NICK LIMA

Currently a second-year starter for the professional San Jose Earthquakes, Nick Lima grew up in Castro Valley as was one of those kids who was good at just about every sport: football, basketball, hockey, swimming, track . . . oh yeah, and soccer.

At Creekside Middle School, Lima played basketball all three years, led the flag football team to two league championships, the soccer team to two league titles, and was a three-year consecutive winner of the President’s Physical Fitness Award. Nick was named Creekside’s Athlete of the Year upon graduation.

At Castro Valley High, Lima was a running back, cornerback and punter on the football team, rarely leaving the field; he specialized in the sprints and long jump for the CVHS track team; and he dominated the competition as a forward on the soccer squad. He also was selected to the U.S. Soccer Region IV Olympic Development Program Team, earned a coveted spot in the Earthquakes Soccer Academy and landed a soccer scholarship to Cal.

At Berkeley, Lima was a standout student-athlete, making 51 starts in 70 total appearances. He was a two-time, first-team All-Pacific-12 Conference selection and a two-time, first-team NCAA Division I All-Far West Region pick. He was honorable mention All-Pac-12 as a sophomore.

Lima was signed by the Earthquakes in January of 2017 as what is known as a “Homegrown Player.” He was just the second in the history of the franchise to earn the distinction. He scored a goal in just his second game last season against Vancouver, getting his first game-winner in July in a 1-0 win over Colorado, and earning consideration for Major League Soccer Rookie of the League honors (he finished fourth in the balloting).

Lima started and played the full 90 minutes in all four matches of the Earthquakes’ U.S. Open run last year, San Jose eventually losing to Kansas City in a 5-4 penalty shootout in the semifinals.

Nick began focusing on soccer while watching the United States participate in the 2006 World Cup in Germany, where the Americans surprisingly tied Italy, 1-1.

“That big stage, I wanted to do that one day,” he recalled. “I wanted to see what they do on that stage because that was my dream.”

The World Cup is still his dream.

“That’s No. 1 on the list. On the international level, that’s every player’s dream,” he said. “Not just to play in it, but to win it.”