

No activity in my life besides school has taken up more time than soccer. My school friends call me a jock while my soccer teammates call me a nerd. The truth is that I take pride in being labeled as both. Soccer has created an important balance and taught me much that carries over to other parts of my life. I have always loved testing myself and pushing my body to its limits, and soccer is the perfect outlet for this. I have spent years conditioning my body and honing my skills, and yet soccer continues to challenge me. Individual excellence in the sport requires precision, endurance, patience, and imagination, skills that carry over to other aspects of life from painting, to creative writing, to working on a robot or science project. Soccer has a certain rhythm and pace to it, but one also needs spontaneous decisions and creativity on the field. But it is the team aspect of soccer that has most carried over into my daily life. In soccer, assembling the most talented individuals is not enough for success; the best teams operate as a seamless unit. My most satisfying experiences have been victories that we won based on heart and teamwork. I try to carry some of that experience to other daily interactions including group projects, informal sports, and friendships. The thrill of playing soccer on a good team that puts it all together, with the subtle pressure and encouragement from fans, is exhilarating and a way of releasing the pressure from the rest of my life.