

7-year-old signs Letter of Intent with Saint Mary's Soccer

By Jon Kingdon



Photo provided

There are numerous rules regarding signing a letter of intent to be on a college's athletic team. However, the one constant for every school is that the signee be at least a senior in high school.

The Saint Mary's soccer team clearly and proudly violated that rule April 4, having Quentin Rios sign his letter of intent in a room full of family, friends, well-wishers, the entire team and the press. Despite violating this rule so

openly, Saint Mary's has no worries about the NCAA placing the Gaels on a future suspension.

Quentin is a bright and dynamic 7-year-old who lives in Oakley, Calif. Thanks to the mutual efforts of Saint Mary's head coach Adam Cooper and Team IMPACT, Quentin is now officially a member of the Saint Mary's soccer team.

Prior to Quentin's third birthday, he was diagnosed with a

juvenile pilocytic astrocytomas brain tumor, undergoing 87 weeks of chemotherapy and soon after, 60 more weeks of chemotherapy. Quentin has chosen to wear number 87, signifying his completing the 87 weeks of treatment. Things have improved, says Quentin's mother, Mary: "This past year has been one of stability. The team has been phenomenal in welcoming him from day one to be a teammate."

Team IMPACT is a national nonprofit, whose purpose has been to connect children facing serious or chronic illnesses with college athletic teams. Since its inception in 2011, Team IMPACT has matched over 1,400 children with more than 500 colleges and universities.

Cooper was very enthusiastic about the latest addition to his team: "Quentin has a vibrant personality and a great smile. He is the epitome of charisma. He has strength and courage. We learn a lot from him. Several weeks ago, a few of the players and I drove out to Quentin's house and we were greeted with such warm smiles and enthusiasm. Not long after, our guys and Quentin were having this big nerf gun fight, were just hanging out."

As an official member of the team, Quentin will attend Gaels practices, games, team dinners, events and more surrounding the program.

Steve Dougherty, a midfielder on the Gaels soccer team, shares Cooper's feelings: "We can tell how strong Quentin is. We can learn so much from him on how he deals with adversity and push-

es through things."

In 2017, Team IMPACT opened a Northern California Regional office overseeing a number of Western states. Regional Director Kathleen Pedrosa says that the connection with the team helps young people like Quentin: "Their affiliation provides a motivation for them to push through their issues. They learn that 'My teammate has my back.' The children and the athletes form life-long bonds and life-changing outcomes."

Camile Triebch, the regional program coordinator and a Campolindo graduate, has the responsibility of connecting the team with the children: "We reach out to the athletic departments and will go with whichever coach is most interested. Though Quentin lives in Oakley, he undergoes his treatments in Oakland which is much closer to Saint Mary's, so that is how we were able to connect Quentin with Saint Mary's."

Standing at the front of the room with Coach Cooper and his mother, Quentin was asked if he would like to say anything. He summed it all up very simply with two words: "Go Gaels!"

Lamorinda Rugby Team goes 3-0 in Ireland

Submitted by Doug Pearson



From left: Orinda residents Jen Tejada, Tighe Tejada, Eric Tejada after the New Ross RFC match.



The Lamorinda boys high school rugby team spent their spring break touring Ireland.

The 26 players, three coaches and about 20 parents traveled to Dublin, Cork, Galway and New Ross. Along the way

they experienced a sold-out 51,000-person stadium cheer on local Leinster RFC to a victory over Saracens RFC in the quarterfinal European Cup match, toured the Guinness Factory, kissed the Blarney Stone at Castle Blarney, played the

traditional Gaelic sports of Hurling and Gaelic Football, viewed the Cliffs Of Moher, and experienced the international rugby experiencing of competing on the field and then sharing a meal together after the match. The tour was championed

by Orinda resident Jen Tejada who was born in New Ross, Ireland. Her son Tighe started in the match against New Ross and in a made-for-TV moment scored the first try of the match.

LMYA SOFTBALL & BASEBALL Athletes Enjoy Spring Training Day

LMYA kicked off its spring sports season on Saturday, March 10th with a special day of skills training for athletes competing in the league's Baseball, Softball, Softbaseball and Teeball divisions. Professional trainers from Santa Rosa's National Academy of Athletics set up stations around the Acalanes High School softball field to help participants work on their batting, fielding, throwing and pitching.

All of the players improved their skills to get ready for the upcoming season and had a great time doing it!



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