

World Cup Legacy



On July 28, 2013 the US Mens National Team won the CONCACAF Gold Cup. This victory provided the spark for the team to qualify later in the year for the FIFA World Cup that will be held in Brazil June 12-July 13.

Starting for the United States that day was goalkeeper Nick Rimando, forward Landon Donovan, midfielder Kyle Beckerman and defender DaMarcus Beasley who was the team captain.

All four of these players were first brought into the National Team programs in 1997 by Billy McNicol who was - at the time - Head Coach of the U18 and U16 National Teams. Other notable players McNicol identified at that time who went on to represent the U.S. in World Cup play were Chris Albright (2006), Carlos Bocanegra (2010, 2006) and Steve Cherundolo (2010, 2006, 2002). Another McNicol protégé, Herculez Gomez (2010) also contributed to the Gold Cup win but could not play in the final due to injury.

McNicol had first shown his scouting abilities about 12 years earlier when he was the Boys Head Coach for Region IV (West) Olympic Development Program. During his time with the O.D.P. he identified and trained promising teenagers who would prove to be impact players for the US National Team on the Worlds' biggest stage. Frankie Hejduk, Chris Henderson, Cobi Jones, Joe Max Moore, Mike Lapper, John O'Brien and Eric Wynalda were assessed and promoted by Billy as being ready for the "next level" and ultimately would wear the U.S. colors at the World Cup.

McNicol has also shown to be equally impressive at identifying and training girls who can compete at the highest levels. Four current members of the U.S. Womens National Team that traveled to Portugal last month to participate in the Algarve Cup were under his tutelage while he was in charge of the Cal South Girls O.D.P. (2002/03). Billy was an assistant coach for the U.S. National Team that won 3rd place at the Womens World Cup in China (2007).