

September 29, 2012 at the Uihlein Soccer Park in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Rush Wisconsin completed a historic run winning both the U15 and U17 Girls State Cup Championship. Both teams will represent the State of Wisconsin in their respective age groups in the National Championship Series in Des Moines, IA in the summer of 2013. Rush Wisconsin was the only club to qualify two teams in the Girls High School State Cup Championship this year.

"It's been quite the drought, almost 4 years with no State Cup final appearances or wins. Well if you are going to end a bad streak, it might as well be on historic terms," said Ben John, Technical Director of Rush Wisconsin.



The U15 Girls Nike team, coached by Daren Milton, got off to a fast start threatening a well prepared S.C Waukesha team. Momentum switched back and forth between the two teams over the course of the next 80 minutes, with both teams creating sparing opportunities against mutually organized and stingy defensive lines. A toughly contested match on an unseasonably warm day continued into two 15 minute overtime periods with the game remaining scoreless at the end of 110 minutes. The game remained tied through the first 5 penalty kicks with both goalkeepers making a couple of impressive saves. The game was finally decided in the first sudden death shootout with Waukesha missing their penalty and Rush scoring from the spot!



The U17 Girls Nike team, coached by Ben John, was a rematch of their opening Midwest Regional League game against the reigning State Cup Champions, Soccers Lake Country. Their previous encounter saw a spirited game between the two sides, which ended in a 3-3 draw. In contrast to that game, the Soccers took control of this game early and would maintain the bulk of the possession throughout the game. Rush struck first on the scoreboard with a penalty kick being awarded in the first 12 minutes of the game. Soccers LC, not to be denied, equalized by converting on a corner late into the first half. Rush would get on the scoreboard again almost 12 minutes into the second half off a well-executed counter attack, finishing with a scramble in the Soccers LC penalty box resulting in a deflection off a Soccers LC defender, putting Rush Wisconsin up 2-1. Rush would not relinquish its lead putting a dogged fight to the very end, deflecting each wave of attack and absorbing a number of impressive offensive opportunities orchestrated by the Soccers LC team.

In reflecting on the accomplishment for Rush Wisconsin Ben John commented, *"I think in both wins, character was our twelfth man on the pitch. The U15's, under Coach Milton's tutelage were prepared for almost every eventuality including the penalty shootout but, the girls showed such poise and never wavered under the most stressful of circumstances. The U17's showed a resilience and discipline that was inspiring and it ultimately earned them the win. Most striking, however, was a number of the U15 players and parents stayed after their game to support the U17's. After the awards ceremony the overwhelming sentiment expressed by all the parents present was, "what a great day for the club."*

"This is a win for the ages, not just for the parents and players on the U15 and U17 team but for what it means to our club. It is a monumental task to win a championship and while we may fail more times than we succeed, we are trying to build a culture of shared excellence (players, parents, coaches, administration, leadership and community) where, what we do and how we do it meets our highest standard. This is one step of many in that ambitious direction."

The 15's and 17's advance to the Midwest Regional Championships that will be held in Des Moines, Iowa June 22-26th. The wins mark the first for the club as members of the Rush organization.