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## News Release

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## IU Kokomo student plays on national power soccer championship team

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — Excellence in soccer is an Indiana University tradition.

IU Kokomo student Kyle Galloway is adding to that winning tradition, as part of a national championship power soccer team.

“We made it our goal to win the Champions Cup at the beginning of the season,” Galloway, 25, said. “I am so happy we reached our goal. We worked hard all season, and our work paid off.”

His team, RHI Sudden Impact, defeated DASA Dynamites, from Missouri, 1-0 to win the National Power Soccer Association championship in July.

Power soccer is an international team competitive sport for power wheelchair users. Any person who has a physical disability that requires them to use a power wheelchair may play. There are more than 60 teams in the United States.

Galloway, a general studies major from Kokomo, started playing a year ago, after his brother heard there was an open place on a team. He had played soccer and baseball growing up, before he suffered a spinal cord injury in a four-wheeler accident shortly after graduating from high school in 2006.

“This is something I can do independently, on my own,” he said “I don’t have many opportunities to do that. I was excited to get to play a sport again. It’s been a while since I’d been able to play. Most wheelchair sports are played in a manual wheelchair, and I can’t manipulate one.”

Power soccer is played on a basketball court, with three offensive players and a goalie for each team. During the two 20-minute halves, players maneuver the 13-

inch diameter soccer ball with a guard on the front of the wheelchair, attacking, defending, and spin kicking the ball in an attempt to score goals.

“The only motion skills are what you can do with the joystick on your wheelchair,” Galloway said, adding that he purchased a special wheelchair built specifically for the sport.

“You can spin it really fast to kick the ball,” he said. “It really makes the game move more quickly, and it’s more exciting for the players and fans. It’s revolutionized the game.”

RHI Sudden Impact is based in central Indiana, with men and women from Carmel, Fishers, Indianapolis, Pendleton, and Kokomo on the team. Practices begin in October, and culminate in the national championships during the summer.

Teams must play at least 12 games during the year, with two in their conference, to qualify for the nationals. Galloway’s team played a record-breaking 47 games during the season, to qualify for the Champions Cup, played at Indiana University—Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Teams play in conferences based on ability. At the end of each season, the top two teams in each conference move up, while the bottom two move down. Galloway’s team will move into the top-level Premier Conference for the 2013-2014 season, after winning their championship.

He looks forward to the new challenge, and plans to play for several more years. There is no age limit in power soccer.

“This is a lifetime thing for me,” he said. “I’ve fallen in love with this game, and I don’t want to stop.”

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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