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Loudoun Local Shines in Inaugural USL Season

LEESBURG, VA (August, 2019)

It's not every day your post-college pro soccer dreams are realized mere minutes from the town where you fell in love with soccer in the first place. That's the case for local standout and former Loudoun Soccer star, Collin Verfurth, who made his professional debut for Loudoun United FC in the USL team's inaugural season this March and will most likely feature in the team's long-awaited home opener on August 9th.

Verfurth, a towering defender who made an impression at the college level during his time at Virginia Tech, was announced as a signing by Loudoun United FC on the Ashburn native's birthday. From the very beginnings of his soccer career, Verfurth was described by his coaches as an "incredible teammate" and a player who was "always so driven to improve." Loudoun Soccer's Director of Coaching, John O'Hara, praised the defender for being "so respected by his colleagues and coaches for his commitment to the team and his selflessness to play any position the team needed."

Prior to Verfurth's first start with MLS team DC United in an international friendly at Audi Field, Loudoun Soccer sat down with the Loudoun County prodigy to talk soccer dreams and where his journey will take him next.



Collin Verfurth (photo courtesy of Loudoun United FC)

Loudoun Soccer (LS): *What were your thoughts when you got the call from Loudoun United?*

Collin Verfurth (CV): I was offered an opportunity to play professionally in Australia before I learned Loudoun United was forming a team right here where I grew up, so finding out a USL Championship team was going to be in my county was extremely exciting! It has been my dream to play professional soccer, so I gave up the position abroad to try out for the team. When I got the offer to play for Loudoun United, I was overwhelmed with gratitude knowing I have taken another step in reaching my goals for soccer.

LS: *How did your experiences at Loudoun Soccer shape you on and off the field?*

CV: Loudoun Soccer has had a tremendous impact both on and off the field. Loudoun has set a great foundation for me as an athlete and person. The high standard that Loudoun's youth system set each day, whether it was practice or games, has helped me to develop as a player and to have the confidence to compete at any level. It was because of my years with Loudoun that I was recruited by the coaches at Virginia Tech, as they saw me during training sessions. I had a great four years at Virginia Tech, where I competed every day and never took the game for granted. I helped Virginia Tech get back into the NCAA tournament for the first time in 9 years and led us to an Elite Eight appearance. All of this was possible through the foundation set by Loudoun Soccer.



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LS: What was the impact of your coaches at Loudoun Soccer?

CV: The coaches at Loudoun Soccer absolutely had an enormous impact on my development. I owe so much to what I've learned to many Loudoun Soccer coaches, most especially Coach John O'Hara and Coach Mike Green. Mike Green shaped me in my younger years to be a strong and confident player, and to play the game the right way. Coach Mike's practices and attitude towards soccer got me to love the game and have fun while doing it; because of him I have so much passion for the game. He believed in my talent and always knew I had a lot of potential. During the USL process, he gave me great advice on how to act like a pro and what it takes to be a pro at the center back position. John O'Hara made a huge impact on my game during my high school years and beyond. He pushed me to work hard through his intense training and discipline; he gave me a great respect for the game and took me to a level of professionalism for soccer that I didn't realize I could attain. John'o has an incredible level of knowledge on the game, and I was able to absorb so many things from his instruction. I was able to understand and utilize in my soccer skills things like structure, how to defend and attack as a team, importance of moving the ball quickly, high pressure as a team, and positional awareness; these are all concepts John'o pounded into my head! Through all of this, he helped develop the Loudoun '95 Red team that I played on and molded us into better soccer players, eventually leading us to Loudoun's first Boys State Cup in club history. He also was helpful in making my college decision, which led me to a great four years at Virginia Tech, and he was instrumental in getting me a trial with Loudoun United. I am fortunate to have had these coaches, and owe so much of my success to the foundation these coaches gave me from an early age.



Collin Verfurth (#24) with Loudoun United FC teammates (photo courtesy of Loudoun United FC)

LS: How did your youth soccer journey set you up for success at the professional level?

CV: Loudoun Soccer built the foundation for me to have success at the professional level. When I joined Loudoun Soccer I played up an age group for a few years, so I was always being challenged by bigger and older players. My coaches believed in me from the start, and continued to help develop me, both on and off the field. I was encouraged to play with the ODP

(Olympic Development Program) teams and get exposure to coaches and players from around the state; I am now teammates with some of the kids I use to play with. My Loudoun Soccer team, '95B Red, was able to play at the highest levels of tournaments all over the East Coast, again ending with the first Loudoun Boys State Cup win. It's been the best ride so far!



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***LS:** What are you most looking forward to as you continue your soccer career and what does it mean to you to continue this career close to home?*

CV: As I continue forward it is very special to be able to play in my hometown and represent Loudoun County. It is a dream to play professionally, and to be able to represent my hometown while doing it is truly a blessing. I love the support from friends, family and the community. It means so much to represent the coaches and players from Briar Woods High School, especially Coach Francois, who gave me so much support. I hope that the younger players currently with Loudoun Soccer can see someone like me and realize that if they work hard and train consistently, then someday they can fulfill their dream of playing professionally. I hope to continue to get better every day and to advance to even higher levels as a professional. To realize your dreams, you have to continue to set higher goals to be able to attain them. I recently had my debut with DC United in an International Friendly against Real Betis; it was an amazing night and this opportunity will continue to drive me forward as I hope to continue to play at the highest levels possible.

Collin recently returned to Loudoun Soccer to take part in the club's Pro Performance Training Camp with Loudoun United FC. Learn more about our camps and our club at loudounsoccer.com, and catch Collin and Loudoun United FC in action in their [home opener](#) at Segra Field in Leesburg on August 9th.

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