

## My Life as a Keeper

To Whom is Interested,

My name is Casey Clark. I grew up in a small town called Denair in Northern California. I was born into a heavy agriculture family that raised cattle. I was an American "cowboy" that grew up loving sports and wanting to ride bulls. My mom quickly shut down the idea of her little boy riding 2,000 pound beasts. So my next step was sports and I managed to find something that I could do fairly well, goalkeeper.

Fast forward a few years I put all my focus and effort into being the best goalkeeper I could be. I went through highs and lots of lows growing up as a goalkeeper. I played for Turlock Fire Elite in the highest level of competitive soccer for the Northern California area. I was put to my limits many times mentally and physically (broken bones, separated shoulders, ribs out of place, losing games for my team and plenty of stitches to keep mom worried). I was told growing up that keepers needed to have a short term memory. Not until getting ready for college did I understand how important that really was.

As a goalkeeper I always felt like an outcast on the team and I had the weight of the team on my back. I would be so nervous going into games that I would have trouble eating anything if I had games that day. If I had a good game then everything was fine, I did my job. But as a goalkeeper when you mess up more times than not it ends up as a goal and all eyes are on you. This weighs on you and would stay with me long after the game was over. My playing goalkeeper may have been even harder on my parents. No matter if you are in goal or cheering from the sideline, the position is not for the weak of heart.

I got to my senior year of high school when I found out that I had a chance to go to college for soccer. If I wanted to go to college I would need a scholarship. I would drive an hour to goalkeeper training and an hour home two times a week, club training 3 times a week, and high school soccer training after every school day with the mindset of getting a scholarship offer so I could go to college. While this was going on my team entered into the NOMADS San Diego Tournament. I was asked to sign up for the NOMADS Keeper Wars tournament that was involved with my team's tournament. I read the rules, thought it sounded fun. Little did I know that it would become one of the fondest memories I have to date in my soccer career. I ended up winning that Keeper Wars tournament and I'll never forget it.

**CASEY CLARK**  
FOUNDER / DIRECTOR

## Why was that such a fond memory for me?

I was able to showcase my talent and hard work to be at the level that I was. It was all about me, my shot stopping ability, distribution to score, athleticism, and pure ability to outwit the keeper that you were face to face with. There was no-one else, no outside factors just you against one of your own kind competing. The opportunity to steal the show and be able to score was a rush that keepers don't get too often! I walked away from that with a trophy that I still have to this day and family members and teammates watching still bring up how fun that was.

I went on to win the Northern California Premier State Cup Championship. Got a scholarship to go play soccer in Nebraska at Doane University. Was named captain, first men's soccer player to receive national honors at the school, named men's soccer team MVP and went on to play Semi-professional soccer in Eugene, Oregon and Saint Louis, Missouri during my summers. My final year of college soccer I realized that I wanted to pursue what many told me was not obtainable including teachers, coaches and a friend's mother when I was in 4th grade when I told her I wanted to play professional soccer and she laughed. I proved them wrong by signing to play Professional Indoor Soccer immediately following graduation. I played 4 years of professional indoor soccer and went on to sign for the only USL Championship team to win back-to-back national championships and get to a third national championship final while I was with them.

In short, soccer has given me a lot to be thankful for. It gave me the ability to become mentally tough, travel, go to college, meet amazing people, and sign kids jerseys with my name on their back. All these things are because of soccer and how it created who I am blessed to be today.

I can't help but thank that keeper wars event that I went to as a starry eyed kid to give that confidence, joy, and excitement that sometimes we miss as keepers. This is why I am writing to you today.

I have been involved in coaching and playing all around the USA and neighboring countries. I want to give back to keepers that follow in my footsteps and strive to reach for goals that some may see as far-fetched. I want to help them and bring this Keeper Wars event to those like me and to the US for a position that is in a way left without much support. I want this event to give them that spark in their heart to give them the courage to push through the hard times, enjoy the position, be proud to be a keeper, give them the limelight and ability to interact with other keepers younger and older to help each other grow and better themselves.



Where America's Goalkeepers Go to Battle!

## **My Vision for Keeper Wars Ink**

I have created an event based company for Keeper Wars that I plan to bring to soccer communities around the US called Keeper Wars Ink. By giving to, for lack of a better word, a neglected audience the ability to steal the show! I want to bring Keeper Wars to the strong, tough and maybe a little crazy soccer players we call keepers. I see the ability to reach an audience that needs support in a fun and exciting way!

As we strive to bring new audiences to the beautiful game of soccer and grow our soccer community we find only so many ways to do that. This I see as not only a way to give back to our goalkeepers but a way to bring in new audiences that may not have even looked the direction of soccer before.

It is a fast action packed game that anyone can play! You stop someone from scoring and you score on them however you can (throw, kick, punch, drop kick, side volley, etc!) I hope to make this something that can be brought to not only national tournaments, but it's own event that can be played anywhere by anyone who would dare to try goalkeeper for a day.

My competitive vision is to have Keeper Wars be a platform for our goalkeepers trying to be seen. As we put on our events we will be able to track stats and have this live for all audiences to see. I want to be able to have colleges and club coaches come see goalkeepers compete against their own aged rivals. I want to give another view for keepers to showcase what they can do in terms of athleticism, shot stopping, distribution, fitness level, and how they carry themselves throughout the event. I know it's hard to get a good feel for a keeper through video. It can also be tough to get coaches to come to a game where you may not get any action or your team may have a very bad game and they don't get an accurate depiction at what you can do as a keeper. Keeper Wars Ink can bridge this gap for scouts and coaches.

I want to give back with this event. Not only do I want to give back to the goalkeeper community but I want to give a percentage of the proceeds to the Multiple Myeloma Foundation. This hits close to home for me because less than a year ago my father was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma. It is one way that I hope to help research and treatment efforts for others who have been affected the same way my family has.



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### **How do I know Keeper Wars Ink will be successful?**

We ran our first event by itself last year as a soft opening in St. Louis, Missouri. It was a huge success with over 95 single entry participants who travelled from 3 surrounding states, and we had to turn keepers away after registration closed! Based on excitement again from our keeper community, we project our 2nd annual event in St. Louis, Missouri will bring in over 150 participants.

We have also been contacted by partners in other states. Through my professional player connections and outreach already established around the US I will be spreading this game across the country. This year alone we have 3 events planned as well as more locations reaching out wanting us to come to them!

With your help I envision this becoming something special nationwide that can help bring a new audience to soccer and help bring kids and families to the beautiful game we all love and owe much to. While this attracts people and joy it will warm my heart knowing that I gave back to the game that has given me so much and help create funds for the Multiple Myeloma Foundation with people like you.

For more information, please visit us online at [www.keeperwarsink.com](http://www.keeperwarsink.com)

Your Keeper,  
Casey Clark