



DOUG SMITH
NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETE OF THE WEEK
SOCCER PROGRAM

The NVHS Athletic Booster Club is proud to present the featured athlete of this week, soccer varsity player, Douglas Smith. Coach Gonzalez tells us that Doug's quiet leadership has been the backbone of this year's team. Doug is willing to adjust to defense or midfield depending on the squad's needs, and will be missed next year.

Booster Club Reporter: *How has soccer benefitted to you?*

Doug: Soccer has uniquely fostered my development as an individual, including the leadership qualities I have gained as a captain, communication skills I developed on and off the field, work ethic consequently engrained in me, and collaborative qualities I have developed from working in a team-based setting. I have also improved my time management skills and I discovered the true value found within forming meaningful relationships in life.

Booster Club Reporter: *How do you balance individual talent with team collaboration on the field?*

Doug: Soccer is a team sport. We win and lose as a team. Better yet, we do everything as a team. Thus, I don't see a reason to strive for individual glory because it comes automatically through the success of the team. As a teammate, you know you have to be selfish with the ball when you are in the best position to score, but when there is someone in a better scoring position than yourself, then it is your duty to get the ball to the open player. Consequently, the onlookers may not portray you as the hero, but your team will surely know who created the goal and thus, pay their respects.

Booster Club Reporter: *And how do you manage time?*

Doug: During soccer season, I do not have free time on weekdays. My lunches are spent completing homework or studying for tests. My nights are filled with soccer, followed by dinner and then homework for the remainder of the night. Thus, in order to be successful with my academics during soccer season, I take advantage of every second I am given to accomplish my goals both athletically and academically.

Booster Club Reporter: *Explain more about the meaningful relationships you mentioned before.*

Doug: While it may sound cliché, a team at Neuqua Valley truly becomes a family by the end of the season. Team sports at Neuqua Valley are not only a competitive sport, yet more importantly, a transformative life journey and unique experience. It is the most incredible feeling to be able to play the sport you love with your peers, whom you see everyday for multiple hours each day.

Booster Club Reporter: *Can you name a significant life lesson you took from your career at Neuqua soccer?*

Doug: The most significant learning moment this year occurred during our conference game versus Naperville North. While the score, Naperville North 5 - Neuqua Valley 0, implies that we lost terribly, this was not the case. We played some of our most exceptional soccer during that game. However, it is difficult to win when your team scores two own goals and misses a penalty shot. After the game, when coach Gonzalez came over to the team huddle, he was stunned by the result. From this game, I learned that despite preparation and hard work, events in life might not always go your way. In our case, we played some of our best soccer yet we were unfortunate enough to score two early own goals that took us out of the game.

Booster Club Reporter: *Who is your role model? Why?*

Doug: My role model in life is my mother, as she has always been there for me, and I have been able to look up to her as a positive influence in my life.

Booster Club Reporter: Tell me three things that most people don't know about you.

Doug: I enjoy cooking; I can solve a Rubik's cube; I was diagnosed with an irregular heartbeat, called Supraventricular Tachycardia, during freshman year and then I had heart surgery to fix it.