



What Does Team Speed Mean To Me? By Courtney Camden

When I think of Sterling and the incredible Team Speed Staff, I think family. It probably sounds crazy, to say that I associate Sterling's grueling, intense, brutal, workouts- the ones where I question whether I'll make it through the training session alive- with pure joy and adoration. But I really do. When I come home from school for breaks, the very first thing I do is get in for a workout with Sterling, and catch up with my Team Speed family. Sterling and the crew have impacted me in ways that I cannot even begin to expound upon. They have been major contributors in molding me into the person I have become, and I will forever be grateful for the compassionate and driven role models I found in my fitness coaches at Team Speed.

I first started working with Sterling at the age of seven. I remember those training sessions like they were yesterday. Let's just say that in second grade I didn't view my workouts with Sterling as fondly as I do now. Back then we thought he was a scary, mean, critical, giant... Little did we know that he was building a foundation for the development of our work ethic, self-motivation and competitive drive- essential components for finding personal success long after we hang up our cleats for good. My training with Sterling continued throughout my days at Real Colorado. Fitness sessions with Sterling out at Heritage turf were regular, yet dreaded occurrences. My teammates and I were always amazed (and terrified) at Sterling's ability to invent creative, torturous drills at the drop of a hat. It wasn't until I faced my first major injury that I went from fearing the man and his workouts, to viewing him as a second dad.

As a sophomore in high school, and a u15 national ECNL player, I underwent an ankle reconstruction surgery after spraining it one too many times, tearing every ligament. As soon as I was cleared to walk without crutches, I started working out with Sterling and he got me back on the field stronger and faster than I had ever been. Unfortunately, only a short few months later, I injured the other ankle and was told I needed another reconstruction. I was devastated after having *just* been cleared from my first surgery. But once again, Sterling was there, guiding and encouraging me through every step of the rehab process.

Rehabbing with Sterling is such a unique experience because he doesn't just clear you when you've reached the allotted amount of visits, or when you reach the typical post surgery comeback date. He cares about you as an individual, and will not clear you until he is confident that you can participate fully in your sport without risk of re injury. Every training session and every workout is catered to your specific sport so that when you get

the green light from Sterling, you are ready to get back on the field and feel as if you never missed a beat.

In the blink of an eye, I found myself wrapping up my 17 years at Real Colorado, graduating high school, and preparing for my freshman season at Azusa Pacific University. Of course, there's no better way to get fit for a collegiate preseason than a summer's worth of training with Sterling. I entered my freshman year fitter, faster, and quicker on the ball than I had ever been, and I attribute it all to my trainings with Sterling. As a freshman, I started and played 90 minutes every game. Unfortunately, as is the nature of the bittersweet game of soccer, I found myself facing a long year of surgery and recovery after one bad tackle. I heard the dreaded "pop", and was told that I had torn my ACL, MCL, LCL and meniscus. To say that I was heartbroken would be an understatement. To a soccer player, an ACL is so daunting because your mind goes straight to processing how much you'll miss. When I got my MRI results back, I knew that I had just said goodbye to my entire sophomore season. I was ready to quit soccer all together and maybe even transfer schools. In my exit meeting at the end of spring season, my coach advised me to carefully think through what I wanted for my remaining college years. He explained how difficult it is for collegiate players make a full comeback after an ACL injury. With a heavy heart, and big decisions ahead of me, I started summer 2014 off with a bang. I had surgery the day after my finals ended, but as soon as I got home from California, I started on the road to recovery at Team Speed. Not only was Sterling the biggest component of my physical healing process, but also my mental and emotional healing too. His constant encouragement, wisdom, humor and competitive nature propelled me through an extremely difficult summer of rehab. It was Sterling Joseph that got me back on track. He helped me rediscover my love for the game, and my love for competition. He reminded me that I am as stubborn as they come, and he wasn't going to let me quit. Instead, he helped me get to a place where I could tackle the odds that had been stacked against me.

I got cleared for contact towards the end of my sophomore spring season- about a year after my injury. I played it safe and didn't push myself too hard too soon because it wasn't worth the risk. As I headed home for summer, I knew I had lots of hard work ahead of me, and lots of lost time to make up for, but I wasn't worried because I knew I'd be in the hands of Sterling and the Team Speed Staff. I had full confidence that by the end of summer, I'd be ready to return to camp as a junior, and prove everyone who doubted me wrong- and that's just what I did. Starting in May, Sterling pushed me past my limits because he never lost hope in me. He has known me for about 15 years now, and he knows what I am capable of. I cannot emphasize enough how unbelievably lucky I am to train at a facility that believes in their athletes and has the capability of helping them surpass goals they never dreamed possible.

Thanks to Sterling and my Team Speed family, I made a full recovery, and in spite of the odds I faced, my comeback year was the best season of soccer I've ever played. I was stronger, faster, and more knowledgeable about the game. I was confident in myself and my abilities because of the support I received from Sterling, and it definitely carried over onto the field. My team and I made it to the sweet sixteen round of the NCAA tournament- constituting the most successful season in school history. Following our exciting season, I was presented with league and conference acknowledgments, as well as defensive MVP, and was voted captain by my teammates and coaching staff.

It was truly an incredible year, but I can't take credit for any of my personal successes. I would never have developed into the athlete I am today without the constant training, coaching and support I've received from Sterling and the Team Speed Staff. They've been by my side from the start, and I'll never have sufficient words to express my gratitude. Team Speed is so much more than a gym. It's a family, a culture, and a support system, and I am so lucky to be able to call it home.