**My Five Drive**

I had a dream, I wanted to become a professional soccer player. I wanted to move to England and represent New Castle United in the Premier League while making millions of dollars. I thought I had it all planned out, but silly me didn’t prepare for any set backs. Many people have already experienced heartbreak or having their dreams crushed but this was my first time.

The path for my master plan became visible once my soccer coach announced that Coquitlam Metro Ford will be hosting an evaluation for their U13 HPL team. HPL stands for High Performance League and all I knew was that that division was one higher than the one I was currently in. I marched over to one of my teammates that I already knew was going to tryout.

“Hey dude,” I called. “Do you know what to expect for the tryouts?”

“No but from what I’ve heard it is super hard to make it on the team,” he answered. “I doubt any of us Poco kids could make it.”

*He’s right, why would any players from a team that is almost dead last be able to jump up a level.*

Tryouts weren’t for another week and a half so I began to go to the soccer field almost everyday to work on my skills. I had a routine, I’d sprint from one side of the pitch to the other until I felt as if I was going to throw up, I’d juggle the ball until I got dizzy or could no longer see straight and I’d practice shooting until my legs went numb. I wanted to make it on that team more than anyone else because I thought that soccer was all I had going for me. My dad wanted to see my name on that roster just as much as I did, well maybe a little bit less because it costed two times more to play than my team currently charged but advice was he suggested me was something which would increase my odds.

“You should tryout for left back,” my Dad proposed.

“But Dad,” I replied. “I’ve never played defense in­­—"

“Trust me Kai,” he exclaimed. “Every team is looking for a good left back.”

He was right so I eventually agreed to his plan and before I knew it tryout day was upon me. Once I jumped out of the car I could feel the tension in the air but there was also a mix of excitement. I caught a glance of the field where the tryouts were taking place, there was about 60 kids wondering around. It felt as though my dream was running away and that I would never be able to catch it.

*They are only accepting 15 boys onto this team and there are at least 60 here*. *How am I supposed to make it?*

A whistle was blown. Everyone started to run towards the center of the field where three men were standing. I saw a couple of teammates of mine who were standing together so I joined them trying to avoid being a loner. Two of the men standing in the center were wearing a black rain jackets and the other was wearing a blue tracksuit.

“Good afternoon gentlemen,” the man in the blue track suit announced. “I will be the head coach of this HPL football team.”

He had an English accent and he said football instead of soccer so for some reason I knew he was going to be a good coach.

We were ordered to go make sure we were registered, we would then be split up into team. I bolted over to where the lady who was making sure we were registered, I made sure I ran as fast as I could so I could show of my speed hoping that the guy in the blue tracksuit would notice. After I was confirmed registered I was handed a blue jersey with the number 5 on it. I pulled the jersey over my head and quickly realized that it was too big.

*What if it makes me slower? Will I be less aerodynamic? Do I look good?*

I thought I was done for just because of that oversized jersey but to make things even better no one from my current team was on the blue team. The guys on my team were trying out for this HPL squad also so they must have been pretty good.

Tryouts were over after an hour and a half of hard work. Sweat dripping from my chin, legs shaking from fatigue and my whole-body shivering from the cold. I could see my breathe trailing behind me as I used the last of my energy to run to the car to get out of the rain. My Dad was waiting for me with the heat on. The drive home was filled with questions from my Dad regarding the tryouts. I thought I performed well, but all I could do now is wait and see if I would get invited back to the second tryouts but those emails would be sent out in about one week.

It was a Monday night, a week had passed and I still have not received an email. I was relaxing in my bed watching YouTube videos when my dad called me over, I knew what that meant so I burned down the hallway to the computer room.

“I got some bad news,” my Dad explained.

My heart sank.

“You got invited back for the next tryouts!” he continued.

I was filled with joy, I couldn’t believe it. I was one step closer to my dream. The email we received looked something like this:

*Good afternoon,*

*A young man in your house hold has demonstrated excellent skill and we would like to see them attend the second U13 HPL tryout. The tryout will take place on Tuesday and we hope to see you there!*

*Good luck*

The tryouts were in two days, I was ready. I went back to my room and laid down on my bed. For some reason my bed felt more comfortable than ever, maybe its because I was relieved and had no worry. I began to think.

*New Castle United, here I come. I only got to get past the next to tryouts and I’ll be smooth sailing.*

The tryouts on Tuesday operated very similarly to the first tryouts. Only difference was that there was only half of the number of players who were at the first one, I also noticed that four of the seven players from my current team were gone. I didn’t know what to think of it but the only thing I knew I could do was grab my number 5 jersey and perform my best. A week after the tryouts we received another email saying I would be invited back for the next tryout. I was shocked, amazed and most of all overjoyed.

*Maybe the number five gives me super soccer skills.*

I hadn’t had to play left back at the first nor second tryout, but the up coming tryout was going to be a scrimmage so I would have to play the possession I registered me for.

The third tryout day, the coach in the blue tracksuit walked out onto the pitch to greet all of the remaining players.

“Big day boys!” he shouted. “Are you guys excited”

“YES!” I shouted along side everyone else.

That was the only positive word I had said in the last 5 days. I played horrible at that tryout, I gave the ball away, missed every shot I took and worst of all I was a crappy left back. I thought I was done, I thought my dream was never going to become reality. I was so angry with myself that I never wanted to play soccer again, I knew the number 5 didn’t do anything for me it just made me over confident.

A week had past since the third tryout, we received an email regarding the tryout. I got invited back. I was so confused on why. I didn’t know what to think of it.

*I played terrible I don’t deserve to be invited back. Maybe they saw some potential in me. Was it a mistake? Who cares I get a second chance!*

I had a week to prepare for the fourth tryout, it was close to Christmas so the weather kept getting colder so I could no longer go to the field and do my normal routine. I would relax my body as much as I could be trying to release every last ounce of tension and fear.

*All the boys still trying out are so good, can I compete? I don’t think I want to play left back anymore. Will they let me change position?*

I started to panic but I shut my eyes and took a deep breathe.

It was snowing, about two inches of snow blanketed the ground below. We were right about to leave when my dad called me into his office. He had a frown on his face, all he did was point to the computer screen.

*Hello,*

*Tonight’s tryouts have been cancelled do to the snow, the data gathered from your third tryout has been used to replace tonight’s. The tryouts are over and the team roster is found below…*

My name was not on the list. I recognized the two other boys from my team made it on the roster. Not only did I feel left behind but I felt like my dream was no longer existent. I not longer felt the urge to become a professional soccer player. I thought it was impossible. I began to cry, I rushed to my room and cried until I forgot why I was crying.

Even though I was heart broken that night I promised myself I would continue to play soccer no matter what level. To remind me of all the training and hard work I put in to make it on that I to this day wear the number 5. A year had passed and I tried out for a team just as good and I made it, my dream of being a professional soccer player was still crushed but I found that I could do other things than just play soccer, I should have fun and not take it so seriously.