

Gomes leads 'irreplaceable' soccer stars

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Across the state of Utah and all four girls soccer classifications, there is something each of the 2013 state championship teams had in common — they were all led by a dynamic player who made both tangible and intangible impacts on their team.

There is something the coaches of those four players agreed on, too. While describing their leaders, each stated, simply, "She will definitely be missed."

For their leadership both on and off the field, the four irreplaceable seniors have been named the 2013 Deseret News MVPs for their respective classifications. They are Nadia Gomes of Brighton, Sydney Oldroyd of Timpanogos, Hadli Gledhill of Dixie and Morgan Fox of Summit Academy.

5A: Nadia Gomes, Brighton

Gomes not only led the Bengals in scoring this season, she did so in spite of missing nearly three weeks of the season.

The senior forward was released from the Brighton squad to try out for, and then compete on, the U-19 Portuguese national team.

She returned to her high school squad at the beginning of October — just in time to play a role in helping the Bengals win seven straight matches en route to capturing the 5A title.

"She was playing with elite players, with the best in Portugal," said Brighton coach Mark Stoker. "She returned a step quicker, with better vision and combination play. She came back with a new confidence on the field."

Gomes totaled 16 goals in her 11 games this season and scored in six of the final seven matches



Nadia Gomes highlighted Brighton's postseason honorees.

after returning from Portugal. In the Bengals' 5-0 semifinal victory over Fremont, Gomes had three goals and an assist in a 12-minute span during the second half.

"We have been fortunate to have her on our team," said Brighton team captain Kami Djahanbani. "We wouldn't have won without her."

Although her abilities were loud, Gomes was a quiet leader who influenced her team through action and execution.

"She had a direct influence by way of statistics," Stoker said. "She is a great leader, a positive teammate — and she does it all through action."

Her work ethic and abilities both on the soccer field and in the classroom have led to Gomes continuing her soccer career next season at BYU.

"She's incredible," Djahanbani said. "From the outside, she is quiet. Once you get to know her, she is funny, witty and, on the field, unbeatable."