

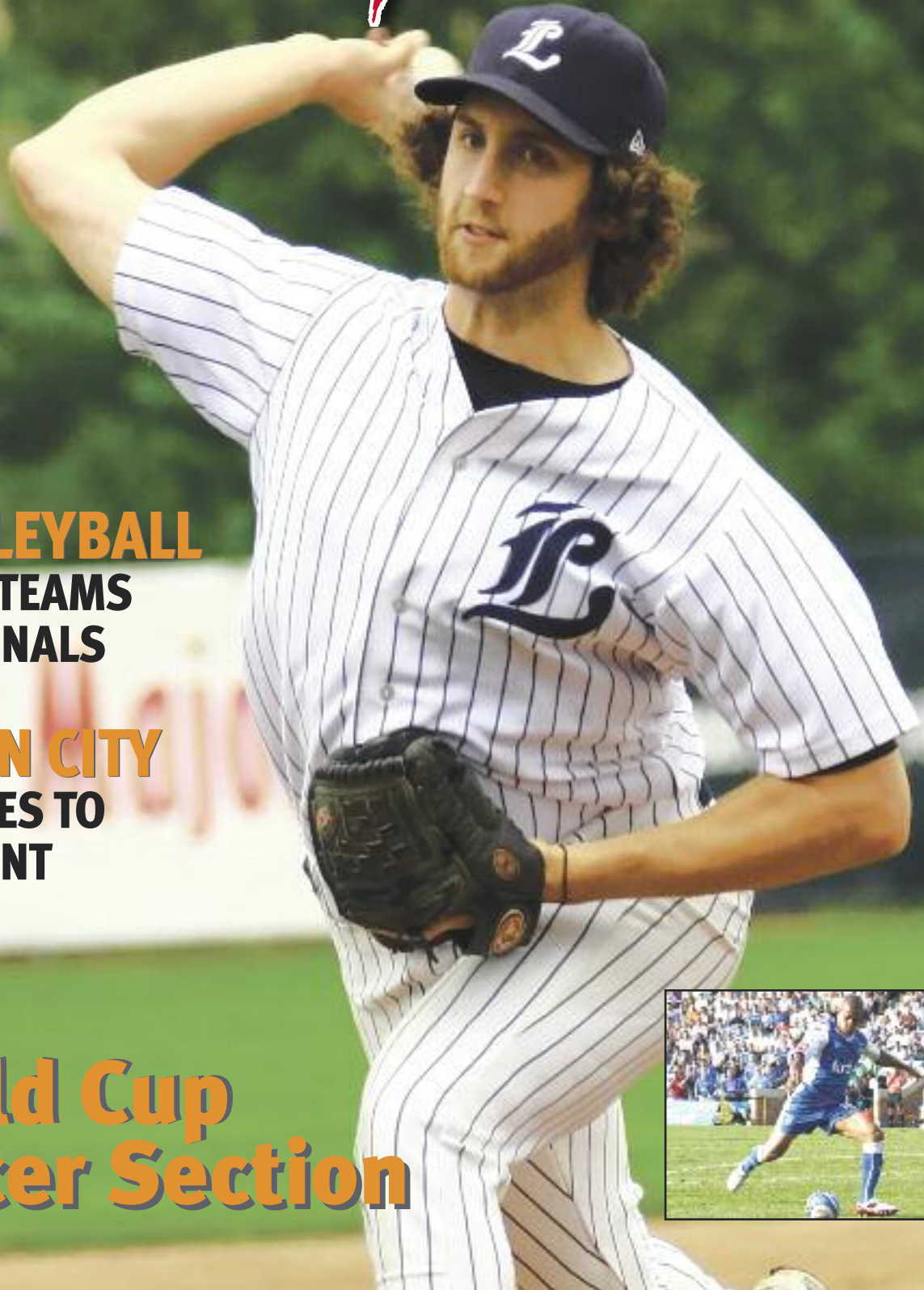
SportsXpress.com

May/June 2010
Vol. 3 / Issue 3

**FC VOLLEYBALL
SENDS 8 TEAMS
TO NATIONALS**

**LONDON CITY
CONTINUES TO
ADD TALENT**

**World Cup
Soccer Section**



London soccer fans United in their goals

By Ian Stewart Palmer

It's early on a bitterly cold Saturday morning. Most sensible people are still in their warm, comfortable beds. But not this lot.

Pints of cold beer and cider are bought in rounds as the mouth-watering aromas of a hearty English breakfast come drifting into the bar from the busy kitchen. The walls are draped with Manchester United soccer flags and other colourful team paraphernalia. All eyes are glued to various television sets scattered around the room when suddenly the sea of red-and-white clad supporters erupts in cheers, hugs and high-fives as United's Paul Scholes heads in a last-gasp winner against cross town rivals Manchester City.

Then the singing starts.

You're right on the mark if you figured the setting is a crowded British pub, and this one, The Scot's Corner, is located smack dab in the middle of London. However, that's Ontario, not England.

Welcome to the headquarters of Red Till Dead, the London branch of the Manchester United Supporters Club of Canada. The club is the brainchild of 34-year-old Derek Collins-Newman, a United supporter who found himself relocating to London from Sudbury several years ago.

When Collins-Newman realized there were a lot of fellow United supporters in town he approached his friend Dan Berriman with the idea of starting an official club where fans could gather and watch their favourite club in action. In the summer of 2009, the pair of fanatics pitched the idea of locating the club's headquarters at The Scot's Corner, to Billy

Thompson, the pub's owner...and the rest as they say is history.

News of the new organization and meeting place quickly spread and the club's membership reached about 50 after just a few months. Red Till Dead then became accredited as an official branch of the Manchester United Supporters Club of Canada in the fall of 2009 and the Toronto headquarters visited London to officially



welcome them that Halloween.

All televised games are shown at the pub, no matter what time they kick off and there's no cost to join the club. Fans of all teams are encouraged to visit The Scot's Corner to view the matches as long as the competitive banter is kept to a friendly level.

While most of the club's members are of British heritage, Collins-Newman said it attracts local fans from all nations, including Canadians and newcomers to the sport. He feels Manchester United's attacking style of play is what attracted him and many others to the team when a steady supply of English Premier League (EPL) games invaded Canadian television airwaves in the late 1990s.



"I became a fan because I noticed a difference between United and other teams. United attacks and attacks while other teams stay back and defend, or park the bus as they say. United doesn't, even when a draw would be ok. They attack when leading against dangerous teams. They're pure class on and off the pitch and a team through and through."

He added that soccer is an ideal sport to watch in a group setting, even with supporters of the opposition present.

"Soccer is best watched with a crowd. The energy of the club brings another level to game. The singing, the cheering, it just makes the whole experience better."

New members to the club will find that Red Till Dead also offers on-field activities to go along with watching United games on TV.

"We hope to get some friendly pick-up games started, first within the club and then against other EPL team supporters. We

also are in the process of raising funds to create our own flag for members to take to Old Trafford and hopefully get some attention. We really want to increase awareness of football in the London area to let fans know to come out and watch United, and England this summer in the World Cup at The Scot's Corner."

With several United players suiting up for their national squads at the World Cup in South Africa, Red Till Dead members and the Scot's Corner should be in all their glory this summer.

For more information about the club please visit its website at www.redtilldead.com and www.thescotscorner.com