



# MLS Roundup

**HAIL DISCOVERIES!:** Both of Colorado's foreign signings, **John Spencer** and **Neathan Gibson**, will be classified as discovery players.

Spencer, a former Scottish international who joins MLS from Premier League club Motherwell, will join the Rapids March 9.

Gibson, a native of South Africa, is a green-card holder and doesn't count against the three-foreigner limit. He played college soccer at the College of Boca Raton (now Lynn University). One of his teammates was Miami's **Ivan McKinley**.

Rapids head coach **Tim Hankinson** is free to use their allocation on a foreign player, if he wishes. But if he does, he'll exceed the MLS limit of three foreigners per team, which probably means he'll have to trade or jettison Colombian attacker **Henry Zambrano**, whom the Rapids obtained in February 2000 from the MetroStars in exchange for an allocation.

A source said league officials will be reluctant to let Colorado waive Zambrano, since he reportedly cost the league more than \$400,000 to acquire, and said league officials would rather not let such an expensive player twiddle his thumbs.

Zambrano's contract is not guaranteed, so the league wouldn't have to eat a salary.

The Rapids' other foreigner is striker **Junior Agogo**, who could not be classified as a junior international last year although he meets the age requirement (22 or younger) for such players because the league had filled its allotted 12 spots.

That pool has been expanded to 24 players, but those slots are filled and league officials have so far elected not to reclassify Agogo retroactively.

**GALAXY ACROSS ASIA:** Los Angeles beat the Chinese national team and lost a pair of games to J-League opposition during its three-game Asian tour Feb. 21-26.

The Galaxy traveled about 40,000 miles on the trip. It beat China, 3-1, in Yuxi, a small city deep in the central region of China, then headed to Japan for losses to Verdy Tokyo (3-2) and Urawa Reds (2-1).

Draft picks did well for the Galaxy. **Brian Mullan** set up a goal against China and scored against Urawa. **Brian Ching** scored in the Verdy match.

**JONES RETURNS:** Midfielder **Cobi Jones** returned from a trial with English club Ipswich

Town ready to sign with MLS, according to his agent.

"He realizes his future is here with the Galaxy and MLS," said **Cory Clemetson**, who accompanied Jones to England.

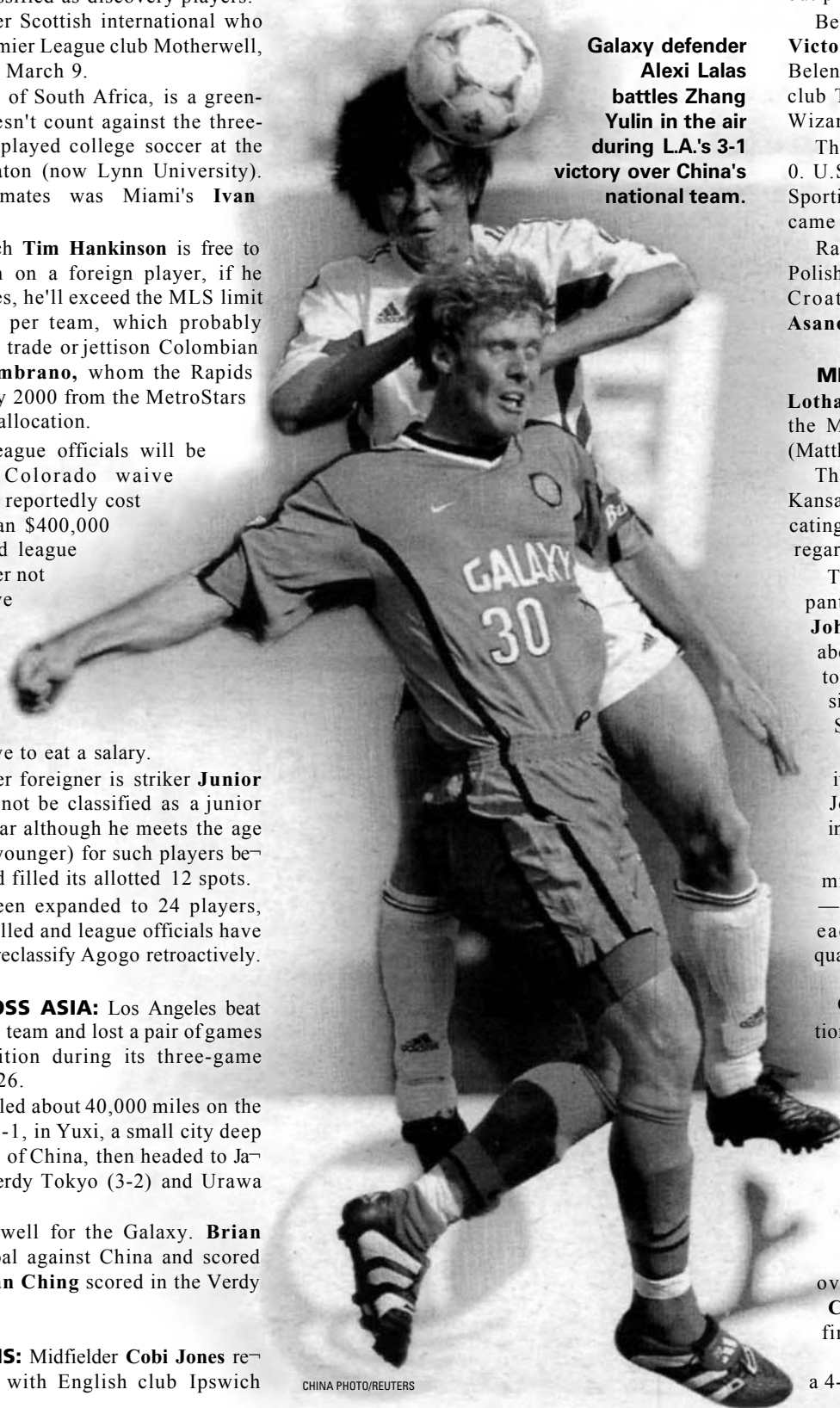
"He enjoyed being at Ipswich and seeing what his options are, but I think he realized that L.A. is a pretty good place for him to be."

Jones will sign a multiyear deal with MLS that will reportedly make him among the highest-paid players in the league.

A source said Jones will receive a salary of \$375,000, a figure Clemetson refused to comment on.

His income could double when endorsements

**Galaxy defender Alexi Lalas battles Zhang Yulin in the air during L.A.'s 3-1 victory over China's national team.**



CHINA PHOTO/REUTERS

and marketing tie-ins are added.

**NOTES FROM PORTUGAL:** By beating powerhouse Benfica, 2-0, on Feb. 27, the Metros finished their tour of Portugal with a 4-0-1 record.

**Alex Comas** and **Adolfo Valencia** scored for the Metros against Benfica, which fielded a mix of starters, backups and reserve-team players. Keeper **Tim Howard** saved a penalty kick, and Colombian midfielder **Pedro Alvarez** played 70 minutes.

A six-game winning streak for the Wizards in Portugal ended Feb. 27 when they fell to Belenenses, 3-2. **Roy Lassiter** and **Mo Johnston** scored for Kansas City. Lassiter's goal was set up by **Gary Glasgow**, who is normally a forward but played this match in midfield.

Belarusian guest players, **Nikita Malyi** and **Victor Kukar** played for Kansas City against Belenenses and in a 1-1 tie with South Korean club Tajon Citizen Feb. 25. Lassiter scored the Wizards' goal against Tajon.

The Rapids lost Feb. 27 to Sporting Lisbon, 1-0. U.S. international **Jovan Kirovski** played for Sporting. Former Clash and Revs midfielder **Jair** came on as a sub for Colorado.

Rapids head coach **Tim Hankinson** has used Polish midfielder **Arkadiusz Kubik** and former Croatian international midfielder **Aljosa Asanovic** as guest players.

**MERCO-QUESTIONS:** As the last vestige of the **Lothar Matthaeus** deal, Bayern Munich will play the MetroStars May 26 at the Meadowlands. (Matthaeus is not expected to play for either team.)

The Metros must move their MLS game with Kansas City scheduled for that date, and complicating the matters for both teams is uncertainty regarding the Merconorte Cup.

They are listed as the probable MLS participants, yet as of Feb. 27, Wizards GM **Curt Johnson** had not received specific information about the tournament. The draw is supposed to be held in April, with the first round provisionally set to commence in July and run until September.

"We've been told to be ready to play in it, but nothing has been confirmed," said Johnson. "I'm not 100 percent sure that we're in it."

The Metros and Wizards would play six midweek games — three home and three away — in the first round. The top two teams in each four-team group advance to the quarterfinals.

**GAME ON!:** The Carolina Soccer Foundation has officially announced a Miami-D.C. United exhibition match March 30 in Winston-Salem, N.C. It will be played at Spry Stadium at Wake Forest University.

**GOOD SHOWING:** The Quakes' **Dwayne DeRosario** gave an indication of the impact he could have this season during the team's tour of Mexico.

He scored San Jose's goal in a 1-0 win over Atlas reserves and set up **Chris Carrieri** for a goal in a 1-1 tie with Atlas' first team.

DeRosario also had a goal and an assist in a 4-3 loss to Dallas.



RIDGE MAHONEY

## Sitters

English club Fulham, which is sailing along atop the First Division, has contacted MLS teams about playing matches in the U.S. this spring. • Miami is believed to have the most interest in swinging a trade for **Preki**, who has not trained with Kansas City and did not accompany the team to Portugal while negotiating a new contract. San Jose and Colorado also have inquired. • Once work visas are issued for Englishman **Ian Bishop** and Honduran **Alex Pineda Chacon**, the Fusion will renew its efforts to move **Welton** and one other senior international. A-source said a South Korean club has asked about **Diego Serna**. • Trialist **David Wardack** has played for the Fusion and Burn in preseason and also is slated to work out with the Galaxy.