

## Brian McBride

### **EVERTON SIGNS U.S. STRIKER FOR 'COVER'**

The chances of Brian McBride's three-month loan deal to Everton resulting in Premier League playing time will depend largely on the recovery rate of the clubs' limping striker corps and the discipline of its teen superstar.

McBride, scorer of two World Cup goals last summer and a seven-year veteran of the Columbus Crew, to whom he is committed through at least 2005, has been in England before.

He played nine games, scoring once, for First Division Preston North End in 2000-01. Preston's manager was David Moyes, who took over at Everton in March. He remembered McBride when the Toffees were left with only one forward, Canadian Tomasz Radzinski, in late December.

Kevin Campbell, Duncan Ferguson and Nick Chadwick suffered injuries. The 17-year-old Wayne Rooney picked up a four-game suspension for a red card and his fifth yellow. And American Joe-Max Moore — in what may have been bad timing — requested that his work permit not be renewed.

McBride arrived in Everton along with Egyptian international defender Ibrahim Said.

"Both these players are coming in as cover; I have to state that," Moyes said. "They're not players who are coming to walk straight into the team. Our current players are doing well, we just need some backup.

"[McBride will] give us cover for Kevin Campbell. He's a good center forward, he's good in the air, he's very mobile, a great lad to have around the place as well. ... He may play, he may not play. If the players continue to play as well as they have done this season, there will be no need to use him."

The Crew expects McBride back in time for its regular-season opener April 5 against Los Angeles.

Fifth-place Everton signed another U.S.

product a week earlier. Goalkeeper Espen Baardsen, who was born and raised in Northern California, but plays on a Norwegian passport, arrived from Watford. Baardsen, who has four Norway caps, has been in England since joining Tottenham at age 18 in 1996.

— **Mike Woitalla**