



The Storm Watch

VOLUME III ISSUE 4

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Soccer Star Kicks Off Football Talent

Space Coast United Soccer Club goalie Madison Dininny never imagined kicking balls through the goal posts on her high school's football field would bring her attention from local and national news outlets - but now she knows better.

"That was quite an experience," she said of being featured on ABC World News Tonight in November. "It was nerve-wracking but fun."

Despite the fact that Madison has been playing soccer in Brevard County since she was 6-years-old, it was actually her football skills that had the media descending on Cocoa Beach High School to interview the 17-year-old senior this fall. She's been featured in Florida Today and other local media.

"The football team was in the stands getting their yearbook picture taken while our soccer team was on the field for tryouts," she said. "Then, the football coach came to me at my locker and asked me if I would be interested in kicking for the team. To be completely honest, I wasn't sure I could do it."

But do it she did - scoring three extra points and a field goal for the Cocoa Beach Minutemen in their last two football games after their regular kicker injured himself in practice.

For her Space Coast United Soccer Club U-18 team, on the other hand, it's Madison's job to block points - not score them. She said she first got drawn to the goalkeeper position when her team had an opportunity for two players to go to goalie training but had only one goalie to send.



"My coach just asked if anyone else wanted to go and I said 'sure,'" she recalled. "And I just stuck with the position."

Now, Madison says she enjoys her time in the goal because of her ability to help her team.

"I kind of like being that last line of defense," she said. "If the ball somehow gets through my teammates or they have a moment of weakness, I like knowing I can still be there to help them. It's a little less stressful not worrying about scoring goals." Scoring points on the football field, on the other hand, was just fun.

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Headlines at SpaceCoastSoccer.org

- ◆ [Coach Tim Michaud Named Region III Girls Recreation Coach of the Year](#)
- ◆ [Jr NPL Director, Dean Flexton, Earns Periodisation Specialist Certification](#)
- ◆ [Big Showcase Weekend For the Ladies](#)

Dininy Open to Collegiate Opportunities

"I definitely really enjoyed kicking for the football team," she said, "It was great having more people there cheering for your team. (My high school soccer team) doesn't get a lot of fans."

But Madison gives credit to her football teammates for adding to that crowd.

"We got some of them to come out to the soccer games," she said. "When I started on the team, they were surprised at first but I'm pretty good friends with a few of them now that I probably wouldn't have been if I wasn't on football team."

In fact, Madison says being a female football player almost went unnoticed against one of the teams she played.

"We were shaking hands at the end of the game and I went by about 15 people, when I heard one guy say, 'Wait! That was a girl!," she remembered.

Madison said she is surprised by the attention she has received and points out that there are other local high schools with female players on their roster, including Bayside High School and Cocoa High School.

"I didn't expect all the attention," she said. "I thought it would be on the downlow."

Madison says her first thought when she went to try out for the football

team was that she just didn't want to embarrass herself. And it took a little shove from her soccer teammates to get her on the field.

"I was hanging back on the sidelines when my soccer teammates literally pushed me out onto the field," she said. "They've been my biggest supporters and thought it was the coolest thing ever. It was really cool to have them there at the football games and I hope they had a good time."

In the ABC World News Tonight segment about Madison, Cocoa Beach High School football coach Dave Lowe called her the "real deal."

Madison is also grateful to the incredible coaches she says she's had through her years at Space Coast United.

"I had really great coaches over the years," she said. "I've had the same coach for two or three years, Dustin Smith, and he is honestly one of the best things that ever happened to my soccer career. (Space Coast United) coaches help you improve as a player but are also there for you in your personal life."



As for the future, Madison is looking ahead to college and hopes to major in athletic training. Because a program like that would require her to travel with various sports teams, she said playing soccer at the collegiate level might not be in the cards.

"I wouldn't mind playing collegiate soccer but it's not a priority because it would be really hard to do my major and play," she said. "But if the opportunity came up, I would be grateful."

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Soccer Fuel: Make Dinner Count, Even on Practice Days

Q: Practice falls right in the middle of our usual family dinner time! What should we do, especially considering that I want to get my player to bed at a reasonable time?

A: Meal timing is a common question for most families with kids who play sports and have regular after school/early evening practices. It may take some trial and error to figure out what will work best for your child and family. While there is no one correct answer for every family, here are several tips/things to consider:

- **Ideally**, full or complete meals should be consumed if you have at least 3 hours to digest food adequately before practice/games. For most kids/teens this is not possible if practice is 5 pm or even 6 pm, since school does not end early enough for many kids to get home and have a balanced dinner before practice. The alternative is to pack or plan a larger snack (at least 2-3 food groups/items) to consume and digest about two hours before practice. Then, have a plan for a light dinner right after practice.

- **Some kids** do well cutting dinner in half and consuming half before and half after practice. Another way to think of this is eating two light dinners or mini meals, one before and one after evening games and practices.

- **If your teen** only has time for a small snack before practice and is starving right after, it's okay to plan/pack another snack to have in the car ride home (some examples include: milk box & granola bar, peanut butter on whole grain crackers, or fruit and nuts/trail mix) to hold your kid over until dinner when you get home. It may seem silly, but having a snack in the car ride home for some will help them feel better and refuel muscles/glycogen stores more efficiently if within 30 minutes after practice. It can also help prevent overeating or eating very quickly when they get home for a late dinner.

Still, try to make family meals a priority whenever possible, even if this means sitting together for a light snack while your teen eats a late dinner of leftovers after practice. Studies show kids and teens tend to do better in school, have healthier relationships, and have fewer incidences of both obesity and eating disorders later in life when family meals occur consistently. If dinners are not an option, then maybe breakfast or weekend meals can be made a priority.

SCUSC would like to thank Kristine Van Workum, RD, CSSD, LDN for offering nutrition information to power our players. She can be reached at Brevard Nutrition, Inc., 122 4th Avenue, Ste 200, Indialantic, FL 32903. By phone, 321-327-3793 x 105. Her website is www.brevardnutrition.com.



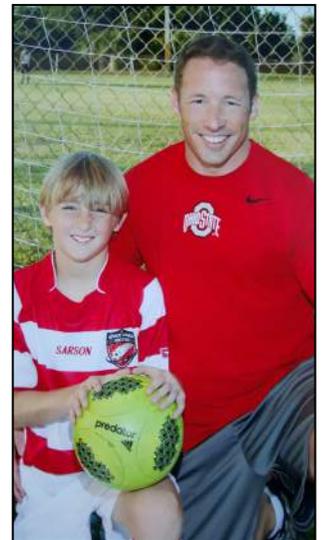
Seeing Young Players Develop, Play Hard Drives Coach

Coach Brad Dunbar has been a member of Space Coast United Soccer for six years and coached the Youth Development Program for five.

"I have a passion for the game of soccer," Dunbar said. "My favorite thing about coaching is seeing the kids not only develop as soccer players, but also as young people."

Dunbar said he coaches so he can instill in the young players an ethos that can carry them throughout years of training: "play hard, never give up, and have fun!"

Although a huge Ohio State fan, Dunbar's his chosen football club to support is Birmingham, England's Aston Villa of the Barclay's Premier League. He said we must include his love for The Villa in his profile. "UTV!"





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Established in 1984, Space Coast United Soccer Club is a non-profit run by volunteers dedicated to families who wish to enjoy the sport of soccer and to provide opportunities to play at all levels from ages three to eighteen with the highest quality of programs available in the State of Florida. Our efforts and energies are directed to the following objectives:

- We strive to develop players at all levels of play – recreational and competitive – by building and improving their skills, confidence, fitness, initiative and a sense of teamwork.
- We are committed to developing coaches and referees to the highest level through a quality instructional, licensing and mentoring program.
- We aim to ensure all of our players' personal goals are met whether they be enjoying recreational soccer, playing on an elite or premier competitive team, playing on your high school team, playing in college, or on a U.S. National team someday.
- We promote and encourage high standards of sportsmanship and fair play and strive to ensure all players are doing it "For the love of the Game!"



Space Coast 3v3 Teams Show Top Talent



Full team results are on the Club Website in [Headline News](#)

Our Programs

Micro/Mini-Kickers
Ages 3-5

Youth Development and Academy
Ages 4-11

Competitive: Select/NPL
Ages 9-19

Recreational
Ages 13-18

Goalkeeper Academy
Ages 9-19

TOPSoccer
Ages 4-19

Youth Soccer Websites

[Florida Youth Soccer Association](#)

[National Premier Leagues](#)

[US Youth Soccer](#)

[Brevard Youth Soccer League](#)

[Greater Central Florida Youth Soccer League](#)