In 2011, Florida Rush Nike (FL) felt like they were casual observers in their first trip to the US Youth Soccer National Championships. This year, they claimed the U-18 Boys national title, defeating defending champs Grand Rapids Crew (MI) in the final, 2-1.

"It feels great to come home as National Champions," said Head Coach Nate Omodt. "Our goals coming into the tournament were to first and foremost qualify for the National Final match on Sunday and then our second goal was to ultimately win the National title. The third goal that we continued to reinforce was to display a quality product on the pitch and get positive results through staying disciplined to our style of play. Not only did we win the National Championship, but we also won the "Fair Play" award as voted by the referees and tournament officials at the U-18 age level. I am very proud of the National Championship and the level of professionalism the boys displayed both on and off the pitch during the series. The boys won the 1st Place in the nation and did it with class and professionalism."

"Winning the National Championship was the final goal we set for ourselves two years ago when Coach Nate took over the team," said Jean Rivaroli who was selected for the Golden Ball Award. "We have been climbing this mountain for a long time, so to finish number one in the nation is extremely gratifying and something that I will be proud of for the rest of my life."

"I could not be more proud of all of the players and Coaches: Nate Omodt, Marcos Machado and Erick Garcia who have molded this team over the years," said Florida Rush President Richie Gray. "Winning the National Championship is absolutely phenomenal, especially at this age with all the pressures on 18 year old players. You have all made the Florida Rush, the National Rush and all teams in Central Florida proud."

Since the United States Youth Soccer Association began hosting national championships in 1976 (36 years), Florida Rush is the first youth soccer club to win a national championship EVER (boys or girls) in Central Florida. It is the first national championship for any Florida youth team in 15 years and only the 6th team ever.

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Rush on the National level has now won 16 National Championships throughout the years.

Very exclusive company Florida Rush.... Congratulations and GO RUSH!!!

Jean Rivaroli (Golden Ball Award) and Juanes Fajardo (Golden Glove Award)

Annually awarded and first awarded in 1998, to the players in each division who have the greatest competitive impact in the USYS National Championships, the Golden Glove and Golden Ball awards date back to the FIFA World Cup. This year both the Golden Ball and Golden Glove Awards were presented to Florida Rush Players. Congratulations to both Jean Rivaroli and Juanes Fajardo.

Golden Ball Award: Jean Rivaroli

For the second time in two years, Jean Rivaroli was selected for the Golden Ball Award during the National Championship Series. In 2011, Jean received the Golden Ball at Region III Championship and now again at the 2012 National Championship. Jean will continue playing soccer in college at the University of North Florida with teammates Drew Spraggs and Andrew Bruce.

Golden Glove Award: Juanes Fajardo

For the third time in two years, Juanes Fajardo was selected for the Golden Glove Award during the National Championship Series. In 2011& 2012, Juanes was selected for the Golden Glove at Region III Championships and now again at the 2012 National Championship. Juanes, who will be

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a Senior in HS this year will continue playing soccer in the US Development Academy with Florida Rush partner Orlando City, DA.

Congratulations Jean and Juanes we're very proud of all you have accomplished!

For more details on the U18's National Championship, please click here.

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