

DeLuca Roofing Proud to be an official sponsor of World Champ Soccer Team

Against All Odds

Salt fleet U-14 Boys Soccer team shocks Southern Italy and the Football World!

During the 2010 outdoor season this soccer team established an amazing record of some 30+ victories, 4 draws, and 1 loss. They won just about everything there was to win, the League title, League Cup, and 4 Tournaments..

The team had many 'Friendly' matches in the fall of 2010 and during early winter 2011, and defeated several teams from the Provincial league, (OYSL).

In 2011, they will be playing their outdoor ball in the Elite division of the SRSL.

Their very high level of play has not gone unnoticed. Along with being promoted to play in a higher division, the club was offered an amazing opportunity.

The team was invited to participate in a high level tournament this past April in

Agropoli, Italy. The promoter who presented the invitation for Saltfleet to participate also informed the team that this tournament was a player showcase tournament where many Professional Scouts from the European Teams and Academies would be in attendance. After a team meeting, it was confirmed that this was indeed a chance of a lifetime for the players and their families; the Saltfleet administration accepted the offer to attend the tournament.

As one would expect, a journey of this nature would represent a considerable financial burden. To help manage the

costs, a parent fundraising committee was formed and they organized a Dinner Dance that included a Silent Auction. With the help of family, friends and the community as a whole, enough money was raised to cover the cost of airfare for the players.

Saltfleet U-14 Boys are off to play in Italy from Tuesday April 19th, to Saturday April 23rd, 2011.

After a nightlong flight across the Atlantic Ocean, a party of close to 50 people, including 19 young men, landed in Rome. Once out of the Airport they were shuffled off and herded onto a bus, driven a half-hour, dropped off on the sidewalk of a busy street and boarded a Sub-way that delivered them to the Vatican where they took part in a four-hour walking-tour. After a few hours of sleep, Jet lagged and tired, the party pushed on for another 4 hours by bus to their final destination, arriving at the Seashore in the South of Italy at the Santa Maria Hotel. Following another day of touring the ancient city of Pompeii and then the island of Capri the players found themselves very eager to play their first match. The team was actually registered in two separate tournaments, the first which was called The International Cup.

Arriving at the field for their first match, the team looked very nice. Everyone was wearing their new, matching Umbro Warm-up suits. Their first opponent was a team from the USA and the result, 8-nil for Saltfleet. Next up Venezuela, and another

victory in similar fashion. The third game resulted in a draw, against a very tough side from Poland, and the fourth and final game of this tournament: a draw versus an Italian team. These results however, would be enough for the Saltfleet boys to capture the first place trophy and be crowned champions of The International Cup.

The Agropoli Tournament:

It was here that the team would get its true test, as they would face several quality sides from the south of Italy. Fairing very well in the round robin portion of the tournament, Saltfleet looked toward advancing to the playoff round. The team discovered that the road to the semis ran through a small town called Eden, that was located high up on a mountaintop overlooking the sea. This spectacular venue would play host to a dramatic battle. Thankfully, Saltfleet would come away victorious by a score of 4 to 2, which would provide them the exact goal differential that was required if this team of supposed underdogs was to advance to the play-off round.

The semi-final playoff game saw this group of 19 young Canadian Soccer players rise above the odds to defeat a very good Italian team by out working them, out smarting them and displaying a higher level of skill and athleticism.

On to the Final:

The final was played in a very nice stadium and the game was officiated by a professional referee who was of the highest caliber. Prior to the start of the match, something peculiar had begun, and it was a strange thing indeed. The teams that had been eliminated from the tournament were in attendance

to observe the final match and they, along with hundreds of spectators, could be heard cheering for this group of Canadian soccer players, and not their Italian countrymen who had made it through to play in this final as well? It seemed that through their spirited play and good sporting manner, the Saltfleet boys had endeared themselves to almost everyone in attendance that day.

But I thought Hockey was their game?

By the time the whistle sounded to end the final match, the score would read Saltfleet 2 the Italian side 0. To say that many were surprised would be a gross understatement. Despite all their trickery, playing in their homeland, being acclimatized, definitely more well rested, and all of the other obvious advantages that come with hosting a tournament, the Italian soccer community was left in a state of shock.

These Canadian boys proved that hockey is not the only sport that they can play well! As the Saltfleet team bus was leaving the stadium parking lot it was swarmed by a crowd of newly found fans, and the opposing coaches and players. They all wanted to learn more about the team from Canada. They struggled with the reality that so many teams that came from the traditional soccer playing nations to take part in this tournament had met defeat in Agropoli Italy, at the hands of the Saltfleet U-14 Boys.

One Final Obstacle:

The only obstacle remaining for the team to overcome was to figure out exactly how they were going to get all of those enormous trophies on the airplane and back to Canada?

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