC First Team... All-State Class L... All-New England... "I've never had a player work so hard," Joel Barlow coach Paul Winstanley said of St. Cyr. "He would chase the ball for 80 minutes if necessary. He just never stopped attacking." St. Cyr is currently considering playing soccer at several Division I universities.

Dylan Stone

Senior

Midfielder

Joel Barlow

Stone's ability to score with both his left and right foot made him one of the most dangerous scorers in the state. The senior captain finished the year with 15 goals and 12 assists, helping the Falcons go 13-0-3 in their final 16 games. "He was incredibly dynamic on and off the ball," Barlow coach Paul Winstanley said. "That is where he made his biggest gain and became so dangerous." Stone is also being recruited by several colleges and is hoping to make his mark at the next level,

something he and St. Cyr have already done at Barlow. "They have etched their names in the upper echelon of great Barlow players," Winstanley said. "They are players that come along once

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every 20 or 30 years. They are absolutely irreplaceable." ... All-SWC First Team.

Donny Walsh

Senior

Midfielder

Bethel

Walsh, who was voted the top player in the SWC, absolutely

exploded in his senior season, scoring 23 goals and handed out seven assists on the year. "What he did in the regular season was ridiculous," Bethel coach Tony Fernandes said. "I always expected him to be a playmaker, but I can't honestly say I expected him to score so many goals." Walsh was incredibly fast off the dribble and his effort helped the Wildcats finish the regular season undefeated and earn the top-seed in both the SWC and Class L state tournaments. All-SWC First Team... All-State Class L ... All-New England.

Ryan Rose

Senior

Midfielder

Bethel

Rose had a great season, despite missing the first three games of the year with a severe ankle sprain. The senior captain, who was an All-State selection last year, finished with 12 goals and seven assists and was the heartbeat for the Wildcats. "When Ryan played well we always played well," Bethel coach Tony Fernandes said. "Things just clicked for us when he was on the mark." Rose found his game late in the season, highlighted by his two-goal, one-assist effort in the Class L quarterfinals against Fermi. "He's very good at controlling the ball," Fernandes said. "When he controlled the ball in midfield, we controlled the game." ... All-SWC First Team.

Liam McCormick

Junior

Forward

Bethel

The speedy junior was a lightning rod for the Wildcat offense. The forward tallied 17 goals and three assists on the year, including a three-goal effort against Fermi in the Class L quarterfinals. "He is amazingly fast, but more importantly he finished," Bethel coach Tony Fernandes said of McCormick. "He really stepped up for in some big games." McCormick will be one of the few Wildcats returning next season as Bethel, which went 18-2-0, graduates 18 seniors this year. ... All-SWC First Team.

A.J. Stueck

Sophomore

Forward/Midfielder

Brookfield

Stueck was the Bobcats most dangerous offensive weapon this year. His

combination of skills and speed made team's constantly shadow him, whether he was in the midfield or up front. The tight defense, however, didn't stop the sophomore from leading the Bobcats with 13 goals and 11 assists. Stueck also scored Brookfield's most important goal of the year, netting a score against Barlow in the Class L state championship game. The Bobcats tied the Falcons 1-1 and earned a share of the state title, their first state soccer title in school history. The sophomore finished the state tournament with two goals and an assist. ... All-SWC First Team.

Brian Grisell

Sophomore

Midfielder

Brookfield

Grisell proved to be a versatile player in the midfield for the Bobcats. The sophomore was a dangerous scorer, netting 11 goals, but also was a skilled facilitator, assisting on nine scores this year. Grisell's goal in double-overtime against two-time defending Class L champion New Canaan in the opening round of the state tournament seemed to spark the Bobcats' run in the state tournament. The sophomore will be one of 14 players returning for the Bobcats next year as they look to defend their Class L championship. ... All-SWC First Team.

Pat Lynch

Senior

Goalkeeper

New Milford

Lynch was rock solid in net for the Green Wave, who had an absolutely sensational season finishing with a 10-6-1 record. The senior captain made 92 saves and gave up just 12 goals__posting a .885 save percentage__all season. He also delivered five shutouts for New Milford and kept the Green Wave in a countless number of games with great saves and aggressive play in the goal box. "He had an absolutely amazing understanding of how the position is supposed to be played," New Milford coach James Tong said. "He did so much for us, controlling the box and the game." Lynch, who was unanimously selected team MVP, is being recruited by several colleges at the Division I, Division II and Division III levels. All-SWC First Team ... All-State Class LL.

Dan Smith

Senior

Goalkeeper

Newtown

The tall and athletic Smith proved how crucial a talented goaltender can be this year for the Nighthawks. Smith was sensational in back-to-back penalty kick shootouts and gave up just one-goal in three games as the sixth-seeded Nighthawks reached the SWC championship game. The senior captain finished the year with 61 saves and posted a save percentage of .843, giving up just 11 goals on the year. Smith's great play in net also helped Newtown, which struggled at times with a young offense, tie five games this year. ... All-SWC First Team.

Mat DeBrantes

Senior

Defense

Newtown

DeBrantes was the senior leader that kept opposing offenses away from the Nighthawk net. His strength and speed allowed him to successfully mark the best in the SWC. The seasoned leader was also crucial in the Nighthawks late season development. The senior captain's experience helped groom the younger Newtown players, setting the stage for their impressive and somewhat surprising run in the SWC tournament. ... All-SWC First Team.

Dan Fabian

Senior

Midfielder

Pomperaug

To say Fabian's ball-handling skills are impressive is an drastic understatement. The senior captain, who missed several games with an injured ankle, was the main facilitator for the Panthers, who were the second-seed in the SWC playoffs and the No. 16-seed in the Class LL state tournament. His speed and vision made him next to impossible to contain as he often split double and triple teams in the midfield. Fabian has been heavily recruited by several Division I universities, but appears to be headed to Davidson, his top choice, in North Carolina. ... All-SWC First Team ... All-State Class LL.

Mike Diker

Senior

Sweeper/Stopper

Danbury

The Hatters may have struggled again this year __ missing both the state and FCIAC playoffs __ but Diker certainly can't be to blame for Danbury's woes. The senior captain, who earned his second straight All-FCIAC selection, was the lynchpin for the Danbury defense, playing both sweeper and stopper. "His work rate is phenomenal," Danbury coach Sean Colley said. "He sprints from sideline to sideline for the whole game." Diker also set the tone for the program's future by never missing a practice despite nagging injuries this year. "He taught the younger guys about commitment and hopefully we can build on it," Colley said. Diker, who also scored three goals this year, will be playing for Division II University of New Haven next year. ...All-FCIAC.

Connor McCarthy

Sophomore

Forward

Ridgefield

The sophomore speedster was a major catalyst for a potent and balanced Ridgefield offense. His speed allowed the Tigers to stretch opposing defenses and McCarthy had the ability to finish, but also facilitate for his teammates. The sophomore scored 19 goals and had six assists on the year and set up Matt Sedney for the game-winning goal in the Tigers' 1-0 win over Glastonbury in the Class LL championship game. "That goal (against Glastonbury) was a nutshell of the type of player he is," Ridgefield coach Phil Bergen said of McCarthy. "He is very unselfish, but is also so dangerous that he just creates holes in the defense."

Oscar Brown

Senior

Forward/Midfielder

Ridgefield

Brown combined a unique blend of intelligence, technical skill and pure athleticism that made him an easy All-State selection. His 14 goals and 14 assists on the year were a perfect outline of his ability to find both the back of the net and his teammates. Two of Brown's goals came in the FCIAC semifinals against then undefeated Westhill. "He was magic out there," Ridgefield coach Phil Bergen said of Brown. "He just made the game and our team come alive. He will be incredibly tough to replace." Brown is currently looking to continue his soccer career at several Division I universities. ... All-FCIAC ... All-State Class LL.

Tim Quigley

Senior

Midfielder

Ridgefield

Quigley was an All-FCIAC selection as a sweeper last year for the Tigers and was just as successful in the midfield this year. He combined with senior Nick Cugine, also an All-FCIAC Central Division selection, to create a powerful duo in the center of the field. Quigley scored six goals and had 11 assists, using his speed and fluid footwork to create chances for his teammates. "Tim was very smooth and soft with the ball," Ridgefield coach Phil Bergen said. "He also seemed to always step up in the big games." The senior captain tallied a goal and assist in the Tigers' 4-3 win over the previously undefeated Vikings of Westhill in the FCIAC semifinals. Quigley is currently being recruited by several Division I colleges. ...All-FCIAC Central Division.

Paul Sanderude

Senior

Sweeper

Ridgefield

The senior captain was the cornerstone for the Ridgefield defense that was the foundation of the Tigers success. "He was very versatile this year," Ridgefield coach Phil Bergen said. "We was very coachable and knew what to do in every situation." The Tigers defense pitched two shutouts in the Class LL semifinal and final and outscored their opponents 77-26 this year. Sanderude's intelligent and calm play in the back limited chances for opponents. His defense __ combined with Conor Walsh, Collin Stellmacher and Sean Meegan __ helped keep the ball out of Ridgefield's back third and gave the Tigers more chances to attack the opposing goal. ... All-FCIAC.

Co-Coach of the Year

Jared Shiekh

Brookfield

Shiekh far exceeded expectations in his first year with the Bobcats. The rookie coach did inherit a tremendously talented team when Tony Fernandes left for Bethel, but he managed to take the relatively young Bobcats to the next level. After the Bobcats lost four of their last five games

heading into the state tournament, Sheikh rallied his troops and guided Brookfield to its first state championship, even if they had to share the Class L title with Barlow. Sheikh, who won a state title at Nonnewaug in 2002, also revamped the attitude on the team. The Bobcats nearly missed the playoffs in 2006 because they almost exceeded 15 yellow cards as a team on the year. The attitude completely changed in 2007 as Shiekh and the Bobcats received the Western Connecticut Soccer Officials Sportsmanship Award.

Co-Coach of the Year

Phil Bergen

Ridgefield

After a 23-year hiatus Bergen brought the state crown back to Ridgefield. In just his fourth year in charge of the Tigers, Bergen has made Ridgefield a force to be reckoned with again. After very nearly winning the FCIAC crown, the state's toughest conference, Bergen and his team responded by rolling to the Class LL state title, beating Greenwich, who defeated the Tigers 5-1 in the FCIAC final, along the way. Bergen was a player on Ridgefield's last state championship team in 1984. "What he did is nothing short of amazing," Bethel coach Tony Fernandes said. "You can't have a much better year than he did." Bergen, who also helps run and organize the Ridgefield youth soccer program, also got to see his 16 seniors, players he has coached since grade school leave Ridgefield as winners. "The guy absolutely eat, drinks and lives the sport," Joel Barlow coach Paul Winstanley said. "There is no one more deserving than him."

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