

Here is a profile on each of the players and some of their observations about their experiences in the United States.

Eike Brian Roeben

Eike is staying with Ms. Debbie Wright and her son, Timmy. Eike attends Callaway High School.

My name is Eike Brian Roeben and I'm playing for the U17. I'm from Tostedt; a small town with 10.000 inhabitants in northern Germany, near the second biggest city of Hamburg. (Back home) I play soccer, volleyball and golf for the club teams of Tostedt. My soccer position is left back, but I like to play midfield too. My Favorite Soccer Team is Hamburg (playing in the German league) and i like especially Rafael Van der Vaart(Hamburg), Robert Enke(Hannover) and Frank Lampard(Chelsea).

My impressions of American soccer? The game is lot more technical than in Germany and not on that high tactical level. But I like to work with foreign coaches - it's a great opportunity for the player. Americans substitute and change the play a lot more. Also there are greater distances to games, because soccer is not that popular in the US as in Germany. But the support of coaches and parents is really good. I am enjoying myself pretty good and I'm looking forward to the next half of the club soccer season and high school season as well.

From host mother Debbie Wright:

"This is the first time our family has hosted a foreign exchange student. The experience thus far has been a truly rewarding one in so many ways. (We) have quickly adjusted and it's been amazing to me. It's almost like we have known each before this. (Eike) has adjusted well. This opportunity came at the right time and worked out so well for my son (Timmy). The Nacel Open Door Program did an excellent job of matching us with our exchange student, blending our shared interests and our personalities. This allowed for a quick and endearing bond between us. It is awesome to be able to share and learn from our exchange student about his country and culture."

Timo Switalski

Timo is staying with Ann and David Sellman - the Sellmans have two players playing with the Titans - David Jr with U16 boys; Kathryn with U14 athena (girls).

My name is Timo Switalski and I am from Germany. At home I played for a small soccer club called TSV Einigkeit Dornap. So I am glad to be able to play for a club now that is a little big larger than my team in Germany. I really like playing soccer in America because we play only on grass fields, the weather is good (although it could be a little cooler sometimes) and I met a lot of nice people. My favourite soccer club in Germany is Borussia Dortmund. My impression of America in general is very good. I like the people here, the school and enjoy just being here.

Tobi Hennegan

Tobi stays with the Copelands (Chris, Robin, and Tanner).

Well okay,I come from a small village called "Reken" in the western part of Germany, about as big as West Point, the city I'm living in right now. I was born in a big city about 30 miles to the south of the village "Reken", but we moved when I was 4 years old. I enjoy living in a small village more than in a big city because we have more place to do stuff and it is quieter. That's the reason why I enjoy living in West Point too.

In Germany I just played soccer on the ragteam of the village, we came together every Thursday night with one of or teachers from school. It was much fun and I really liked it, but it is kind of different to the Titans (of course). The Titans

are a well organised team with many games on the weekends. I really enjoy playing with them because there are good players and friends and I always wanted to play soccer for a real team with matches against other teams. So I really like to play with the Titans and hope that we continue to practise hard in order to win games. I, so far, enjoy my stay here in America; I really love it here. I'm staying with a wonderful family and I like to go to school because of the people, who are always very nice, and the good teachers. I also prefer the American way of school sports. In Germany we don't have school or college teams and we don't play Football also it's a wonderful sport! So all in all I really enjoy it here and I am happy to be here.

From Mark McCloud, Titans SC Director of Coaching and U17 Classic Head Coach

"Having these players has really been a blessing for our team and club in so many ways. Not only have they helped our team on the field, they are all terrific kids and have provided a nice spark in terms of team chemistry for our squad. The guys already on the team have really welcomed the exchange students and made them feel at home. From a technical standpoint, the exchange players are not any stronger than the players we already have. However, from a tactical awareness standpoint, there is no comparison. That obviously comes from the differences in soccer in Europe compared to the States. We've had quite a few humorous moments this season as both sides have had to adjust to the language barrier and other differences (such field dimensions: yard vs. meter, etc), but it's been an enjoyable learning curve.

I have really enjoyed knowing and coaching Eike, Tobi, and Timo and will miss them when they leave. I look forward to watching them continue to play with their high-school teams."

Jose Amillo

Jose is staying with the Kostilnik's.

I am Jose Amillo and I am from Pamplona, Spain. I am 15 years old. At home I play on the soccer team at my school and it is a very good team. All of my friends also play soccer for the team. When I came to LaGrange I thought that the American Soccer would be different and not so good when compared to soccer in Spain. But now I know that soccer here is really not too bad and it is not much different from soccer at home. Obviously I think soccer in Spain and Europe is still somewhat better.

The Troup Titans team that I play for is the U-16 team and they are really good guys who play hard and like to win. There are many good players on this team. I am thankful to have the opportunity to play on this team and to know all of my teammates. Next year I will try to play for the LaGrange High School soccer team.

I really love sports- I need it. I like the discipline, effort, force, and trying hard as a part of a team. Just one player can't win a game, but if everybody on the team tries to do the best they can, then the team will win.

America is a good place. There is a lot of freedom to do many things and you can drive a car when you are 16 years old. In comparison, I still prefer Spain for the food, the weather, and the way of life and other stuff (I learned to use this word in America!). So far, I am happy living in LaGrange as part of the Kostilnik family.

My favorite soccer team in Spain is Real Madrid. It has many good players and it has the best goalkeeper in the world- Iker Casillas. My favorite soccer player is Sergio Ramos.

From Ted and Catherine Kostilnik (host family)

We really enjoy having Jose as part of our family. He is a good student, has a great personality and a bright wit, and is very well mannered for being only 15 years old. He has made many friends since arriving here in August.

As could be expected, it is quite an adjustment for Jose to become accustomed to our American and Southern ways of life. For him to leave his home, his family, his native language and culture, for an entire year at this young age, and to be doing so well, is truly something that many people would be unable or unwilling to do.

Jose wants to be a doctor when he finishes college, and we are confident he will achieve his goals.

From Coach Mark Folsom - Jose's coach - U16 Titans

"Although there is a small language barrier, Jose had no trouble fitting in with this team. He is respected by his teammates and coach's alike, not only does he have good soccer skills but mainly because of his hard work ethic. He quickly catches on to what is going on around him in training and adapts. A very polite and mild mannered young man, and though it took a few practices, he has opened up to even show he has a great sense of humor with the other players. To sum it up, 3 words describe Jose, tuff (will not let you know if he is injured or not, for fear of letting his teammates and coach's down), dependable (never misses training), and fun (once you get to know Jose, he is just a great kid to be around, on and off the field). Plus one big bonus, he has a super host family in the Kostilnik's."