

## My View

# No perfect world



**S**tay at home or move abroad?

It's a theme that runs throughout this issue.

It's the subject of the lively debate in Indirect Kick (Page 6) on the choice Landon Donovan faced. The consensus? Let

Landon live his own life. (One must wonder, though, how happy Donovan is with the decision, considering how down he looked in the recent national team matches against Argentina and Jamaica.)

DaMarcus Beasley, Donovan's teammate on the U-17s, U-20s and senior national team, is the subject of Ridge Mahoney's cover story (Page 16). Beasley stayed in Chicago after deals with Middlesbrough and Ajax fell through last year, and he returns to a Fire team that's been broken up because of salary-cap problems.

Over in Europe are Oguchi Onyewu and Alex Yi, two other members of the great U-17 national team of 1999 (Page 12).

Onyewu waited six months before he finally debuted with French club Metz. Yi, based in Antwerp, Belgium, has spent a lot of time dreaming what it would be like if he was back at UCLA. Weather is just one of the problems.

French and Belgian soccer are famous as breeding grounds for young players, but they can be harsh on young foreigners.

The lure of European glory — not to mention the euro — is strong. The big story in the MLS offseason has been the sudden breakup of the San Jose Earthquakes (Page 30). Salary issues prompted two of the Quakes' key players — goalie Joe Cannon and left back Wade Barrett — to flee for Europe.

Neither has a great situation. Cannon has a six-month contract as the third-string keeper at French club Lens. Barrett moved to Aarhus, near the bottom of the Danish SuperLeague, not exactly a major destination for aspiring young players.

Still — and this is troubling part for MLS — they saw the potential of a better deal than they felt they would get at home.

As Yi has found, waiting up nights for the UCLA scores, the grass is always greener on the other side.