

United Preview

By Steven Goff

FORWARDS

Emilio, the reigning MVP and scoring champion, reunites with Moreno, MLS's career leader in goals, to form an imposing tandem. But with Moreno entering the final stage of his career, the club felt it needed more depth at that position, so it acquired the pint-sized, feisty Niell. Both Santino Quaranta, in his second stint with United, and Rod Dyachenko are options on the front line and in midfield.



Jaime Moreno

Luciano Emilio



RESERVES IN
Franco Niell (pictured)
RESERVES OUT
Guy-Roland Kpene

Fred



Clyde Simms

MIDFIELDERS

The attack is charged by Gallardo, a two-time Argentine World Cup member who offers a graceful passing touch and a lethal shot from distance. His understanding with the clever Brazilian wing Fred and the seasoned forwards will be vital to United's success. Support is provided by Simms, who might end up logging the most minutes on the roster. Olsen, a first-team all-league selection last year, is recovering from offseason surgery on both ankles and might have a difficult time winning back his job from McTavish.



Ben Olsen (Injured, but expected to start when he returns)

NEW ADDITION
Marcelo Gallardo replaced Christian Gómez

RETURNING RESERVES
Devon McTavish (and D)

RESERVES IN
Dan Stratford
Santino Quaranta
RESERVES OUT
Brian Carroll
Josh Gros



Marc Burch

NEW ADDITION
Gonzalo Peralta replaced Greg Vanney



DEFENDERS

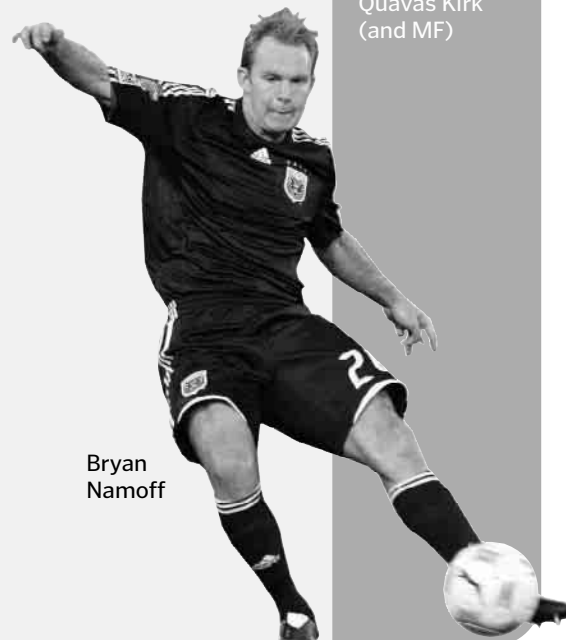
The outside backs (Burch and Namoff) remain the same, but the new central duo of Martínez and Peralta replaces Bobby Boswell and Greg Vanney. Martínez, who has Colombian national team experience, is built like a linebacker, while Peralta is 6 feet 2 and reads the game well. The versatile McTavish, coming off a breakthrough season, will also play in the back when not needed in midfield.



NEW ADDITION
Zach Wells replaced Troy Perkins



NEW ADDITION
Gonzalo Martínez replaced Bobby Boswell



Bryan Namoff

RESERVES IN
Pat Carroll
Quavas Kirk (and MF)

FULL ROSTER

Coach: Tom Soehn. Assistants: Chad Ashton, Mark Simpson.

No.	Player	Pos.	Age	Home Town	No.	Player	Pos.	Age	Home Town
1	Zach Wells*	GK	27	Costa Mesa, Calif.	19	Clyde Simms	MF	25	Jamestown, N.C.
2	Gonzalo Peralta*	D	27	Murmo, Argentina	21	Pat Carroll*	D	22	Springfield
4	Marc Burch	D	23	Cincinnati	22	Ryan Cordeiro*	MF	21	Highland Mills, N.Y.
5	Quavas Kirk*	MF-D	19	Aurora, Ill.	23	Gonzalo Martínez*	D	32	Ibague, Colombia
6	Domenic Mediate	MF	25	Southlake, Tex.	24	Jeff Carroll	MF-D	24	Springfield
7	Fred	MF	28	Belo Horizonte, Brazil	25	Santino Quaranta*	MF-F	23	Baltimore
8	Justin Moose	MF	24	Statesville, N.C.	26	Bryan Namoff	D	28	Rockford, Ill.
10	Marcelo Gallardo*	MF	32	Martínez, Argentina	30	James Thorpe*	GK	23	E. Longmeadow, Mass.
11	Luciano Emilio	F	29	Jales, Brazil	34	Franco Niell*	F	24	Buenos Aires
12	José Carvallo*	GK	22	Lima, Peru	99	Jaime Moreno	F	34	Santa Cruz, Bolivia
13	Jeremy Barlow*	MF	22	Herndon	—	Cezar*	F	22	Belo Horizonte, Brazil
14	Ben Olsen	MF	30	Middletown, Pa.	—	Jeff Curtin*	D	24	Oreland, Pa.
15	Rod Dyachenko	MF-F	24	Vancouver, Wash.	—	Brandon Owens*	D	22	Murrieta, Calif.
16	Dan Stratford*	MF	22	London					
17	Dane Murphy*	D-MF	22	Redding, Conn.					
18	Devon McTavish	MF-D	23	Winchester, Va.					

*Not with United last season

GOALKEEPER

By trading for Wells and acquiring Carvallo on loan, United believes it has created a healthy competition for the starting job after watching Perkins go largely unchallenged by his backups last year. Wells is older and bigger, but has never started more than 17 games in a season. Carvallo is quick and has played in major competition. Wells is atop the depth chart, but Carvallo will see regular action.



RESERVES IN
José Carvallo (pictured)
RESERVES OUT
Jay Nolly

PHOTOS BY TONI L. SANDYS — THE WASHINGTON POST

United Enters Season Opener Having Added Leadership and Durability

UNITED, From E1

three other starters, United took strategic steps to stimulate the roster by acquiring two seasoned central defenders, a spare forward and a playmaker from South America. It obtained a pair of goalkeepers to battle for the starting job and added several role players to bolster depth.

When the dust cleared, only a dozen players from last year's 28-man roster remained.

"Our goal was to make us better and right now we feel like we have accomplished that," said Coach Tom Soehn, who will begin his second MLS campaign Saturday night against the Kansas City Wizards. "But we will have to play a season to see if it actually worked."

There was inherent risk involved. United replaced its playmaker of the past 3½ seasons (Christian Gómez) with a midfielder known throughout the soccer world (Marcelo Gallardo) but who will need to conform to a new team, new league and new country. Zach Wells and José Carvallo have enduring qualities, but their predecessor, Troy Perkins, was one of the top goalkeepers in MLS.

Central backs Gonzalo Martínez and Gonzalo Peralta performed well in their debuts, the Champions' Cup quarterfinal series against Harbour View of Jamaica, and appear to be a notable upgrade over last year's duo

of Bobby Boswell and Greg Vanney. Franco Niell's arrival has given United a tested forward to back up Emilio and Moreno.

Soehn has noticed change in both performance and guidance.

"Leadership comes in different forms, through the way someone plays or the way someone directs traffic on the field," he said. "We have more vocal people on the field, and they have been through a lot of soccer in different countries."

Asked if he thought leadership was an issue in recent years, Kasper said, "To some degree, it was."

Midfielder Clyde Simms, in his fourth season, said extended training camps in Florida, California and Texas, not to mention a trip to Jamaica for a meaningful match, have helped a diverse group grow tighter. "It was a good bonding experience and you could really see us coming together," said Simms, who has gotten better acquainted with Peralta and Niell by carpooling with them to practice from their apartment complex in Alexandria.

With Spanish the primary language of several players, communication has been an issue. But, Soehn said, "the Spanish-speaking guys are learning English and the Americans are learning Spanish." As for him, Soehn said he speaks a form of "Spanglish." Soehn's second language is German, passed down by his Euro-

United at Wizards

Where: CommunityAmerica Ballpark, Kansas City, Kan.

When: 8 p.m.

TV: Comcast SportsNet (tape at 11 p.m.).

Radio: WWTW (107.7 FM, 1500 AM, 820 AM, tape at 10:30 p.m.), English; WACA (1540 AM), WLXE (1600 AM), WYSK (1350 AM), WZHF (1390 AM), Spanish.

D.C. Probable Starters (4-4-2 formation):

GK Zach Wells; Ds Bryan Namoff, Gonzalo Martínez, Gonzalo Peralta, Marc Burch; MFs Devon McTavish, Clyde Simms, Marcelo Gallardo, Fred; Fs Franco Niell, Luciano Emilio.

K.C. Probable Starters (3-5-2):

GK Kevin Hartman; Ds Jack Jewsbury, Jimmy Conrad, Tyson Wahl; MFs Chance Myers, Kerry Zavagnin, Kurt Morsink, Carlos Marinelli, Michael Harrington; Fs Claudio López, Ivan Trujillo.

pean-born parents, and "sometimes I am talking to [the new players] in German forgetting that they understand Spanish."

On the field, while Gallardo will steer an attack that scored an MLS-best 56 goals in 30 league games last year, Peralta and Martínez are poised to tighten a back line that suffered severe breakdowns in a first-round playoff loss to Chicago last fall. Devon McTavish, a steadily improving third-year player who started in midfield in the two Harbour View games in place

of the injured Olsen, will also be utilized on defense.

Niell's presence should alleviate the frontline depth issue, which was exposed in last year's playoffs when replacements for the ailing Emilio and Moreno did not have an impact.

With the offseason moves, Kasper says he believes United will "have a group that is fresher and guys who are hungry" when the club is in knockout competitions, such as the MLS playoffs and Champions League, which is modeled after the famed European continental championship of the same name and will debut this fall.

United appreciates that, ultimately, it will be judged on how it performs in those events, not just the regular season.

"It is not always easy with so many new guys," Moreno said. "We are trying to understand each other and every day we learn something new."

United Notes: Moreno, recovering from a hamstring injury, is expected to be in uniform against the Wizards, though he might not play until Tuesday's Champions' Cup semifinal at Pachuca (Mexico). . . . Midfielder-forward Rod Dyachenko is serving a one-game suspension after receiving a red card in last year's finale. . . . Midfielder-defender Dane Murphy (Virginia) and goalkeeper James Thorpe (Franklin Pierce, N.H.) signed developmental contracts.

United Schedule

Month	Date	Opponent	Time	TV
March	29	at Kansas City	8	
	April	1	at Pachuca*	10 FSC
May	5	Toronto FC	7:30	
	9	Pachuca*	7:30	
	12	at Real Salt Lake	9	CSN
	17	Columbus	8	ESPN2
June	26	Real Salt Lake	7:30	CSN
	4	at Colorado	3	CSN, TF
	8	Chicago	7:30	ESPN2
July	17	at Chivas USA	10:30	FSC
	21	at Toronto FC	7:30	CSN
	24	Toronto FC	7:30	CSN
	29	at New England	7:30	ESPN2
August	2	Kansas City	7:30	CSN
	10	at New York	5	CSN
	16	at Chicago	8:30	CSN
	20	at New England	7:30	CSN
September	23	Colorado	7:30	CSN
	30	New York	7:30	FSC
	6	at San Jose	10	CSN
	13	FC Dallas	7:30	FSC
October	20	at Los Angeles	11	FSC
	28	at FC Dallas	3	TF
	4	Chivas USA	7:30	FSC
	12	at Houston	7	CSN
November	16	New England	7:30	ESPN2
	26	at Columbus	5	CSN
	29	Los Angeles	noon	ABC

CSN: Comcast SportsNet; TF: TeleFutura; FSC: Fox Soccer Channel

* CONCACAF Champions' Cup ** SuperLiga