

York9 FC becomes the first Canadian club to sell a domestic player to European team

Written By ROBERT BELARDI

York9 FC became the first Canadian Premier League club to sell a player to Europe this past week.

The Nine Stripes confirmed the sale of 21-year-old Toronto native and Chinese Tapei international player Emilio Estevez to the Dutch, Eredivisie side ADO Den Haag.

According to the club's press release, Managing Consultant Angus McNab's brevity thanked Estevez for his time with the club and added the progress the league has made in a short time.

"Everyone at the club would like to wish Emilio all the very best following the agreement of his transfer to ADO Den Haag," McNab said.

"This transfer is a further sign of the progress the CPL has made in a relatively short period of time. On our side, Jimmy Brennan deserves so much credit for identifying Emilio and working with him. We want to be a club that is known for developing talent and we hope this is the first of many sales to top divisions in Europe."

Estevez, formerly played for League 1 Ontario club North Mississauga FC making 8 appearances. He made a move to the Canadian Soccer League a year after, joining the SC Waterloo Region.

This transfer, would not be the first time Estevez's boots caress European soil. In the same year with Waterloo, he travelled to Europe to join EFL Championship club Queen's Park Rangers and La Liga club Levante on trials.

In 2018, York9 FC signed Estevez to a deal after seeing his efforts in the Canadian Premier League Open Trials.

"Coming from trials two years ago and now going to Europe is obviously a huge thrill for me. I learned so much and owe a lot to the coaching staff at York9 who believed in me and gave me a shot," Estevez said in the press release.

In 18 appearances for the Nine Stripes, Estevez recorded one goal.

The club also announced one day after Estevez's departure the signing of Canadian U-17 midfielder and Vaughan, Ontario native Julian Altobelli to a contract. If options are exercised, this contract can be up to 2023.

The young midfielder, arises from the Toronto FC academy. He becomes the youngest signing for the club in their young history. He also becomes the third U-20 signing of the year, right behind Aurora native Max Ferrari and Brampton native Ijah Halley.

Altobelli, competed with the Canadian national team last year in the U-17 World Cup. The national team were eliminated in the group stage, that saw matches against Brazil, Angola and New Zealand.

McNab told reporters, "Julian is clearly a young player with a great deal of talent" his selection for the National Team at last year's U-17 World Cup shows that "but what impressed me most was his desire to get better."

Altobelli expressed his emotions on what it means to be a professional in the release.

He stated, "It is an amazing feeling to sign my first professional contract. The stadium is a few minutes (drive) from my house so starting a pro journey with my local club is something special."