



Two-Sport Star Hits It Big

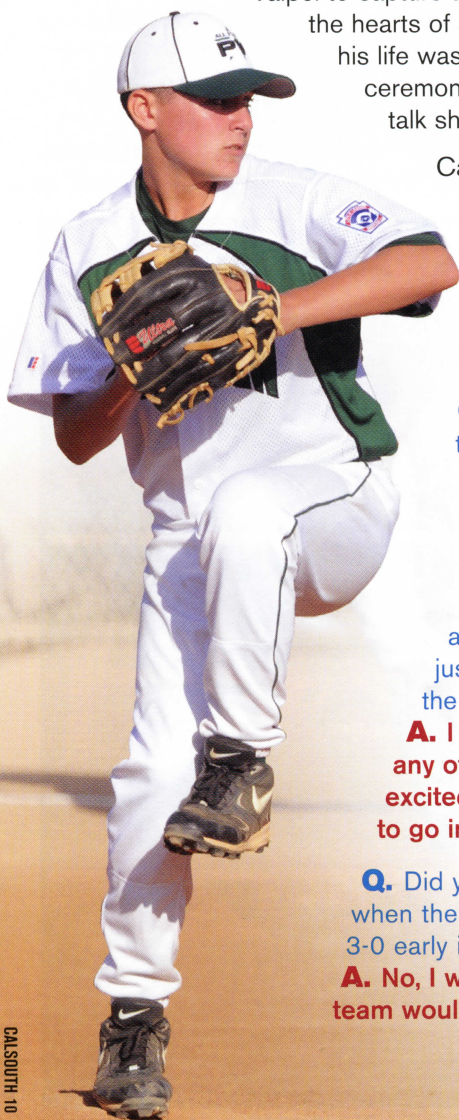
You're used to seeing stories in this magazine about Cal South players winning National Championships, making the National Team, and even playing in the Olympics. But, winning the Little League World Series...?

Well, that's what happened to Kiko Garcia! Part of a family with strong soccer ties (his sister Alexa plays for the U16 Crusaders SC), Kiko spent last season as a left defender with FC Barcelona. His team won their division, and things were going just great for soccer player Kiko Garcia.

But Kiko's baseball-playing half took his game to even greater lengths. Kiko led his Chula Vista All-Star team all the way to the championship game of the Little League World Series in September, where he pitched the last three innings of a come-from-behind win against Chinese Taipei to capture the 2009 title and

the hearts of a nation. Suddenly, his life was filled with award ceremonies, parades and talk shows.

Cal South Soccer Magazine caught up with Kiko Garcia and found out how he was handling his sudden fame:



Q. What was it like taking the mound for those last three innings of the championship game? Did you feel the pressure, or did you approach it like it was just another game in the season?

A. I approached it like any other game and was excited to get the chance to go in and help my team.

Q. Did you begin to worry when the team went down 3-0 early in the game?

A. No, I was confident our team would score runs.

Q. What was your first thought when the final pitch was thrown in the championship game and you realized your teammates were going to go crazy on you?

A. I was excited but tried to get out of the way of my teammates jumping on me.

Q. You weren't just a pitching star in the Series, but you were also one of the top hitting stars. Which do you prefer, standing on the pitcher's mound or swinging the bat?

A. I would have to say that I like them both equally. I love to pitch and I also love to bat.

Q. What has it been like balancing playing soccer and baseball over the past few years?

A. It was not too hard to balance because the practices were on different days and I made sure and did my homework ahead of time so I did not have to stay up too late after practices. It was fun to be able to play in soccer and baseball games on the same day.

Q. Which of the two sports do you prefer?

A. Both sports are a lot of fun but my passion has always been baseball.

Q. While you took this season off due to your baseball adventures, are you planning to get back into soccer eventually?

A. I would love to play soccer again if my schedule allows it, but right now travel baseball takes up most of my free time.

Q. What was it like going on the Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien? They concentrated on you a lot in the interview. Were you nervous appearing on such a famous show?

A. It was really fun being able to go on the Tonight Show. Conan was funny and nice. I wasn't nervous because my whole team was there and it was really cool seeing how they filmed the show.

Q. What was it like going back to a new school year after becoming a national baseball hero?

A. It was fun because everyone at my school knew about our team and they were excited about us winning.

Q. Do you suddenly have a lot of new girlfriends because of your fame?

A. Well, a lot of different girls talk to me now.