



This past week, Ryan Mouldenhauer had the opportunity of a lifetime and travelled with the Rush Select Program as the goalkeeper for the U16 Boys Select team. The trip, subsidized by the new Adidas/Rush relationship, saw the U16 team head off to a new adventure. Unbeaten domestically, the boys went abroad to find a new challenge. Ryan (known on the team as Möldé) has been the long-time goalkeeper for the group and as many at Rush Pikes Peak will know, he has a knack of keeping teams in the game with his outstanding saves.

The trip took in the entire soccer culture of Spain. As soon as they touched down the first order of business was to go to one of the greatest stadiums in Europe, the Santiago Bernabeu to watch the Real Madrid versus Atletico Madrid match. The game did not disappoint and Atletico earned an historical result with a 1-0 win.

The boys had the opportunity to train with Jose Manuel Lara Gomez, the current U12 Coach of Real Madrid. The boys also got to play three games against Spanish opposition. The first game was against Rayo Vallecano. This game ended 2-0 to Rayo, but this was due to a string of saves by Molde otherwise the score would have been far worse. The next game was the one that everyone had been waiting for. Rush Select played the Real Madrid B16 Academy team, who are arguably in the top 5 of all U16 teams on the planet. And they showed it! Although the score was 8-0 Real Madrid at the end of the game, the spirits were high having now seen the benchmark of where our Rush boys need to be if they ever want to play at the professional level in Europe. The final game was against the La Liga 3<sup>rd</sup> division side Las Rozas. The Rush boys tied 2-2 and

showed a maturity and composure that they did not have the last 2 matches.

In addition to this, the boys got to tour the Bernabeu stadium, watch a UEFA Champions League game where Real Madrid won 4-0, visit the home of Spanish Football to see the World Cup (as Spain are the reigning champions) and tour the historic cities of Madrid and Toledo.

This was truly a life changing soccer experience for Ryan and served as another example of the opportunities that Rush can offer its players. Congratulations Ryan, we are all very proud of you here at Rush Pikes Peak!