

Women's National Team

Danielle Fotopoulos Retires from International Soccer

- U.S. Forward and All-Time Leading Scorer in the History of the NCAA Division I Was a Member of 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup Winners

CHICAGO (February 22, 2007) – Danielle Fotopoulos, a member of the historic 1999 Women's World Cup Team for the United States, has retired from international soccer.

The 5-foot-11 striker steps away from the game having earned 35 caps for the USA while scoring 16 goals, which ranks her 17th on the all-time U.S. scoring list. She debuted for the Women's National Team in Brazil on Jan. 14, 1996, against Russia, and two days later scored her first three career goals in a hat trick performance against the Ukraine. She scored her final four goals for the USA with braces in back-to-back games on July 10, 2005, against Ukraine and July 24, 2005, against Iceland.

Formerly Danielle Garrett, she was one of the most dominate players in the history of college soccer. She played two years at SMU in Dallas and two years at the University of Florida, finishing her career with an NCAA Division I record of 118 career goals, shattering the previous mark (103) held jointly by Mia Hamm and Tiffeny Milbrett.

Fotopoulos played three seasons in the WUSA with the Carolina Courage, finishing as one of the top scorers in league history with 27 goals, but her final season was cut short by an ACL tear, the second such injury of her career. She would tear an ACL ligament for the third time in January of 2006 and worked hard to regain her form during Residency Training Camp in 2006, but the numerous knee injuries played a part in her decision to retire. She first tore her ACL while training with the national team in 1997.

"I look back on my career and I'm so thankful for the opportunities I've been given, for the friendships, the memories, the experiences all over the world, all my coaches I've had since I was five years old and especially my teammates," said Fotopolous. "I want to thank Greg Ryan and Brett Hall for giving me the opportunity to play after my ACL surgeries, but the way my knees are right now, it's probably wise to step away so I can run around with my kids as they grow up. I'm also looking forward to being a mom and supporting my husband who has sacrificed so much for me. Overall, being a part of this team, being part of something bigger than myself, is something I will always treasure."

Fotopoulos was 23 years old when Tony DiCiccio named her to the squad for the ground-breaking 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup. She saw action against Brazil in the semifinal match in what was her lone Women's World Cup appearance.

She led Florida to its only NCAA title in women's soccer in 1998, finishing a storybook senior year by scoring the winning goal on a free-kick to upset North Carolina, 1-0, in the championship game. She finished second in the voting for the Hermann and M.A.C. Player of the Year awards to Cindy Parlow.

Married in 1996 to George Fotopoulos, she has two children, a six-year old girl and a two and a half year old boy. Fotopoulos, who was the only active Women's National Team player with a USSF "A" coaching license, now plans to pursue coaching opportunities. She was co-head coach with her husband at Louisiana State University in 2004 and served as an assistant coach at Florida in 2005.

"I've always been very competitive and driven and I am really looking forward to having my passion for the game carry into coaching," said Fotopolous. "I want to share the knowledge I've gained through my experiences and give back to the younger players. My generation had few female role models in the game of soccer and I want to provide that for the next generation."

The retirement of Fotopoulos leaves just four players from the 1999 Women's World Cup Team still active with the U.S. National Team: goalkeeper Briana Scurry, defenders Kate Markgraf and Christie Rampone, and forward Kristine Lilly.



Danielle Fotopoulos scored 16 career goals for the U.S.
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