COBRA NEWS
CLEVELAND PROFESSIONAL SOCCER, INC.
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PLAYER PROFILE: TOM NOWICKI

The opportunity to display your skills before your friends and relatives in the town where you grew up is the ultimate dream of most professional athletes. When Tom Nowicki signed with the Cleveland Cobras last winter, this dream became a reality for the Garfield Heights native and Cleveland State graduate.

"One of my goals for a number of years has been to play pro soccer, and the opportunity to play in Cleveland before my friends and relatives makes all the hours of hard work and training worthwhile," observed Nowicki shortly after signing a Cobras' contract.

Tom's roots are planted in Garfield Heights where his father is president of the Garfield Heights City Council. Nowicki first started kicking a speckled ball past a leaping goaltender at the age of 12. Since then, he has played on numerous amateur teams where he polished his skills in the quest of that elusive dream of some day becoming a professional. He attended Chanel High where he divided his freshman year between making a pivot around second base on a baseball diamond and kicking a soccer ball.

"I liked both baseball and soccer," recalled Nowicki, "but since I seemed to have more ability in soccer, I decided to concentrate on that sport. It was hard to gain experience because Chanel didn't offer a soccer program."

Nowicki managed to assimilate enough of the essentials of soccer to make the highly touted Cleveland State soccer squad as a walk on during his freshman year. After his initial season, the fullback was quickly placed on scholarship, and he went about copping collegiate honors with the ease of a child collecting stones. He placed trophies for All-Midwest, All-Ohio, and the Viking's most improved player in his back pocket. Th all contributed to the Cobras' decision to make him their third round draft choice in

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this year's college draft.

"Tom has always been a solid player, not the flashy type who will make one great play and then follow it up with a stupid move, rather he plays a very disciplined, intelligent game which should make him a good pro," noted Dr. John Gyekenyesi, the Cobras' general manager.

Club president, Howard Collier is pleased to have Nowicki in the fold.

"Tom is the kind of player we are always looking for. He's an American kid who can play soccer with the best from other countries. The fact that he is from Cleveland makes him a natural draw and the fans will be behind him. This should make his transition to the professional ranks easier, and it should improve the Cobras' relationship with the community," said Collier.

Nowicki is completing his work on a B.A. in business at Cleveland State and he hopes to enter into the field of promotion and youth soccer.

"Soccer is really beginning to boom in the Cleveland area, and I want to be in the position to help it along," said Nowicki whose very presence in a Cobras' uniform is doing just that.

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