My experience with the Idaho Rush soccer club is something I wouldn’t trade for anything. Rush allowed my teammates and I to gain exposure to a wide array of college coaches and the best competition available. I was lucky enough to play on a team coached by Lee Riley for two years and then Jens Haustein for three years. Lee Riley did a fabulous job developing us individually and helping us to learn new more sophisticated aspects of the game. This included developing our mental approach to soccer and using offensive and defensive tactics to help us win games. Jens took over my team when we became U16s and turned us from a bunch of little boys to playing like men. Every team that played us hated us afterwards because we played harder and more physically than any other team did. Jens knew how to make us believe in ourselves, so that we were beating teams we had no business beating. We beat teams with much more talent such as Slammers, who were defending national champions, and Players SC, who went on to win regionals the next year, because whether we liked it or not, Jens trained us harder than anybody else was training in Idaho.

With Rush being an international club, we were given opportunities to play with players from other Rush clubs from around the country. In both my U13 and U14 years I was allowed the opportunity to go play for Colorado Rush in Florida for a tournament called Champions Cup. It was one of the most eye-opening and amazing experiences I’ve had with soccer. I met and played with kids from Hawaii, Utah, Alaska, Colorado, Virginia, and Tennessee. I am still in contact with a few of the guys that I met and it was a blessing to meet and play with kids from all around the country. From playing local soccer in Idaho to battling against top-tier clubs was something very valuable in helping me become a better player, teammate, and person.

Lastly, my teammates on Idaho Rush have become my best friends and we will all share

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something that not a whole of kids get to. From my U13 year to my last year, which will be Hawaii 2013 Far West Regionals, my team has been through thick and thin. In order to play against competition that challenged us, we needed to travel. All my travels through these years were through soccer, so I explored America from Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona, Nevada all the way to Ohio and Tennessee with these guys on my side. Through Rush I was seen by Seattle Pacific University for whom I now play college soccer with two of my Rush teammates. I love the college and playing for such a great team, but without the success of my club team I would never have had this opportunity arise for me.

Idaho Rush did so much for me as a soccer player and I wouldn’t be where I am if it weren’t for all the years that I spent with it.

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