

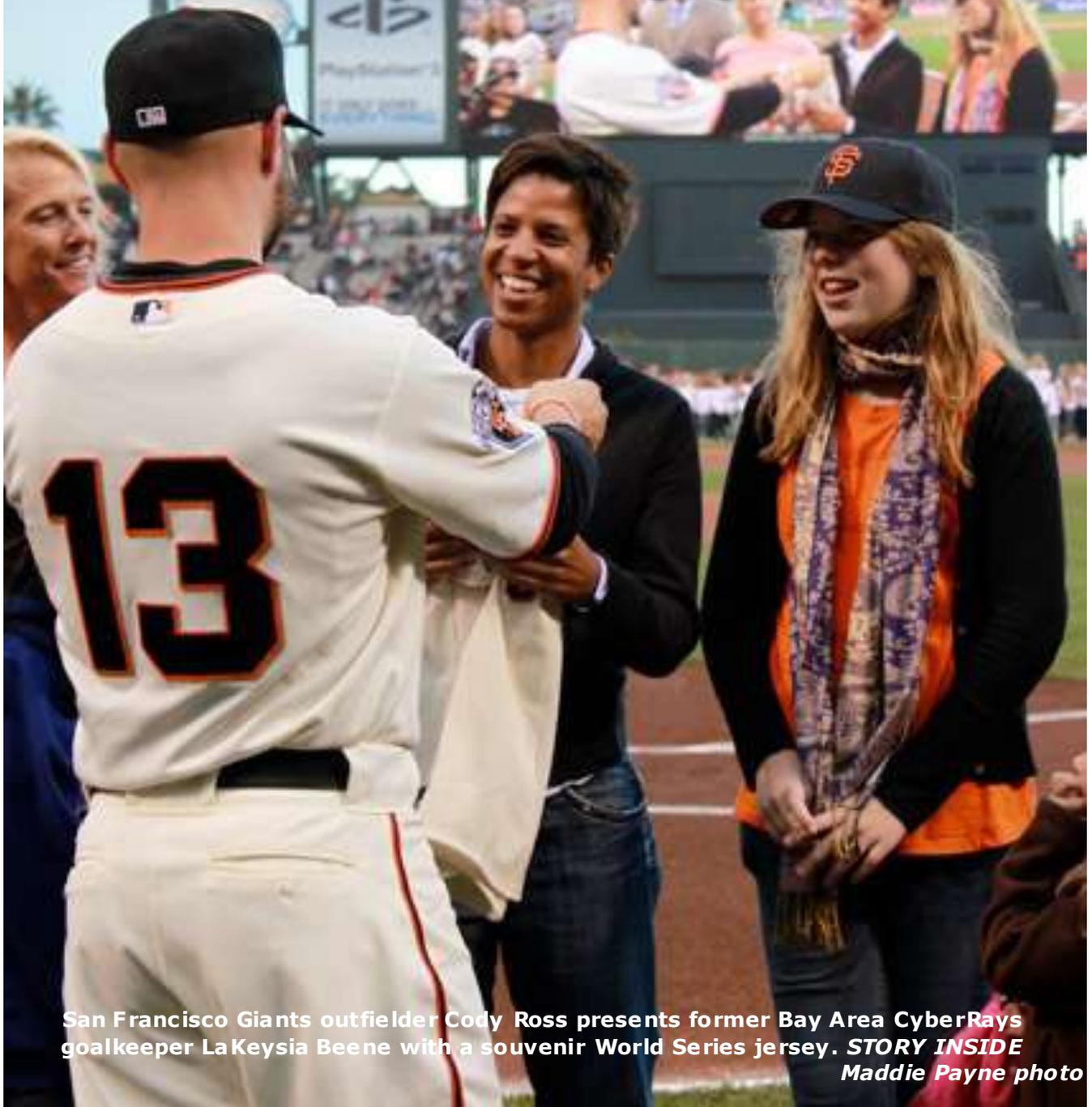
The

# CyberRays Slate

AT&T Park, San Francisco, California

Aug. 25, 2001 and Aug. 25, 2011

## From one champ to another



San Francisco Giants outfielder Cody Ross presents former Bay Area CyberRays goalkeeper LaKeysia Beene with a souvenir World Series jersey. **STORY INSIDE**  
Maddie Payne photo

# From one champ to another



Maddie Payne photo

**Eleven players from the 2001 Bay Area CyberRays gathered at AT&T Park to be honored on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their Women's United Soccer Association championship.**

Lined up across the grass behind home plate at AT&T Park, surrounded by excited children, the women who played professional soccer 10 years ago for the Bay Area CyberRays didn't look like threats to the established order.

But threats they were and are. Subversives, hiding in plain sight.

The San Francisco Giants, reigning World Series champions, honored them Thursday night for what they had done

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*"Somewhere behind the athlete you've become and the hours of practice and the coaches who have pushed you is a little girl who fell in love with the game and never looked back ... play for her."*

Soccer player Mia Hamm

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exactly 10 years before, winning the first championship of their own league, the Women's United Soccer Association (WUSA), on Aug. 25, 2001.

As they were introduced, Giants outfielder Cody

Ross – most valuable player of last year's National League championship series – presented each of the CyberRays players a Giants jersey. One champion to another.

Winning the WUSA title was difficult enough, I suppose. As the public relations director for the team but neither a woman nor a soccer player, the most I can say is that winning a championship is difficult by definition.

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# From one champ to another

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The team opened its season with a 1-0 loss at Washington in the league's inaugural game and six games later, with just one victory, was still buried seven teams deep in the eight-team WUSA standings.

In the next six games, however, goalkeeper LaKeysia Beene, a two-time All-American at Notre Dame, didn't allow a single goal, a string of consecutive shutouts that would never be equaled in the WUSA's three-season history.

Twelve games into the 21-game regular season, the CyberRays had climbed from last place to third. Five more games and two more Beene shutouts put them atop the league. They eliminated New York 3-2 in the playoff semifinals and then went to Foxboro, Mass., to beat Atlanta 4-2 on penalty kicks after regulation and two overtimes ended in a 3-3 tie.

*"The relative positions to be assumed by man and woman in the working out of our civilization were assigned long ago by a higher intelligence than ours."*

**President Grover Cleveland**

Yet through history, no matter what the equal rights battle has been – racial, religious, sexual orientation, country of origin or any other reason people dreamed up – achieving has never been as difficult as getting a fair chance. For women, winning games has always been easier than just getting on the field.

The 600 percent increase of women in law schools and the 500 percent increase

## *That championship season, 2001*

**Record:** 13-6-4 37 points (1 point for each Tie, 3 for a Win)

14 April	L Washington Freedom 1, CyberRays 0	0 points	8 <sup>th</sup> place
29 April	T CyberRays 1, Boston Breakers 1	1 point	7 <sup>th</sup> place
6 May	L Philadelphia Charge 3, CyberRays 2		
13 May	<b>W CyberRays 2, Carolina Courage 1</b>	4 points	
16 May	L Boston Breakers 4, CyberRays 2		
27 May	L Atlanta Beat 1, CyberRays 0		
2 June	<b>W CyberRays 1, San Diego Spirit 0</b>	7 points	6 <sup>th</sup> place
10 June	T CyberRays 0, New York Power 0	8 points	
17 June	<b>W CyberRays 2, Carolina Courage 0</b>	11 points	
20 June	<b>W CyberRays 3, Philadelphia Charge 0</b>	14 points	5 <sup>th</sup> place
24 June	T CyberRays 0, San Diego Spirit 0	15 points	4 <sup>th</sup> place
8 July	<b>W CyberRays 1, New York Power 0</b>	18 points	3 <sup>rd</sup> place
12 July	<b>W CyberRays 3, Washington Freedom 2</b>	21 points	
15 July	<b>W CyberRays 2, Boston Breakers 0</b>	24 points	2 <sup>nd</sup> place
19 July	T CyberRays 1, Atlanta Beat 1	25 points	
22 July	<b>W CyberRays 1, Washington Freedom 0</b>	28 points	
25 July	L San Diego Spirit 2, CyberRays 0		
29 July	<b>W CyberRays 2, Carolina Courage 1</b>	31 points	1 <sup>st</sup> place
2 August	<b>W CyberRays 3, Philadelphia Charge 2</b>	34 points	
5 August	<b>W CyberRays 1, New York Power 0</b>	37 points	
9 August	L Atlanta Beat 4, CyberRays 0		

### **WUSA Semifinals**

18 Aug. **W CyberRays 3, New York Power 2**

### **WUSA Championship**

25 Aug. **W CyberRays 3, Atlanta Beat 3** (CyberRays win 4-2 on penalty kicks)

## *Final Regular Season Standings*

	W	L	T	Pts
x CyberRays	11	6	4	37
x Atlanta Beat	10	4	7	37
x New York Power	9	7	5	32
x Philadelphia Charge	9	8	4	31
San Diego Spirit	7	7	7	28
Boston Breakers	8	10	3	27
Washington Freedom	6	12	3	21
Carolina Courage	6	12	3	21
x – advance to playoffs				

in the number of women in medical schools between the 1972 enactment of Title IX– the federal civil rights law requiring schools to provide equal opportunity to girls in all educational activities and programs – and the 2001 CyberRays' championship season happened with little controversy and almost no notice.

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# From one champ to another



**Australian Julie Murray nails her game-winning penalty kick ...**

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But the words “Hi, I’m Dr. Samantha Jones and I’ll be doing your vasectomy” never struck fear in the American sports world the way “Hi, I’m Samantha Jones, and my classmates and I want to play softball” did. Some people never learn to share their toys. Others believe that if Eve, Sarah, Esther and Mary didn’t score goals in the Bible, they shouldn’t score goals today.

Still, most Americans seem to have no problem with women’s sports. At the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, where women’s soccer was added to the program for the first time, I covered the semifinals and medal games that drew crowds of 64,000 and 76,000 in the University of Georgia’s football stadium. Three years later, when the Women’s World Cup – soccer’s world championship – was played in the United States for the first time, the games I covered included the USA-Brazil semifinal at Stanford (attendance 73,173) and the USA-China championship in the Rose Bowl (90,125).

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**John Todd photos**

**... and teammates (L-R) Brandi Chastain, Gina Oceguela (partly hidden), Tisha Venturini, Jacqui Little, Carey Dorn, Kelly Lindsey (partly hidden) and Thori Bryan celebrate.**

# From one champ to another

– *Continued from previous*

Starting a professional women's league, then, seemed to make sense, even to those who for 30 years continued to try to weaken Title IX's rules for school and college sports.

Pro sports, though, are all business and not covered by Title IX. The U.S. men's soccer league at first tried to profit by starting a women's league but backed off when the top players, including CyberRays captain Brandi Chastain, refused to play for it. They had investors for a league of their own.

Nevertheless, the TV rights fees for the women's national team were owned by and paid to the men's professional league. The men's pro soccer team in San Jose blocked the CyberRays' attempt to play at San Jose State's Spartan Stadium until the mayor coughed up enough money to buy them off. The CyberRays did get to keep their hotdog revenue.

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*"[Feminism is] a socialist, anti-family, political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians."*

TV evangelist Pat Robertson

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The morning after the CyberRays won the championship, we boarded an American Airlines Boeing 767 from Boston to California where a huge crowd met the team at the gate. It was my job to contact the White House and try to arrange a visit with President George Bush. But I was not optimistic about securing an invitation. One of our team's

## *CyberRays at the celebration*

Midfielder **Sissi**, hometown Sao Paulo, Brazil (now living in Concord, Calif.), 3-time member of Brazil's Women's World Cup team and 2-time member of Brazil's Olympic team, assisted on Tisha Venturini's goal in the 86<sup>th</sup> minute that sent the WUSA championship game to overtime.

Midfielder and defender **Brandi Chastain**, hometown San Jose, 4-time member of the U.S. World Cup team (she scored the championship-winning penalty kick against China in the Rose Bowl in 1999), 2-time member of the U.S. Olympic team with a gold medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and a member of 2 NCAA final four soccer teams at Santa Clara University, scored first CyberRays goal against the Atlanta Beat in the WUSA championship game.

Defender **Thori Bryan**, hometown Joppatowne, Md. (now living in Wake Forest, N.C.), member of the bronze medalist U.S. World Cup team in 1995 in Sweden, only player in the WUSA to play every minute of every game in the 2001 season, played collegiately for North Carolina State.

Defender **Lisa Nañez**, hometown Los Gatos, Calif., member of the 1999 Mexico Women's World Cup team, played collegiately for Santa Clara University.

Forward and midfielder **Kim Clark**, hometown Cupertino, Calif., played collegiately at the University of Southern California, scored a goal and an assist in 2-1 regular season victory over Carolina that put CyberRays into first place.

Forward **Megan Horvath**, hometown Santa Clara, Calif., (now living in San Mateo, Calif.) assisted on game-winning goal over the New York Power in the WUSA semifinals, played collegiately at Santa Clara University.

Goalkeeper **Janine Szpara**, hometown San Jose (now living in Portland, Ore.) played collegiately at Colorado College.

Goalkeeper **LaKeysia Beene**, hometown Gold River, Calif., (now living in Sacramento) had a league record 6 consecutive shutout games and 624 consecutive shutout minutes, former member of U.S. Women's National Team, played collegiately for Notre Dame.

Defender and forward **Gina Ocegüera**, hometown Santa Clara, member of the 1999 Mexico Women's World Cup team, played collegiately for Santa Clara University.

Midfielder **Venus James**, hometown Oakland, played collegiately for UCLA.

Forward and defender **Christina Bell**, hometown Santa Rosa, Calif., had an assist on Julie Murray's goal that tied WUSA championship game 2-2 at halftime, played collegiately at Fresno State.

owners, John Hendricks, CEO of television's Discovery Channel, was a large Democratic Party donor. And Rod Paige, Bush's secretary of education, was working on a plan many people believed would be another attempt to water down Title IX.

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# From one champ to another

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The White House had no time for the CyberRays despite my letters and phone calls.

But in the next couple of years, Marlene Bjornsrud, our team's general manager and a former college coach and administrator, went to Washington to testify against attempts to weaken the law.

She had better luck.

Seventeen days after we landed with the trophy, a man with a religiously inspired concept of the status of women wrote in his last will and testament that no woman be allowed to touch his dead body.

Then Mohamed Atta and his four comrades boarded an American Airlines Boeing 767 from Boston to California. After killing the pilots early in the flight, he continued the plane's westward course until reaching the Hudson River, the visual navigation point for his intended turn south, and aimed the plane at New York's World Trade Center.

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*John Todd photo*

**Captain Brandi Chastain, left, and Tisha Venturini, who sent the game into overtime by scoring with four minutes left, hoist the Founder's Cup trophy.**

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*"Feminism is the radical notion that women are people."*

Sociologists Cheri Kramarae and Paula Treichler

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# Today's picture pages



So what the heck is a CyberRay? A made-up word and a made-up sea creature honoring the team's home in Silicon Valley and its proximity to Monterey and San Francisco bays. When the team staff began working on the idea, we wanted to give it a personality and a biography as if it was our 12<sup>th</sup> player. We named it Shock, because it was an electric ray. "Credited with assists in electrically charging the game-day atmosphere. Graduated from Pacific Marine U. in 2000 with a double major in computer science and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. Likes surfing the internet, swimming, fishing, body-surfing and watching "Shark Week" on the Discovery Channel. Three favorite foods: California rolls, oysters Rockefeller, shrimp cocktail."



*John Todd photo*

Celebrating the championship.



<<< Signing autographs before the Giants game (L-R): Christina Bell, Gina Ocegvera and Thori Bryan.



Venus James, Megan Horvath and Sissi

**Brandi Chastain and her son, Jaden, at the autograph table >>>**



**The good ol' days of 2001, Brandi Chastain, Katia and Ann Cook take a practice break**



**Mia Hamm, left, who played for Washington in the WUSA, and CyberRays General Manager Marlene Bjornsrud testify before Congress on Title IX.**



**Fans welcome CyberRays back to the Bay Area after their championship.**

Goodbye from the  
**CyberRays Championship Celebration**  
at AT&T Park, San Francisco

