

Starko, Doria, Peterson Score For Kahoks, Collinsville Downs Warriors 3-0 In Inaugural Paz Cup Match

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GRANITE CITY - Before a very spirited and supportive crowd of both Granite City and Collinsville supporters, Ty Starko scored in the first half, then Juan Carlos Doria and Trey Peterson scored in the second half to give the Kahoks a hard-fought 3-0 win over the host Warriors in the inaugural Paz Cup match Thursday night at Gene Baker Field.

The cup is named for former Granite City South goalie Alex Paz, who was diagnosed with liver cancer recently and will eventually require a transplant. The money raised during the match, which included a 50-50 drawing, will help Paz and his family with the transplant and other expenses that may be occurred.

Although the Warriors lost on the pitch, Granite head coach Ryan Reeves, a teammate of Paz and his brothers, Dave and Tim, felt that the night was a big success.

"At the end of the day, that's really what it's all about," Reeves said. "The crowd was tremendous, Collinsville came out and supported Alex and I thought Granite, even though he's an older Granite guy, he's an alumnus, we did a good job of spreading the word about his importance to the soccer community and an alumnus of Granite City, with his and his brothers. The community came, just like I thought they would, they supported us, the atmosphere was unreal.



"I thought for the most part, the game was competitive, until the second half, there," Reeves continued. "It got away from us, but I was proud of the effort, proud of the community, proud of both schools for participating. You really couldn't have asked for much more."

The Paz brothers are a part of the famous Granite City/Granite City South soccer program who were coached by Baker, who died on Aug. 27. and the entire Granite soccer alumni continues to make positive contributions to the Granite community.

"All the alumni, really, not just Alex," Reeves said, "all the Granite alumni, they continue to give back, they're always in and around soccer, you always see them at the games, he goes to a lot of club games, he's always there/ And they're always in the Collinsville community any more than he is in Granite. But he's around, and I know my daughter, my son, everybody knows him. They know him; he's always taking great pictures of my son and stuff.

But really, I mean, all the alumni in Granite, with coach Baker and all the guys," Reeves also said. "I think they just have a real, true appreciation for the history of soccer in Granite and for what coach Baker did for everybody in the area. And I think of moving forward. I hope it continues. I was talking to some old alumni guys who played for me a few years ago. It's crazy to think I have alumni guys coming back to watch games I

coached. I've been doing it for about six, seven years now, but I think the community's really solid, our alumni's really solid and I hope it continues that way for years to come."

The Kahoks had the better of the play for the opening 20 minutes, having good opportunities to score, but the Warrior defense and goalie Tyler Lakin managed to push aside the chances. Armando Hernandez had a pair of good opportunities to put the Warriors into the front, but Braden Henson did well to stop the Granite chances.

In the 22nd minute, Starko picked up a loose ball in the box and slotted it into the lower left hand corner to give Collinsville the lead at 1-0. Both sides had good chances the remainder of the half, but failed to click as the Kahoks took their lead into the interval.

In the second half, Doria doubled the lead for Collinsville as he headed in off a corner in the 52nd minute to give the Kahoks a 2-0 edge. It became 3-0 in the 63rd minute when Peterson tucked home a great crossing pass to triple the lead, which the Kahok defense protected well to give Collinsville the three points and the Paz Cup, which was presented to the team at midfield by Alex, Dave and Tim after the match.

The Kahoks end the regular season 11-6-1 and hold the number three seed in the Normal Community sectional complex in Class 3A. They'll play Quincy in the Edwardsville regional Oct. 17 at 7 p.m., meeting the winner of the first semifinal between Edwardsville and the winner of a play-in game between Alton and Springfield Southeast in the final Oct. 21 at 3 p.m.

The Warriors conclude the regular season 2-9-2 and have the seventh seed. Granite plays top-seeded O'Fallon Oct. 17 at the Belleville West regional at Bob Goalby Field in a 5 p.m. kickoff, with the winner playing the winner of the host Maroons or rival Belleville East in the final Oct 21, at 5 p.m.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)