This past month Rush Soccer had the honor of sending 4 coaches on an exchange with our Cameroon Rush branch located in Bali-Nyonga, Cameroon. Brian Lux (Pikes Peak/Rush Soccer), Ben Medina (Rush Soccer), Cara Nelson (New York) and Alex Mendolia (New York) spent 26 days working with the youth and senior programs of the club. Their mission was not only as part of a coaching exchange, but also as part of a humanitarian outreach through the Rush Soccer R.E.A.C.H. (Rush Equipment Assisting Children). The program collects new and used soccer equipment as well as used uniforms from our domestic players to donate to our international partners. The 4 coaches brought 5 full suitcases of uniforms, cones, balls and cleats to donate to the players.

The coaches got to train the senior team, known as FC Bali Rush, several times and also preside over 2 friendly matches. In the first, the team split in half for a Colorado versus New York encounter, with the NY team winning 1-0 on a first half penalty kick. With the win, the NY team won the inaugural Bali Cup. The next week, the team played against a local team from the 2nd division and handled them easily 3-0 to continue their great run of form in the preseason.

FC Bali Rush First 11 versus Makin	FC Bali Rush First 11 - Colorado

The youth program consists of a boys and a girls side, and initially there were 20 girls and 45 boys participating. With players ranging in age from 8-20, this program was the only of its kind in Bali. Once the word spread that coaches from the United States were helping, the program grew significantly. By the last training session, 35 girls and over 80 boys were participating. In the first annual FC Bali Rush Small Sided Tournament, the coaches team representing Bayern Munich prevailed in penalties over the champions from the youth division representing Arsenal. After a heart-breaking defeat to Inter Milan in group play, the coaches bounced back to claim the title.

Coaches Alex Mendolia and Ben Medina with the youth boys of FC Bali Rush	The youth girls do a Rush cheer after their training session

In addition to all of the soccer outreach, the coaches also got to participate in several local traditions, including church services, funeral celebrations, and even a meeting with the Fon, the chief of the local tribe in Bali. While all of the experiences were life changing, the overwhelming feeling that will always remain with the coaches is that of the kindness and hospitality of the people of Bali and of Cameroon. Led by their chaperone, driver and friend Masala Simon and Coach Julius Kampalla of FC Bali Rush, the coaches were treated like members of the community, the club, and most importantly, members of the great family of Bali.

Coach Kampalla, Coach Mendolia, Gabriel Tita (FC Bali Rush Senior Player), Nelson (FC Bali Rush Senior Player), Coach Lux	Youth players showing off the soccer balls and equipment donated through REACH

The 26 days spent in Africa went by far too quickly, and all four of the coaches are looking forward

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to when they can go back and help FC Bali Rush continue to strive to the next level. As they say in the local tribal language of Mungaka, the coaches could like to say “Njika njamo” (thank you very much) to all the people of Bali and of Cameroon!

The coaches are working on some daily recaps that will be available soon so check back often!

Coaches hanging at the hotel	NY Coaches Alex Mendolia and Cara Nelson with Coach Kampalla	Our biggest fan! Fongod Peter from the Belleview Resort in Bali
Senior goalkeepers training	Friends and fans of FC Bali Rush	

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