

# Younger Nash lacing his cleats outside big brother's shadow

LENNARD WU  
The Martlet

VICTORIA (CUP)—His brother Steve may just be the best Canadian ever to pick up a basketball, but when it comes to soccer, Martin Nash can still run circles around his older sibling.

Two decades ago, a young Nash admired the silky footwork of his hero Glenn Hoddle, a talented English attacking midfielder who played for Tottenham Hotspur.

"He was our kind of hero. He was the best player on the club," Nash says.

These days, it's Nash who earns the admiration of young soccer players. He boasts an illustrious career and recently contributed to Canada's run to the semi-finals in the 2007 CONCACAF Gold Cup, a tournament for North and Central American national teams.

Nash is a versatile player who can operate either as a winger or a holding midfielder. Raised in Victoria, he has played in England, Canada, and the United States, won the Gold Cup, earned back-to-back A-League titles, and won the 2006 United Soccer Leagues (USL) Championship.

Nash played in the English Second and First Divisions for Stockport County from 1996–1998. He called his time spent there "a great experience," and the period in his career where he learned the most.

Getting there wasn't easy. After making the long journey to Stockport for a one-week trial, the then-20-year-old Nash was told to return to Stockport for two more weeks of trials before signing a month-to-month contract with the team.

Then came his big break: during his second month with Stockport's reserve team, Nash was given a chance to play for their first team. He would end up soon signing a two-year contract.

"[England] is a lot different," he says. "Even in training it's a lot more intense because I think, more so there than anywhere else, you are fighting for your position."

More recently, Nash returned to the Canadian senior men's team to play for the Gold Cup. The team demolished Guatemala 3–0 in the quarterfinals before falling 2–1 to the United States in the semifinals following a controversial call that denied Canada a late equalizer.

"It was the first time the Canadian team has actually kept possession," he says. "With a bit more luck, you know, we could have been in the final."

Nash's fine form for the Canadian men's team was no surprise for fans of the Vancouver Whitecaps, his



SUPPLIED

**THE OTHER DRIBBLE** Martin Nash is following the path his athletic family set.

most recent club team. Last season, Nash was third in the league in assists with six in 25 games.

Nash's unselfish play started in Victoria, where he and Steve used to play together on the same basketball and soccer teams.

**"Before we walked, we were kicking balls."**

**MARTIN NASH**  
VANCOUVER WHITECAPS

"We shared the ball and tried to make our teammates better, so it worked well, and we always used to have a lot of fun playing with each other," he said. "With each other doing well, it kind of just pushed us to do better."

Soccer has always been a favourite activity of the Nash brothers. Buoyed by their father John Nash—a former professional soccer player in South Africa—and his passion for the game, soccer was the first sport the

brothers ever played.

"Before we walked, we were kicking balls," Nash says.

Nash's work ethic is a testament to his passion for the sport. In 2006, he set a new club iron-man record, playing in 69 consecutive games for the Whitecaps.

Although he modestly attributes a substantial portion of the iron-man record to luck, Nash's daily lifestyle has no doubt reduced his chances of injury—he works hard during training and eats as healthy as he can.

"The better condition you are in, the less chance you will get injured," he says.

Nash said he hopes to continue playing for up to four more years. Currently, he's coaching a Vancouver-area youth team and keeps that as an option for the future.

He is currently in contract talks with the Vancouver Whitecaps. The team's fans will be hoping he re-signs in time for an exhibition match against David Beckham's Los Angeles Galaxy in November at BC Place.

which means that the Pandas play third-seeded Manitoba first, on Thursday morning. Depending on when you read this, that might already be in the past. Spooky, no?

The Bears (5-5-4), in fourth place, will meet host Trinity Western in the semifinals on Friday night.

#### Playing for keepsies

After sweeping their invitational tournament this weekend, the basketball Bears are ready to prove themselves in the regular season as they tip off against

Thompson Rivers on Friday and Fraser Valley on Saturday.

They'll be travelling with the national silver medallist Pandas, who face the same teams. The Pandas were 6-2 in the preseason.

#### Prairie fire and ice

After a weekend in which they split against Manitoba, the Bears hockey team (5-2-1) hopes to get back into a consistent winning mode this weekend. They'll be on the road playing division rivals the Regina Cougars.

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## TREND HIRES ON AN ONGOING BASIS

*Though the 22-mile Man vs Horse race has been run every year in Wales since 1979, it was not until 2004 that one of the human contestants actually won, with a time of 2:05:09.*

*Hardly any horses try to make it to sports meetings, Tuesdays at 5:30 in 3-04 SUB, so you shouldn't have any trouble getting here first.*

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## SPORTS IN BRIEF

By Robin Collum

### Kickin' it on the coast

Both of Alberta's soccer teams are on the Lower Mainland for Canada West finals this weekend. The Pandas (6-7-1) earned the last spot to make it in on the women's side, and the top two teams (UBC and Victoria) have byes to the second round,