

## Jamaican teen lands historic soccer deal

16-year-old Jamaican has made history by becoming the first footballer in the region to sign an endorsement contract with major sporting goods company Nike.

Leon Butler inked a three-year deal with Nike that will see him wear their apparel on and off the field. The deal comes on the heels of the player coming through the Phoenix All Stars Football Academy ranks and signing to Dutch powerhouse Ajax. "I feel excellent because we have been through a lot and it is a great accomplishment for me and the Phoenix members," said Butler. "It is a dream come true because I have always liked Nike and I think Nike is the best." Officials say the contract sets aside a certain amount of money for products and also allows the Phoenix Academy to request items including balls, soccer shoes and jerseys. "Nike has scouts all over the world and he (Leon) got into the Nike radar and then we did some investigations and started negotiations," Nike's regional director Pedro Boyd said during a press conference on Tuesday. "We were interested in Leon because we knew he was talented and we got good reviews on him from our secret scouts." Leon, who was born dyslexic, says has overcome the varying challenges of the condition.