Each year, Rush Soccer undertakes a rigorous and extensive review of all of its members and selects 16 players from each age group as the premier players within the organization. Those players are invited to represent the club on the national stage as part of Rush Select, a team of top players that will compete in some of the nation's most prestigious soccer tournaments throughout the year. For 2012, the first event Rush Select will travel to is the invitation-only 33rd-annual President's Day Tournament based in Phoenix, Arizona in February.

It is a remarkable accomplishment and an incredible honor to be chosen for Rush Select, playing alongside some of best players in the nation within one's particular age group. For this year's event, Alaska Rush Soccer Club is proud to announce that **Sophie Gross** (99G Nike) has been invited and will represent the club with the U13G Rush Select team. She is the first female player from Alaska Rush to hold such a distinction. Upon receiving her invitation over Thanksgiving weekend, Sophie has since been training hard and fine tuning her game in order to represent Alaska Rush well. When asked about her preparations, Sophie said: “I feel a big responsibility to make sure that I play as well as I can in order to make my Alaska Rush teammates proud.” Her coach and the Technical Director for Alaska Rush, Jason Leonardis, is working with Sophie in order to provide her with some extra training. “Two of Sophie’s best attributes are her willingness to work hard every time she steps onto the field and her determination to achieve the goals set forth of her,” Leonardis stated. "She finds a way to succeed, irrespective of the obstacles, and for me, that's what makes her a special player." He also added, “Her teammates and I are very proud of Sophie and will do whatever we can to support her. We are confident she will not only represent the club in a positive light, but Alaskan soccer as well.”

The opportunity to be invited and participate on select teams, such as the one Sophie has been chosen for, is very unique and distinguishes Alaska Rush Soccer Club from other clubs within Anchorage, and even Alaska, that do not have the same international affiliation. Because of Rush Soccer, which, as an organization, has a long, consistent history of developing players that go onto play for elite NCAA Div. 1 programs, olympic teams, and even the national team, members of Alaska Rush have the option to play on select teams, train with clubs in other states and countries, and even receive training on a national level. “Sophie’s selection to become a member of the Rush Select team is a clear example of the opportunities Alaska Rush can offer its members as opposed to a local club where the international footprint is much smaller,” Leonardis added.

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