

Prospect

By Min Kim

The sun was shining bright as I looked up at the window. The time was 7:00 A.M. It was the first day of football for middle school. I got up quick as a could, washed, ate breakfast, and ran to the school bus. The day was going really well, and I was having fun in my classes. Meeting new friends, socializing, and eating lunch with strangers was a great experience. But the only thing I could focus on for the whole day was football.

As a kid growing up, watching football was my hobby. I imitated them spinning, juking, and diving into the endzone. Football really inspired me to play for the school I loved. The first day of practice was really boring to me as I didn't get to do anything but watch others run the ball and pass. But it was really great for me to workout and get fit for the season. As weeks went by, I started to notice something "Why isn't the Coach giving me a chance out on the field?" I thought in my head. I asked Coach if I could play with the others, but he didn't give me a chance. Games went by and no chance was given to me; I was really hurt. I practiced hard as I could, trying to gain the Coaches attention and trust, but nothing happened. I felt like a bird that could not flap its wings. As the only Asian player there I often was called names and bullied a lot.

My hope died out, and I cried every night, wanting to play the sport I loved. But what could I do when the Coach is in control of everything? Time passed by, and I was already in 8th grade. I walked in the hallway and bumped into a guy named Yahir. He seemed chill, and we became friends instantly the next couple of days. He loved talking about soccer and how he feels so free playing it, and I told myself "I want to feel that freedom." I joined the football team in 8th grade again wondering if I could play a snap of the game. Eventually nothing came; I was just a benchwarmer daydreaming of myself catching footballs with one hand. I decided to quit football after my dreams and hopes had died. A year later, I thought of what my friend Yahir said to me about soccer and how he felt about it. So I was faced with the biggest decision in my life: was it football or soccer for high school?

I decided to play soccer and tried out for 9th grade. And Oh My God, it felt so free that I started tearing up after only day one of tryouts. I met new friends who supported me and really wanted to know me. After tryouts, I had made the team. Feeling proud, I trained myself, thinking of my past to never give up, and to train harder. Practice after practice, I worked hard and eventually started on the team. I played left back which is a defender, but guess who was in front of me, it was my best friend Yahir. He played left wing, which means I could pass him the ball and attack the other team. In my first game I felt so proud of myself knowing I worked hard for this. I ran all over the place like a cheetah chasing its prey. This feeling of accomplishment will be in my heart for the rest of my life.

Today, I still play the game I really love, which is soccer. I love my friends and the support is so overwhelming. There is, however, a lesson I learned through my journey. Hard work and dedication pays off to it's finest. If given a chance, grind hard on it. And also never ever give up. I truly mean that.



"Half Dome" by Adelynn Salem, Photography