

Brothers Hollister set to impress U.S. lacrosse scouts

By MATT COXFORD
matt@dailytownsman.com

Months of traveling to the Lower Mainland for the weekend are about to pay off for a pair of Cranbrook brothers.

Dakota and Keiffer Hollister have been making the trip to practice with the Burnaby Mountain Selects (BMS) field lacrosse program, and will soon be playing with their respective teams in front of American university scouts.

"It's a pretty awesome opportunity, especially if you're looking at that route, to play for high school or trying to get a scholarship or something," said Keiffer, who will be in Grade 12 next year.

"There are lots and lots of scholarship opportunities for lacrosse."

Simon Fraser University men's lacrosse co-coaches Jeff Cathrea and Brent Hoskin lead the BMS squads, which are drawn from all over B.C. — even into Idaho and Washington.

Dakota, who is on the sophomore elite team, got scouted while playing with the Kamloops Rattlers in Seattle. The staff then had a look at Keiffer, and both were offered spots with the program.

Dakota said he tries to not get caught up in the notion he's been singled out by the coaches to join the Selects.

"It's pretty cool when you think about it, but I've just been treating it like normal," he said.

Dakota will be in Calgary this weekend for his final tournament of the year with the Rattlers. Even though that season didn't go as well as he would have liked — losing out on a provincials berth to Penticton — he feels he's grown lots as a field lacrosse player.

He started the game partway through last season, and has experienced wall-to-wall lacrosse since.

"It's just all blending together," he said. "I understand the game more, like running plays. When I was in Cranbrook, it was pretty much just pick up the ball on our side and run it down, but now we run it down in set plays."

In two weeks, he will be joining the sophomore Selects on a trip to Colorado



Shellie Hollister photo

Dakota and Keiffer Hollister in their Burnaby Mountain Selects practice gear.

to compete at the University of Denver Pioneers' team camp, a premier recruiting event for the Western U.S.

Over several days, the Selects will play an international tournament in front of NCAA and Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association scouts.

Set to enter Grade 10, Dakota isn't putting much pressure on himself.

"It's going to be good. There are going to be lots of scouts there, I know that, but I'll have lots of other chances too," he said. "I'm used to it now because I've already been to lots of places where there are lots of scouts."

Late last fall, Dakota traveled to the Eastern U.S. with the Calgary Elev8 touring

side, playing against several prep schools.

Keiffer will be following a similar path to his younger brother with the senior elite BMS team starting July 19.

They will be traveling to Baltimore to compete in the invitation-only Champ Camp at Johns Hopkins University. Aside from playing top-calibre lacrosse, members of the Selects will tour the campuses of Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland.

They'll wrap up the tour with a day trip up the coast in Manhattan.

"I've never even been anywhere like New York. It will be pretty crazy," said Keiffer. "It will be a neat experience and a chance to play against university teams

and get looked at by their coaches."

He tore up his knee something fierce last year, and said the field game suits him better.

"I can play without worrying about injuring myself. During the box season (with the junior B Cranbrook Elite), I'd pop my knee out every once in a while, and then I couldn't play for a bit. It really limited what I could do," he said. "With field so far, I haven't experienced anything like that. The field is so much more open; you're not running into people. There's just more space to play with."

He has less experience at field than Dakota, but Keiffer has enjoyed the weekly training sessions in Burnaby.

"I learn something new every time I go down there," he said. "Even the way we break out, and when we're getting back on defence, it's totally different. It's not run-and-gun at all. It's all set plays, so there's a lot to learn yet."

Although he enjoys box lacrosse's aggressive nature, Keiffer said field's comparative calmness and emphasis on strategy is appealing.

"You're not rushed, you don't have that 30-second clock," he said. "You're not rushing for the shot, so you can make way more clean plays."

Keiffer said the Selects' coaching staff's duties haven't been confined to improving the on-field product; they've also been coaching the young athletes about how to behave with scouts and what to expect to hear from university representatives.

"The (university) coaches will talk to us whether they're going to pick us up or not. They're going to take a good look at everybody that's there," said Keiffer, who can be actively recruited next year.

Both brothers are playing midfield for their respective Selects squads.

"We pretty much have to get the ball, we have to do all the work, really," said Dakota, who wouldn't want to take up the defensive longpole or stay up on attack anyway.

"You get more variety because you have to play defence and offence; you're not just stuck with doing one thing."

Spain shows its class to reach quarters, FIFA boss hints at video U-turn

By Simon Haydon
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Spain showed touches of the class that made it European champion on Tuesday, edging out Portugal in a tough second-round game while Paraguay needed penalties to dispose of Japan at the World Cup.

David Villa finished off a fluid move of intricate passing to finally break down Portugal's defensive wall and give Spain a 1-0 victory. Villa's goal was his fourth of the tournament, making him joint top scorer in South Africa, while Cristiano Ronaldo could not manage to inspire Portugal.

Villa, the Barcelona-bound striker, saw his first shot blocked by Portugal goalkeeper Eduardo, but on the rebound, he coolly slotted home with his right foot.

"It was one of my best goals because it got us through to the next round," Villa said. "Keep scoring so we can keep going."

Spain will face Paraguay on Saturday at Johannesburg's Ellis Park in the quarter-final, hoping for a semifinal meeting with

Argentina or Germany.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter, acknowledging the fury of soccer fans around the world, said that he has apologized to England and Mexico for refereeing mistakes that helped eliminate their teams from the World Cup.

He said FIFA will reopen the debate on high-tech methods to improve decision-making on the pitch following the mistakes in Bloemfontein and Johannesburg — when Germany and Argentina advanced.

"Naturally, we deplore when you see the evidence of referees' mistakes," said Blatter, adding it would be "a nonsense" for FIFA not to look again at goal-line technology with its rule-making panel.

"After having witnessed such a situation," Blatter said, referring to England's non-goal against Germany, "we have to open again this file, definitely."

"Naturally, we will take on board again the discussion about technology. Something has to be changed."

The refereeing system won't be changed midway through the World Cup. Blatter

said the panel, known as the International Football Association Board, would begin considering changes at a July meeting in Cardiff, Wales.

Uruguay's Jorge Larrionda and Italy's Roberto Rosetti, whose blunders prompted the FIFA rethink, have been left off the list of referees for the rest of the World Cup. FIFA did not announce its reasons, but referees involved in controversy rarely make it to the later rounds.

Paraguay qualified for the first time with a penalty shootout victory over Japan after 120 minutes of tedious soccer in Pretoria's Loftus Versfeld.

Paraguay and Japan drew 0-0 after extra time and the South Americans won the shootout 5-3 after Yuichi Komano hit the crossbar with Japan's third kick — his team's only miss.

Five-time world champion Brazil beat South American rival Chile 3-0 Monday to make the quarter-finals for a fifth straight tournament. The Netherlands beat Slovakia 2-1 to join Uruguay, Ghana, Germany and Argentina in the last eight.

Netherlands coach Bert van Marwijk has demanded unity from his World Cup players after Robin van Persie's angry outburst at being substituted in the 2-1 defeat of Slovakia threatened to derail preparations for its quarter-final against Brazil.

Van Marwijk said he called a team meeting after reports in Dutch media that the Arsenal striker said midfielder Wesley Sneijder should have been brought off instead of him.

"I will never accept anything that could upset the next match," Van Marwijk told Dutch national broadcaster NOS.

South Africa's police chief said a British tabloid journalist has been arrested after what police called an orchestrated attempt to undermine World Cup security with an England fan's intrusion into the team's changing room.

National police commissioner Bheki Cele said police arrested Simon Wright on Monday. He said the Sunday Mirror journalist admitted to harbouring and interviewing Pavlos Joseph while police were searching for him.