



The '98 Colorado Rush NPL (National Premier League) boys squared off in the Mountain Developmental League (MDL) Playoffs. This MDL Playoffs is comprised of the top two finishers from both the Colorado Conference and the New Mexico/Arizona Conference.

Our Colorado Rush NPL team was a squad which brought the 3 Colorado branches together featuring elite players from North Area: Juanantonio Ruiz, Joel Sanchez, and Daniel DeLeon and Pikes Peak: Andrew Turk. Another elite player joined our Club from Edge, Armando Ocampo. All players played key roles in the weekend. It truly was a Rush, unified effort.

The first day of semifinal games were scheduled as CO Rush vs SC Del Sol (AZ) and FC Boulder vs Sereno SC (AZ). The Rush and Del Sol game was an open attacking game where many chances were created, and the score line represented it. Head Coach, Cameron Bushey commented, "It was a good game for us. To finish the game 4-2 – having scored goals in key moments of the game to keep our momentum, energy, and confidence about us – it is a game where we are very happy with the result and the soccer product." Goal scorers were featured from each branch: this year's Rush Golden Boot winner Jack O'Brien (CO), Sanchez netted twice (NA), and Turk (PP) scored his first goal of the year. In the other semifinal, Sereno found themselves a 1-0 victory over a strong FC Boulder team, so the final was set as Colorado Rush vs Sereno SC.

In the championship game, the Rush came again with a quality soccer product. Ryan Wilson (CO) and Cody Brazelton (CO) were pulling the strings of the team inside, and it was some beautiful attacking soccer being played. With David Solis (CO) at center back leading the backline, with his center back accomplice Phillip Gustafson (CO), the team was free to express themselves in attack. Late in the first half, the Rush found the score sheet with quick break-out play that Colorado Rush Director Mike Piserchio would be drooling over. Goalkeeper Easton Hartman (CO) collected the ball and found Brazelton on an early release pass, Brazelton maneuvered past the first defender freeing winger Daulton Logan (CO) to have space to play a near 50 yard early-cross to O'Brien at

the back post. O'Brien coolly headed the ball inside the post. The Sereno keeper was left with little he could do. The Rush continued to play good soccer through the second half while squashing Sereno counter attacks. Sereno was dangerous, but our Rush boys defended with composure and tenacity. Through the middle of the second half, our boys earned a freekick nearly 35 yards out which Wilson was keen to have a go at the goal from. He scored at the top corner at the "near" post (if you could say a post was "near" from that distance). It was a well placed finish. The boys did not allow Sereno to see dangerous chances through the end of the game as we finished the game confidently. The final whistle blew, and the celebrations began! It truly was a good win against a good opponent to finish a great weekend.

Coach Cameron was caught after the game for comments again. "Well, Sereno is a good team with good players, but we were the team imposing ourselves on the game today. This may have been our best team effort yet, and I am proud of the boys. For me, they deserve what we have achieved. We are proud to be able to represent the Club at NPL national, and the New Mexico Rush U15 boys have advanced to nationals as well. It is a good day for our Club, for Rush Soccer."

NPL Nationals is later this summer, July 18-22, at Aurora Sports Park. Good luck to both our Colorado Rush and New Mexico Rush teams!