

## "What Youth Soccer Has Meant To Me"

"What Youth Soccer Has Meant to Me", is a question that I never gave any thought that I would have to answer. Playing youth soccer has been a major part of my life since the age of 6 and I guess I thought that it would never end. After reading the question and sitting down to gather my thoughts it came to me that this part of my life will be over this summer.

Participating in youth soccer has been a major part of my development in to becoming a mature young lady ready for the challenges of college and life beyond. It begins with the memories of getting ready for the Saturday morning games, sitting with my mother and getting the hair just right. The excitement of having my older brothers, grandparents and mom and dad all standing on the sidelines ready to cheer me on, win or lose, to as I got older and making trips to tournaments meeting girls from other teams, other cities and from other parts of the United States.

Besides the memories, playing youth soccer has given several qualities that will help me as I begin the next phase of my life's journey. Discipline, confidence and teamwork are qualities that will stay with me forever. These three qualities have allowed me to established goals, set a plan to attain those goals and work towards completing these goals.

Discipline allows me to stay focused on the task at hand and to put in the extra time to help me reach my goals, in both playing the game or with my school work.

Confidence has allowed me to realize that no goal is unattainable. That with hard work and positive thoughts that I can meet or exceed my expectations.

Teamwork has shown me the importance of being able to work with others for a common goal. That along with the individual qualities, discipline and confidence, that the ability to work with others, to exchange ideas, to know that it does not matter differences in culture, religion or individual beliefs, that a team still works together for that common goal.

With all that I have learned and will carry with me on my life's journey, you cannot forget what got you into the game to begin with, fun. With all the practices, with all the games, win or lose, with all of the hours spent in the backyard practicing ball skills, it was always fun. Something I looked forward to each day.

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