

GREAT EXPERIENCE!!!!

For my second summer, I have gone to Dominican Republic to train and play against the Dominican Women National Team. Starting from day 1, discovering our living facilities, wasn't what everyone expected. There was no AC, no hot water, no television, no laundry facilities and times, no power. It was a building, which we had to share with the Dominican girls, with bunk beds, limited showers, and ping pong table for entertainment. Our first reaction from everyone was " What kind of place did we come to?"

The next 10 days, we would have practice starting at 7AM and have evening practices at 4PM. and games throughout the day. Our meals were served at the complex 3x a day. We told ourselves, weather we liked it or not, we had to eat what they offered. Showing respect or we would feel like they would feel insulted.

In the evenings, Coach Gaspard had us do everything as a team. It was washing our clothes, eating dinner together, walking over to the village, playing pool, or even our dance offs after our practices that we had. These things we did brought us closer as a team but also made us feel as family. We managed to entertain ourselves by playing cards, telling stories, or being silly. Meeting the people in the village, made us feel sad at times, but we found ourselves amazed how they survive, with as little as they have. But they are always in great spirits. They greet us with happiness and they offer what they have. On the last day, coach took us to the beach and let us have fun as a family. Before we left in the morning, each of us was willing to give them what we could. Some of us gave our soccer balls, cleats, clothing, toiletries, towels and snacks that we had left over.

This was a great experience, not only did it make me a better soccer player, but educated me in life. I learned to thankful for what i have and respect others that don't. Every person is equal with or without. If I have an opportunity to return for the 3rd time, I would.

..... Maria Farella ♥

Any experience with Gaspard Dalexis and Omega Select is one that exceeds all expectations and teaches you not only about soccer, but also about yourself and your character. The Dominican Republic trip taught me all those things and much more. I have never learned so much about my position on the field and about my position in life than I did in those ten days in the Dominican. Although some parts of the trip were difficult, I had the best soccer experience of my life. The days flew by so quickly that on our last day there I couldn't believe that I was already going home. After playing the Dominican U-17 and U-21 national teams I have a craving for more competition and a renewed desire to become a better player. The Dominican Republic teams played with such a sense of national pride to be wearing their country's uniforms that it made me realize how special the games we played were. Even though Gaspard could be hard on us at times, he never held back in his praise for what we had accomplished and succeeded in doing on and off the field. I would go back to the Dominican Republic for soccer in a heartbeat and I will always remember this trip and what it taught me about soccer and myself.

Leighanne Davis NC

I am very thankful for the invitation and for the experience of going to the Dominican Republic and playing on a team with girls brought from all over, all dedicated to do the same thing...play excellent soccer! Being able to compete against the DR U17 and U20 National Teams was a great challenge for our team and me as an individual. I learned a lot about the huge commitment and dedication you need to perform at that level. Being in the DR made the experience so much more real, I witnessed a new country and culture and learned how other people live. Some of their daily challenges and hardships aren't even issues in our country and it gave me a new appreciation for the life that I live. We took extra precautions with our food and drinks which made it more of a challenge on the trip but it was all part of a great experience that I would never trade for anything. I think that it would be an amazing opportunity for any player to go on one of these trips; it was the best two weeks of my summer. Again I am so thankful for being invited on this trip and for being provided this great experience.

Shelby Potter, KS

A Parent's Perspective:

I sent a soccer player to Deltona, FL and the Dominican Republic with Omega Select. The experience in the DR changed my daughter's outlook as a human being, she returned humble and thankful for the blessings in her life. The soccer player that returned to me was a LEADER with a new focus and commitment. It really showed in our last practices and at this weekend's tournament, she maintained a positive attitude through all eight games that she played. I watched her and the other team captain assemble their team, and get them focused for every warm up and keep them focused for every game. And best of all, off the field there was no drama. Their leadership kept everyone in the right uniform at the right place at the right time. I thank you for providing her the ability to learn and grow as a player and a person and she is looking forward to the trips in the future.

Paul Potter

I just wanted to thank you so much for everything you have done to make the Florida camp, and Dominican Republic trip an amazing experience. I think I have learned more in those past two weeks than I have from any other coach! Not only did you teach me soccer skills, you helped me learn about myself as well, which is very important and helpful.

Magda Blakeson; P.S. I miss the mango's :(

This has now been my second year in a row coming to the Dominican Republic. The experiences here are unexplainable...We were trained to do everything as a team because it only makes us better. The training was great, two times a day (7:00 A.M. - 9:00 A.M. & 4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M). Even though we were only with Gaspard for 2 weeks, he can change a team and player around so fast. His training is great! Within the 10 days together with everyone we all felt/became like family, everyone bonded and worked together on everything. Even when it came to us all washing our clothes, we did it as a team. It just only made us better.

Omega got to not only play against the Dominican Republic U-17 & U-20 National team; also had to live in the same environment and building as them. Not only did we get the advantage of playing soccer with the national teams; we also are learning life lessons and experiences of how people live here, in a third world country. Coming here has taught me so many things, as in not to take things for advantage, always respect the people around you and they will give you respect back. They taught our team how to have and show pride, by having a chant and clapping, or if it came to doing a dance off against each other.

To do this kind of training and hard work you have to want to do it and want to accomplish and willing to work hard for it. Being truly honest I was a little out of shape when I got there and within 2 days of his training I was in shape right away. Willing to take those extra runs during the games; it all pays off in the end. To have a trainer like Gaspard to invite me and others to the Dominican is such a great experience, I thank him for what he's done for us girls.

Franny Farella, NC

I began playing with Coach Gaspard in the fall of 2010 at the Texas Cup where he put me in practically every position to find where I succeeded. After that I went to the Orange Classic, Disney Showcase and Las Vegas Showcase. There I saw how well his system works. He explains how the team will attack and defend and promotes competition. He makes it clear that you have to challenge yourself each and every time you play. I went this summer with Coach and the other Omega players to Deltona Fla. and Dominican Republic and the trip reinforced his strong sense of team unity and how much knowledge he has when it comes to college soccer and even life. Coach Gaspard is understanding, but no nonsense and I can recommend his team to anyone that wants to be the best!

KRISTIN N. VAN DYKE, NC

"During the Omega camp, I learned a simpler way of play that will be much more effective in a real life game. I enjoyed the strict discipline, but also thought it was cool how at the end of trainings we could just dance and have a good time. I liked Coach Gaspard's coaching points and his useful advice for those wanting to progress into the next level (college)."

MEAGAN SPECK, NC

I have been playing with the Omega Select teams since December 2010. I played in the Orange Classic, Disney Showcase and the Las Vegas Mayors Cup, as well as attended the Omega summer camp in Deltona Florida. Coach Gaspard is a very knowledgeable coach that really cares about his players. He has taught me new techniques in goal keeping, speed and agility and even improved my vertical jumping by teaching me proper jumping technique. He has allowed opportunities for me to play in very competitive college showcases as well as play with girls from all over the United States and Canada. He has also provided assistance and advice in the college recruitment process. Being a part of Omega has been very beneficial to me and A LOT of fun as well!!

KARLY GUSTAFSON

A Parent's Perspective:

Leighanne's soccer experience this summer was very positive. In Florida she worked on improving possession in crowded spaces, air balls, and learned some keys to playing her center midfield position and then it was reinforced in the Dominican Republic. She found practices both in Florida and the Dominican to be challenging and informative. She enjoyed playing the games and the competition in the Dominican. At first, I was apprehensive about sending Leighanne to the Dominican without one of her parents. But, after spending the week at the Florida camp watching the practices and games, and observing how Gaspard interacted with the girls, I knew she would be in good hands.

He is very knowledgeable not just about soccer but life. He not just coaches the girls, he also teaches them life lessons. He makes it fun at times and strict when it needs to be. We are so glad that Gaspard invited Leighanne to participate this summer. She wanted to improve on her skills and experience life outside her comfort zone. She has improved and gained more self-esteem. She also made some good friendships. She is looking forward to the next tournament.

Karen Davis

Going to the Dominican Republic to play soccer against the Dominican National teams was a great opportunity and a fun experience. I had never played internationally and I learned a lot. I only knew one other player on the team prior to the trip, but I am now friends with many of my teammates. It was interesting to try the Dominican foods and see their culture but if you are going to go, make sure to bring bug spray and snacks with you. This trip was a couple weeks after graduation, so it was a good chance to play with many different players before the college season started. Thanks Gaspard.

Jenna Hoing

I was just emailing you to let you know how things are going here at university. I just wanted to say thank you so much for everything you did to help me get to where I am today. I really appreciate it. So far everything has been going great. I have been playing the full game of every game at central defender. Unfortunately, we have not been getting the results that we hoped for, but every game has been extremely close and very within our reach to win. We start conference games coming up this weekend and those are the ones that count the most so hopefully we have everything sorted out by then.

My coach has said that she has been very happy with my play. She feels that I have been contributing a lot and am going to keep improving. The one thing that I need to work on is my communication on the field. My coach has said that since the other center defender is a senior this year, she is going to expect me to take on a leadership role next year so I need to work on that this season.

Classes have been going on for about 3 weeks and they have been going very well. So far my grades have been good and I have been able to manage my schedule and classes well. Hopefully it continues and I can keep my GPA high.

I hope all is going well with Omega and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Once again, thank you so much for everything,

Brianna Salverda
Jacksonville State University