

# BOYS SOCCER

Text by Steve Gorten



## Class 5A-4A First team

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**ROMILAIRE AMROISE**  
Deerfield Beach sophomore  
**Pos.:** Forward  
**Comment:** The two-year starter was the Bucks' leading scorer, amassing 28 goals and 12 assists to lead his team to a surprising district title.
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**BRENO ERTY**  
Cypress Bay senior  
**Pos.:** Defender  
**Comment:** One of the team's leaders, the starter on all three Lightning championship teams made key plays in play-offs and finished with five goals and four assists.
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**HUMBERTO DIAZ**  
Cypress Bay senior  
**Pos.:** Defender  
**Comment:** The four-year starter helped spearhead a defense that didn't allow a goal in the final nine matches. Scored six goals. Has committed to St. Thomas University.
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**HECTOR FERNANDEZ**  
Cypress Bay senior  
**Pos.:** Goalkeeper  
**Comment:** Lightning finished season with nine straight shutouts. Fernandez's defining performance came in state semis when he made several stellar saves. Winthrop signee also superb in championship.
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**JASON FITZGERALD**  
Douglas senior  
**Pos.:** Forward  
**Comment:** The three-year starter, who has signed with Florida Atlantic, tallied 35 goals and 10 assists for the Eagles. He was a first-team pick last year as well.
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**NICOLAS GUEVARA**  
Cypress Bay senior  
**Pos.:** Forward  
**Comment:** The Lightning's leading scorer had 19 goals, the biggest being the game-winner in the state semifinals in upset of Boca Raton. Has committed to Florida Southern.
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**RALPH JOSEPH**  
Fort Lauderdale Junior  
**Pos.:** Forward  
**Comment:** The Flying L's leading scorer, a three-year starter, racked up 27 goals and nine assists. Scored winning overtime goal in improbable regional semifinal win.
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**GABRIEL MENESCAL**  
Monarch senior  
**Pos.:** Defender/midfielder  
**Comment:** A major reason Monarch finished with a 13-2-6 record, he recorded 11 goals and three assists in his third year as a starter.
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**JACK MISKEL**  
St. Thomas Aquinas Junior  
**Pos.:** Forward/midfielder  
**Comment:** The three-year starter, also a first-team pick last year, posted 17 goals and 12 assists in helping lead Raiders to the regional semifinals.
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**OSCAR SALAS**  
Fort Lauderdale senior  
**Pos.:** Midfielder  
**Comment:** Flying L's "top set-up guy" was an offensive playmaker. He had a county-best 27 assists along with 15 goals, including a goal in the regional final.
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**GADIEL WILLIAMS**  
Fort Lauderdale senior  
**Pos.:** Defender  
**Comment:** The sweeper, a two-year starter with four goals this season, was best defender for Flying L's and a key to their run to the state semifinals.



## DARWIN ESPINAL

Class 5A-4A Player of the Year ■ Taravella senior

**Position:** Forward  
**Statistics:** 25 goals, 20 assists

### Season highlights

Espinal, who had three goals and two assists against Northeast in the regular season, led the Trojans to regionals for the first time in five years and then tallied a goal and three assists as they earned their first regional win in a decade, 4-1 against South Plantation in the Class 5A quarterfinals. His cross in overtime the next round resulted in an own goal by St. Thomas Aquinas and another playoff win for the Trojans, who finished 18-3-2 following a regional final loss to Boca Raton.

### Comment

Unlike most elite players forced to choose between playing for their academy and high school teams this past season because of a new U.S. Soccer Federation rule, Espinal chose the latter. "I had a lot of fun," said Espinal, who hadn't played high school ball since he was a freshman in Washington, D.C. "I just tried to enjoy every game I played and play with my heart, most of all. I was always smiling during games." Espinal, who will play next season at Darton (Ga.) College, said he wanted to play with his friends at Taravella and help them achieve big things, and that the experience was even better than he expected. He was exactly the playmaker Taravella needed to return to regionals - both as a goal-scorer and passer who set up teammates. One of his more memorable moments: scoring in the 90th minute of a 2-2 tie against Monarch. Besides being the leading catalyst for Taravella's offense, he developed into one of the team's leaders. "Certainly a phenomenal year," Taravella coach Mike Goodrich said. "He's definitely in the small handful of the best players I've ever seen in Broward County. Like any great player he had the ability to make those around him better and he certainly did that."

*"I just tried to do my part, my job, and support the team any way I could. I just wanted to show people what we had as a team, try to get our name out there more. And I think it is a little more now thanks to this year. ... I feel like we're more visible."*

## Coach of the Year

 **BENITO CLERVEAUX**  
Fort Lauderdale  
**Comment:** In his third year as coach, Clerveaux guided Fort Lauderdale to unprecedented success. One season after winning the first district playoff game since the program started in 1979 and then capturing the district title before a regional quarterfinal loss, the Flying L's made it all the way to the Class 4A state semifinals, where they lost to eventual state champ Naples Gulf Coast. They finished with an 18-7-1 record. "One word to describe this season: spectacular," Clerveaux said. "I called the guys dreamchasers. When we made it, it was just an unbelievable feeling." The Flying L's run included a 4-3 overtime win in the regional semifinals against Haleah American in which they trailed by two goals in the final two minutes of regulation stoppage time. "When they saw the season was a minute away from ending, everybody just jelled together and got the job done," Clerveaux said. Fort Lauderdale then beat Martin County in penalty kicks for its first regional championship.

## Second team

John Belfort	Blanche Ely	Sr.	forward
Bijan Campbell	Coconut Creek	Sr.	midfielder
Ezio Carbone	Monarch	Sr.	defender
Rafaél De Jesus	Monarch	Sr.	goalkeeper
Jake Fuhrman	Cypress Bay	Fr.	midfielder
Daniel Gutierrez	Cypress Bay	So.	forward
Daving Morinvil	Deerfield Beach	Sr.	forward
Esteban Ochoa	Taravella	Sr.	forward
Alex Ortiz	Western	Sr.	defender
Kris Rosales	Deerfield Beach	Sr.	midfielder
Keegan Wade	St. Thomas Aquinas	Sr.	defender

## Honorable mention

**Blanche Ely:** Milton Cabrera, Jacques Lorfilis, Jadel Toussaint; **Cooper City:** Trent Austin, Ali Labied, Ryan Oliphant; **Coral Gables:** Musheer Abdalrhuk, Johnny Castro, Oscar Dominguez; **Cypress Bay:** Miguel Perez, Juan Todeschini; **Deerfield Beach:** George Cunha, Gabriel Gonzalez, Diego Hormiga; **Douglas:** Jai Pandit; **Fort Lauderdale:** Vladimir Joseph, Bergh Orellen, Benson Orellen; **Flanagan:** Brandon De La Rosa; **Hollywood Hills:** Alejandro Osorio, Pablo Osorio, Fritzgerald Bernadel; **Miramar:** Jose Castellon, Kristan Etrrick, Jude Jean-Baptiste; **Monarch:** Gian Scalise, Mattheus Silva, Rodrigo Silva; **Northeast:** Aldrid Toledo; **Nova:** Jake Dubin, Nick Ramirez; **South Broward:** Igor Gardina, Lenny Jean-Louis, Francisco Pataliano; **St. Thomas Aquinas:** Nikolai Markini; **Taravella:** Jorge Duran, Trevor Newman, Eddison Ramirez; **West Broward:** Mykel Crossty, Sady Ramirez; **Western:** Phil Gafanovich, Lorenzo Lopez, Carlos Viganoni



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