

"East" team wins coveted ESP All-Star Game

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POMONA, CALIF – While getting here was perhaps the main goal of the weekend, somebody had to win Saturday night's adidas ESP All-Star game.

Shea Groom is the type of player who is likely to figure it might as well be her team.

The ultra-competitive Groom ran herself into the ground as per usual, scoring a goal and helping the Tony DiCicco's "East" squad to a 2-0 win over Cindy Cone's "West" team.

The rosters were not divided by geography, and it wasn't necessarily the fastest-paced match given that it was each player's third in about 30 hours, but the game was still competitive. The East squad began to assert a lot of control over possession as the 1st half wore on and it paid off with an opening goal when Gabriele Iribarne made a good run down the left and hit a grounded cross through the 6-yard box where Dana Rosney met it with a good strike into the back of the net, the Penn Strikers midfielder making it 1-0.

Rosney and Dallas Texans' player Clarissa Wedemeyer were both very good on the evening for East, showing a lot of battle in midfield and helping their team keep the ball and create chances.

One of those chances got KCFC Alliance player Groom the ball at midfield and she ran 50 yards with it, keeping a step ahead of pursuing defenders and then poking an effort past an onrushing goalkeeper to make it 2-0. Her good work continued through the 2nd half and a brave dive by West goalkeeper Morgan Ruhl kept Groom from scoring a 2nd after a good pass from Kelley Monogue.

Sydney Payne was also good for East with some good runs and turns and a ferocious strike at goal in the 2nd half that Ruhl did very well to tip on to the crossbar. Brittany Von Rueden and Paige Diamond were solid in central defense for East, while Megan Oyster and Maya Theuer also put in solid shifts. 2nd half goalkeeper Molly Poletto made an excellent save for East in denying Annalika Steyn's low drive late in the game.

For the West side, Arin Gilliland showed a great work rate and skill at right back, while Amy Kauffung and Megan Marsack had fine stints in defense, with Indiana Mead showing some good play in midfield, especially in the 2nd half. Taylor Schneider also was good in helping her team win more possession in the latter stanza.

The event closes out with final group matches Sunday morning.

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All-Star Lineups

East

GK: Sarah Voigt (Molly Poletto)

D: Mariah Winters, Paige Diamond, Brittany Von Rueden, Olivia Brannon

M: Sydney Payne, Clarissa Wedemeyer, Kaysie Clark, Gabriele Iribarne

F: Jennifer Gonzalez, Shea Groom

Subs: Satara Murray, Megan Oyster, Meredith Speck, Dana Rosney, Maya Theuer, Kelley Monogue

West

GK: Abby Smith (Morgan Ruhl)

D: Arin Gilliland, Kathryn Nigro, Amy Kauffung, Whitney Jaynes

M: Jessica Kelley, Muriel Battaglia, Riley Houle, Tracy Hong

F: Chioma Ubogagu, Annalika Steyn

Subs: Megan Marsack, Shelby Payne, Taylor Schneider, Indiana Mead, Lia Bellizzi, Sarah Killion