



# GUYANA FOOTBALL FEDERATION INC.

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## PRESS RELEASE

### NATIONAL U-15 SQUAD ENCAMPED

#### **– Prepares For SOUALIGA Tournament in Saint Martin; U13 player Included in Squad**

**29<sup>th</sup> May, Georgetown:** Encampment for the National U15 team began on Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 in New Amsterdam, Berbice with a 25-man squad preparing for the ‘SOUALIGA’ Tournament in Saint Martin from the 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2017.

This tournament will serve as part of the national team’s preparatory activity for the CONCACAF U-15 tournament scheduled for August 2017.

The squad includes players from six (6) of the GFF-ScotiaBank Academy Training Centres (ATC) and one from Region One including Georgetown (6), East Demerara (7), East Bank Demerara (2), Bartica (1), Berbice (5) and Rupununi (3). There are three goalkeepers, seven defenders, eight midfielders and seven forwards. *Please see below complete squad*

Among the squad, which will be encamped for four days, is a player who featured in the U-13 squad, Kamani Milne, a forward from the Berbice ATC as well as Ronaldo Rodrigues, Troni Semple and the appointed captain Joshua Braithwaite.

In an invited comment, Rodrigues, who plays his game at Santa Rosa, Moruca and always had an affinity for the game said he’s proud to be participating in his first international assignment. He also said his community, which has been very supportive of him, was happy following his first camp in April, 2017. “Everybody was happy, extremely happy, as I was the only person from my village/community (participating in the camp). They all gave me some good advice to keep working and focusing until I reach the top.” The striker, emphasized the importance of balancing academics and football, and also expressed his desire to play for both the senior national team and international professional leagues such as Chelsea and Real Madrid.

Troni Semple, who hails from the East Coast ATC and plays for Buxton United FC is on his third national duty, having represented at both the U15 and U17 teams respectively. He will rely on his international experience to play a better game in the upcoming tournament. “The first tournament I attended was in French Guiana. I was very nervous and it really took a part in my game, I didn’t play as well. I went away with the U-17s, when the game began I wasn’t as nervous as the first time. I was very relaxed and composed, I played a better game.

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– 2 –

I have been in a lot of camps with both teams and I know my players so when it comes to the national team, it's just relaxed for me and I play better."

The Annandale Secondary School student and aspiring pilot who said it was "a great honour to be in the national U15 team", spoke about the benefits of the continuous encampment conducted by the GFF Technical Department: "Everything taught in camp can be referred to in a game. I've seen it many times also, when we were in French Guiana, we did some high-temp playing. In the matches in French Guiana, the other teams played very fast; they played faster than us which showed me that we should train more on high-tempo playing, make the football more intense. The first tournament in French Guiana, we didn't play with each other, we didn't have an understanding of the team mates as much as the other teams. They did well as a team, we only did well as individuals and that can't win a game. Now that we have had consecutive camps, I think we're playing very good now...I think we can do way better than we did the last time."

Meanwhile, Braithwaite said it's a great feeling to lead the national team as it gives him a chance to "lead from the front" and "it was one of his goals." The aspiring soldier commented on the value of being part of the ATC: "It came in handy for me as you not only train with your club but you have the chance of playing with players who are part of the national programme and I think it's great as the things that you need to learn at the national camp will be taught at the Academy so when I head to the national camp, it will be much easier for me because I have already been taught at the academy."

The skipper said he expects the team to win in the SOUALIGA Tournament: "I expect the team to win this time as we've been together for a long time. This is the fourth camp that the national programme has had for us and I think this time, we won't be having any excuse; I think we should win this time."

The squad, which is headed by Bryan Joseph and assisted by Challus Mc Kinnon will be reduced to a 16-man travelling team following encampment, which will end on Wednesday, 31st May, 2017. The team is scheduled to depart on the 1st June, 2017

The SOUALIGA Tournament will feature 10 territories including Anguilla, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Tortola, Barbados, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Thomas and Guyana.

The ATC is a national initiative, which seeks to, among other goals, create a pathway for the development of players to the senior national team.

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