

MY ODP EXPERIENCE

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My first ODP experience was a lot fun. I remember when my sister first started ODP, it looked fun and challenging, so I knew when I was old enough I was going to try it too. The time came sooner than I could imagine. Since it was my first ODP experience, I was a bit scared because there were so many players. It is a tryout, of course and the first days were very exciting. I was like a sponge. I learned so much from not only the coaches and training sessions, but from the other players too. It was different than what I was used to as far as regular tryouts or training sessions. We just scrimmaged against each other and they watched us play. The coaches would give me tips as the games went on. The strangest thing was playing so many positions when I was comfortable with only two on my regular team. At the end of the first stage of tryouts, we all gathered around the coach waiting to hear our number called. The anxiety was too much to handle as I sat with what was once considered my competition, but now my new friends.

They called my number which was a good feeling but what made it better was when they called my club teammates name too. So I made it through the first stage and the teams were announced. This is where the fun started. We traveled to So Cal to play against Texas, So Cal and Washington. It was cool playing against some of the best players from the other states. The main thing I remembered about the first game against Texas was we played in a college stadium and the field was huge. We walked out to the field to the sound of the Star Spangled Banner over the stadium speakers. It felt like I was playing in the World Cup. After three games, I was exhausted. I don't know what was more fun, playing the games or hanging out with old and new friends talking about everything that came to our minds.

ODP was more than I expected when I traveled next to Idaho to compete with and against the best players in all the western states. I learned a new position of center back which as you can imagine is much different than forward. Idaho was my first trip away from home without my family close by. When it was all said and done, ODP was a great experience. I still talk to my new friends from all over the State. ODP gave me a new drive to be the best soccer player I can be. I look forward to next year's training sessions learning from new coaches and trainers and meeting new friends. I am a better player today because of ODP. I definitely recommend giving it a try. Life is short. I'm ready for soccer to take me wherever it wants to.