

# NYL PLAYER STORIES

## Dylan Horgan

My love for football began at the age of 5. Football was always going to be my choice of sport considering every member of my family played it. Watching my parents demolish their opponents on the weekends (yes, even mum), gave me an unmistakable buzz which inevitably created the enjoyment I have for 'the beautiful game'.

I have played for Ellerslie my entire life and only just recently transferred to Eastern Suburbs for this National Youth League. I made my first team debut for Ellerslie at the end of last year and have made a total of 12 appearances in total. I was also fortunate enough to receive the Ellerslie AFC Most Promising Young Player of the Year award this year. A short while ago I travelled over to America to take part in two University football camps, one in Berkeley and the other in Stanford, with coaches from various Universities around different states. I received positive feedback and eventually was contacted by the head football coach of a University in Colorado, expressing his interest in me. Here's to hoping that eventually works out.

I owe a lot to the people that made me the footballer I am today. Coach of the Ellerslie first team, Chris Wallace, gave me various opportunities to play men's first team football. Ryan Shiffman, my 15th, 17th, and 19th grade coach as well as my coach for the ACFC U17 tournament for two years. Ryan is an extremely knowledgeable football coach and is a great guy off the pitch as well. He works with his players on a very personal level which is why I think he is a great leader and inspirational role model. Fred de Jong is my most recent coach at Ellerslie for the upcoming Napier Tournament. Fred is a former All White and it is obvious he knows what he is talking about when teaching us new skills. He is also a very well-known sports commentator which gives him great communication skills when it comes to teaching us various new plays and enables us to more easily learn them. My dad, Mike Horgan, is without a doubt

a huge contributor to the person and footballer I am today. He has played at a high level in his youth and continues to put a smile on my face when watching his old and slow team hammer their opponents on a weekly basis. He is one of the reasons I began playing football and is one of the reasons I will continue play it.

## George Andrew

I come from a town on the east coast of the north island called Gisborne. I was brought up by my dad to be a rugby player but I always preferred football so when I finally got a chance to play at primary school I jumped at the chance and have loved it ever since. At Gisborne boys high school, I got called up to my first proper team which was Team Gisborne. They played in Napier's league so we had to travel two and a half hours every second week just to play our games. From there I got recommended to the Hawkes bay united youth team.

This meant even more training as I had to travel once a week to Napier for training after school and then again to Napier in the weekend to either play there or catch a flight from Napier to wherever we were playing. After that season had finished a coach from Gisborne recommended me to Chris Zorocich who coaches Saint Kentigern College in Auckland. Chris came and watched one of my national youth league games when we played Auckland city in Auckland. After the game he told me he wanted me to come to Saint Kents. So I started there at the start of 2016 but was unfortunate as I wasn't able to play all year because we had to many new to school players so I got stuck with the second eleven for the whole season. At the end of the season Chris mentioned to me that I should do National youth league again this year but at eastern suburbs and that's how I ended up here.

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## Calvin Lee

I started playing football at a young age after my father passed away to cancer when I was five. He was a professional goalkeeper himself in what is now known as the Chinese Super League, playing for Beijing, and of course, I naturally fell in love with the position. Although I played a season with Fencibles United in the 8th Grade, I did not play for a club again until high school, instead focusing my time on trainings and inter-school football. However, I credit my formal development to Suburbs' partner club, Ellerslie FC, the Eastern Suburbs' Premier Reserve Team whom I played for this season and the Auckland Football Federation Talent Centre.

My greatest achievements in football would include being selected as the No.1 GK for the NZ Schoolboys, training with the Qatar U17's at the Aspire Academy in Doha and winning the Dilworth School Sportsman of the Year award for 2016. Playing in the 1st XI football team at Dilworth since year 10 and captaining the side as a senior was also a memorable experience, where working together with my mates and achieving results in front of my peers and teachers was extremely rewarding. I personally love the buzz gained from making saves, keeping the team in the game and/or preserving our lead.

I'm now also really embracing the challenge of being a sweeper-keeper, a role I have developed significantly under the guidance of the Suburbs' coaches. Influential coaches would include Kris Pinnock, my former goalkeeper coach at Ellerslie, Courtney Napa, my GK coach at the Auckland Football Federation, and of course, Jesus Bueno, our current Suburbs National Youth League goalkeeper coach whom I have had the privilege of learning from, working with and being mentored by this season at the club.

## Corey Walters

Starting off as a youngster I spent my early playing days at Fencibles United AFC under the wing of goal keeper coach Dave Priestley who developed my initial skill set & understanding of Keeping. In 2012 i made the Move to Eastern Suburbs where i was handed my first opportunities in senior football, whilst the infamous Kevin Fallon was in charge of the First Team and The well weathered yet very capable Andrew Webber with the reserves. Much the same could be said for the Manager of reserves at the time John Davidson (JD Senior).

Throughout my time at Suburbs I had also been working on my game with goal keeper coach Miroslav Nikolic who to date as well as Paul Marshall, who i worked with at Mount Albert Grammar (MAGS), have been the biggest Influences in my football journey so far.

Some of my most memorable moments in football would include winning the FTC national tournament with AFF, being apart of The LillyWhites 2015 first team squad who achieved winning both the NRLF Premiership League, as well as the Chatham Cup and gaining my First Team experience with Central United FC at the start of the 2016 Premier League Season, Before returning back to Eastern Suburbs in the mid-season transfer window.