

# ***THE NEW JERSEY SOCCER GROUP***

## ***Press Release***



**Monday, April 28 2008**

### **Magic Head Coach eagerly awaits WPSL season**

With the start of the WPSL season just weeks away, Millburn Magic Head Coach Andy Sones is eager to get the games underway. "Everyone has been looking forward to the start of the season for a long time" he comments. "Now that it is so close anticipation is running high." Sones, who has developed a reputation as an outstanding communicator and educator of soccer players over more than a decade, will lead the Magic in the Atlantic South Division where they will face strong competition from established teams such as the AC Diablos, looking to defend their divisional title, and the Long Island Fury, who will be looking to repeat their 2006 National Championship success. "We know we are in a tough league, every game will pose a different challenge but I have confidence in our squad" says Sones. "We have enough talent to be competitive and take early strides towards becoming a successful WPSL franchise."

The Magic Season opener is set for May 16<sup>th</sup> against a Delaware Future side that enjoyed mixed fortunes last season finishing fifth in the division with a 1-8-1 record. "Although we are all excited about opening kick off, we are not under estimating the strength of our opposition" remarks Sones. Our focus needs to be on putting in a good performance, we cannot allow ourselves to be distracted by the occasion." Sones continues "We have players throughout the squad that have played in big games, so I think the experience of having playing in major competitions, for example, will serve us well."

The emergence of the Magic has allowed local stars Lia Fierro and Sam Wiener to be reunited with Sones having played under his leadership at Millburn High School, where he remains Varsity Head Coach. "I am delighted to work with be working with a squad full of local talent" he comments. "I have coached in the area, both at the High School and in the surrounding area, for a number of years now and I am pleased the Magic has presented the opportunity for me to continue to be involved in the community."

Joining Sones and his local protégées are players from the English Premier League. Having begun his coaching career in the UK working for the English Football Association, Andy developed his coaching style and philosophy at top English clubs, including Manchester United, and is eagerly awaiting the arrivals from his homeland. "For me personally, it will be fantastic to work with UK based players again." Sones continues "not only are they extremely talented additions to the roster, but English players have a tremendous passion for the game. This can only add to the desire amongst the team to be successful this season – and beyond." It was during his time in England that Sones took on his first head coaching position at Bedford College before moving on to Leicester College. It was here he turned a declining men's program into a side that, two years later, reached the final four of the National Championship. During his tenure at Leicester College, Sones combined his role as the Director of Football at Leicester City Ladies to start a women's program which he then led to a National Championship in an unbeaten 23-0 season. Having been successful in the past, looking to the future, Sones "I am looking forward to working to help bring success to the Magic franchise. We have incredible talent on the roster and a great coaching staff and I am confident we can achieve as a team."

The Magic's combination of American and English players is one that excites Sones. He remarks that "having worked with top level teams on both sides of the Atlantic, it has become apparent that there are differences between English and American styles of play. I am interested to discover where the balance will lie between the two in how we play as a team; to see if one style becomes more dominant or whether both are combined to form our own unique style."

With his considerable experience in both countries, coupled with his vast knowledge of the game, Sones is well placed to unite his international and talented Magic squad towards becoming a successful WPSL franchise.

The Millburn Magic is the Northern NJ member of the Women's Premier Soccer League, an independent national league representing the highest level of women's soccer in the United States. The Magic are part of The New Jersey Soccer Group, a management company representing a family of soccer based organizations offering a full range of soccer services in northern New Jersey.

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