

2003

SOCCER BEAT

By Debbie Arrington

Brothers achieve another goal together

Greg and Jon Curry had a special connection on the field at Christian Brothers High School. Now, the Sacramento siblings share a national championship, too.

Starters for underdog UC Santa Barbara, the Curry brothers helped the Gauchos beat powerhouse Wake Forest in Saturday's semifinals and UCLA 2-1 Sunday for the NCAA Division I men's soccer title in chilly St. Louis.

Christian Brothers coach Vince Juarez was particularly proud.

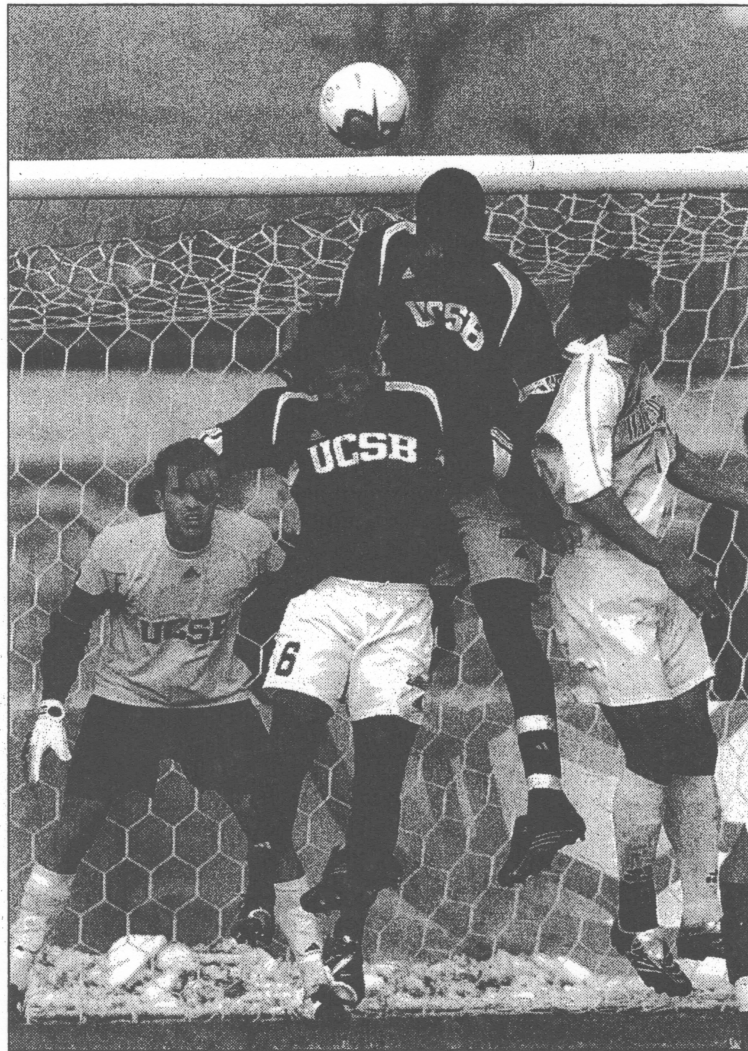
"They're both tremendous athletes," said Juarez, who received a call from Greg after the title game. "They won the section championship here, playing together. To now win the national championship together, how exciting could that be?"

A junior, Greg has been a stalwart on Santa Barbara's defense, which held No. 2 Wake Forest to a 0-0 tie in the snow-delayed semifinals. The unseeded Gauchos (17-7-1) advanced on penalty kicks 4-3. After 110 scoreless minutes Saturday, the Gauchos held UCLA to one goal.

"Greg knows how to manage a defense," Juarez said. "He's not that tall (5-foot-9), but he has a terrific vertical jumping ability. He's a natural leader."

Jon, a 5-8 freshman midfielder, has learned from his brother.

"Jon has developed that same attitude - winning the ball in the air," Juarez said. "That extra communication between brothers really shows. Greg has always been developing and working with his younger brother. They've got each other's back. They can defend against anybody."



Associated Press/Tom Gannam

Greg Curry (6) helps UC Santa Barbara thwart Wake Forest in the NCAA semifinals. He and his brother, Jon, started as the Gauchos won the title.

Championship brothers

Starting defenders Greg and Jon Curry of UC Santa Barbara played a role in the Gauchos' 2-1 NCAA soccer championship victory over UCLA.

Greg was a four-year starter at Christian Brothers under coach Vince Juarez, winning three Sac-Joaquin Section titles and earning Bee Player of the Year honors in 2002. Jon was a two-year starter and an All-Metro pick in 2004. It was just the Gauchos'

second triumph over UCLA in 32 matches (the previous victory coming in 1982), and it was the athletic program's second NCAA championship, the first being a men's water polo title in 1979.