



U.S. Women's Soccer World Cup Cocaptain Alex Morgan

'MOTHERHOOD MADE ME BETTER'

HEADING INTO HER FOURTH WORLD CUP—THIS TIME AS A MOM!—THE SUPERSTAR SHARES HOW LOVE & FAMILY BRING BALANCE TO HER GAME

By **GILLIAN TELLING**



Proud Parents
College sweethearts Morgan and soccer player Servando Carrasco welcomed daughter Charlie, 3, in 2020.



2015



Winning Streak

Alex Morgan was 22 when she played in her first World Cup in 2011. Since then she has scored nine World Cup goals in three tournaments.



2019

When soccer star Alex Morgan takes the field in this year's Women's World Cup, which kicks off in Australia and New Zealand on July 20, she will be poised to make some serious history. As cocaptain of the U.S. Women's National Team, she's playing in her fourth consecutive World Cup, and if the U.S. wins (for the third time in a row!), she'll be the only mom ever to have achieved such a feat. Despite the pressure, Morgan, 34, insists she's feeling oddly calm.

"Honestly, it's probably the least amount of stress that I've ever felt going into a World Cup," says Morgan, who was born and raised in Southern California and now plays for the San Diego Wave during the regular season. "I just feel really confident with where I am. Obviously the pressure will build throughout the tournament, but we feel more like a team than ever. So we're just really excited to get started."

This World Cup also marks the first time Morgan has played for the USWNT as a parent. In 2020 she and her husband, soccer player Servando Carrasco, 34, welcomed their daughter Charlie, now 3, and Morgan says being



The A-Team
 “She’s had just an incredible career,” says Morgan (at the 2019 World Cup win with teammate Megan Rapinoe, who will retire).

a mom has actually boosted her game. “I definitely feel like I am a lot more calm and levelheaded in how I approach soccer now,” she says. “I’m more balanced all around. If I had a bad game before, I used to dwell on it, but now my daughter runs up to me afterward, and everything is good. She puts it all into perspective.” Plus, she adds, Charlie doesn’t care if she misses an important goal. “She just wants the right snacks,” Morgan says with a laugh. “I think that makes me a better person and a better teammate.”

Her fellow USWNT members Crystal Dunn and Julie Ertz also have babies—three moms on a World Cup team is a rarity—and Morgan says they’re all grateful the USWNT has supported their motherhood.

“We have the opportunity to bring our babies and families on the road with us, and that’s really special,” she says. “We don’t want to leave our kids at home while we continue doing what we love and playing our sport. We get the best of both worlds, which is not always how it was. That makes us feel empowered.”

Charlie has even taken to being cocaptain of the baby and toddler squad. “Marcel, Crystal’s son, is about 1, so Charlie’s always walking him around, getting him blueberries and snacks and playing music for him.” So

‘BEING A MOM CHANGED ME FOR THE BETTER AS A SOCCER PLAYER BUT ALSO IN LIFE’

—ALEX MORGAN

we’d get maybe 3,000 fans a game,” she says. “Now it’s around 60,000. It’s really exceeded my expectations.” In 2022 Morgan and teammates like Megan Rapinoe won their fight to be paid the same as the men when competing on a national team in international events like the World Cup. “I think when we first started to advocate for ourselves, we weren’t sure how people would react,” she says. “But I think that really changed the game for the future of the sport—and gave the confidence to players around the world to fight the discrimination they have faced for so long.”

Unlike her longtime teammate Rapinoe, Morgan isn’t announcing her retirement just yet. “I’m taking it one season at a time,” she says. “My body feels good, and I’m in the moment, so I’m not looking too far ahead.” When she does retire, she’ll have plenty to do. “I launched the Alex Morgan Foundation this year, and that’s something I’m really proud of,” she says. “It financially helps athletes of all backgrounds to pay for club soccer.” As for the chances of Morgan’s trying out coaching, she beams and laughs: “I’d do it for Charlie’s team!” ●

Meet the World Cup Team

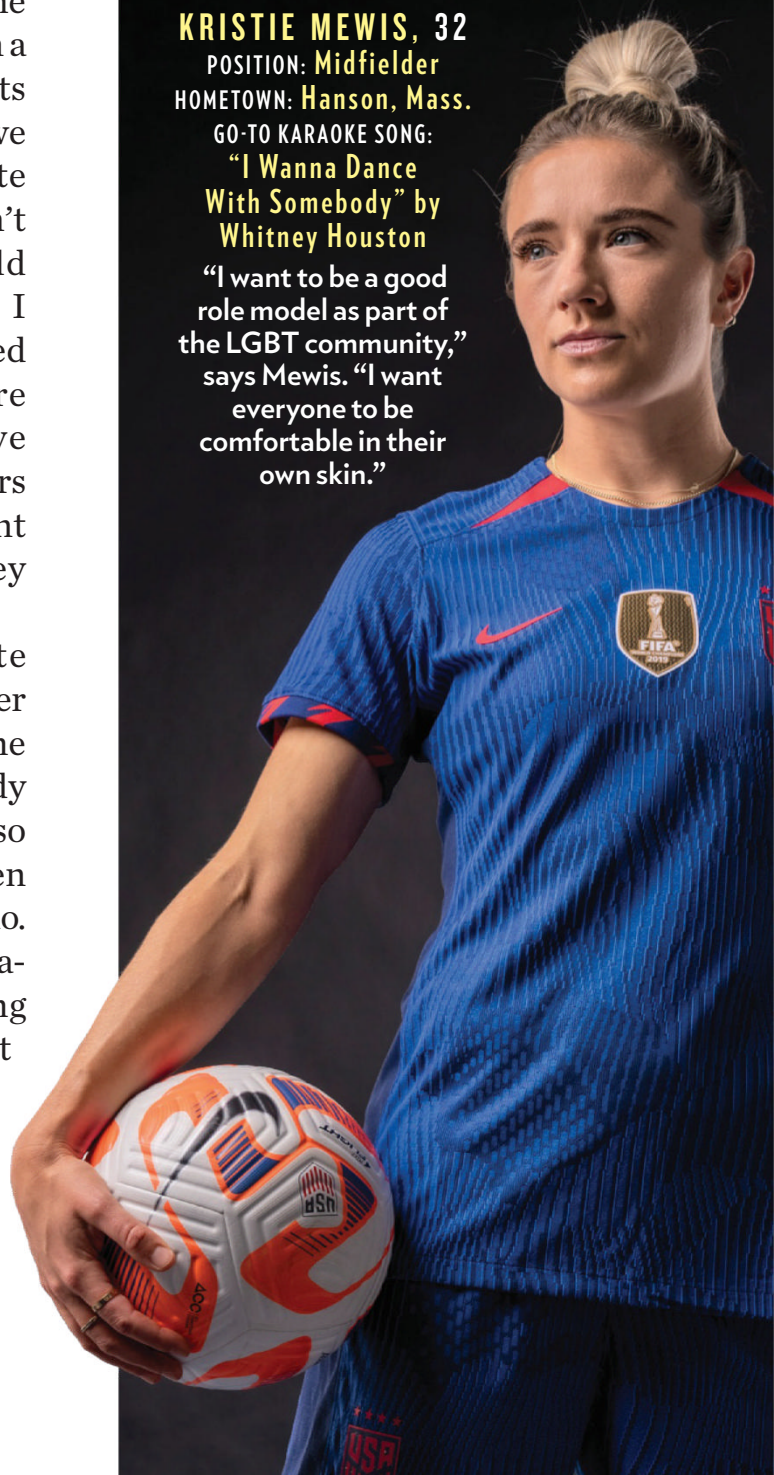
3 - P E A T THE GOAL!

GET TO KNOW
SOME OF THE PLAYERS
FAVORED FOR
A HISTORIC THIRD
STRAIGHT
WORLD CUP WIN



KRISTIE MEWIS, 32
 POSITION: Midfielder
 HOMETOWN: Hanson, Mass.
 GO-TO KARAOKE SONG:
 “I Wanna Dance
 With Somebody” by
 Whitney Houston

“I want to be a good role model as part of the LGBT community,” says Mewis. “I want everyone to be comfortable in their own skin.”



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←
SOFIA HUERTA, 30

POSITION: Right Back
HOMETOWN: Boise, Idaho

GO-TO KARAOKE SONG:
"No Scrubs" by TLC

Huerta, who has dual Mexican citizenship, is proud to "inspire the younger generation, especially the Latinx community."



→
ROSE LAVELLE, 28

POSITION: Midfielder

HOMETOWN:

Cincinnati

GO-TO KARAOKE SONG:

"It's All Coming Back to Me Now"
by Celine Dion

One of the stars of the 2019 championship team considers Mia Hamm, who played on the U.S. National Soccer Team from 1987 to 2004, the greatest of all time. "It hasn't really hit me that I am to kids what players like Mia Hamm were to me," she says.

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TRINITY RODMAN, 21

POSITION: Forward

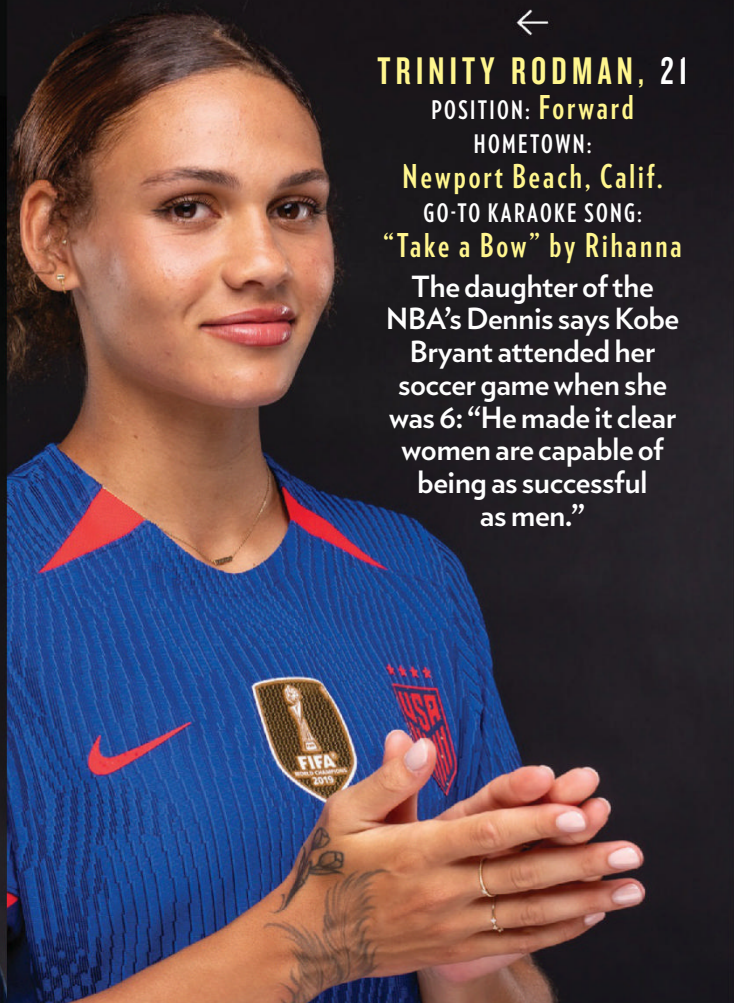
HOMETOWN:

Newport Beach, Calif.

GO-TO KARAOKE SONG:

"Take a Bow" by Rihanna

The daughter of the NBA's Dennis says Kobe Bryant attended her soccer game when she was 6: "He made it clear women are capable of being as successful as men."



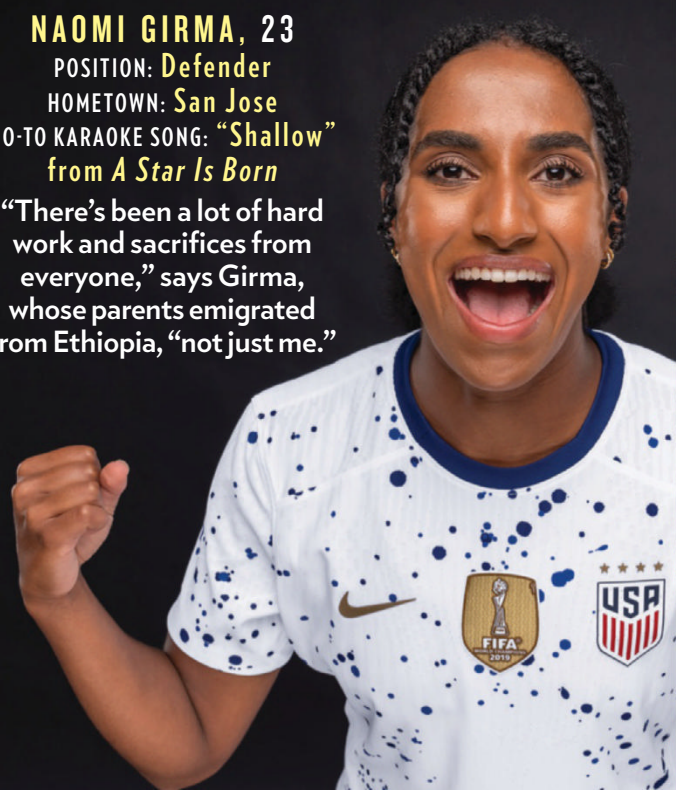
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NAOMI GIRMA, 23

POSITION: Defender

HOMETOWN: San Jose

GO-TO KARAOKE SONG: "Shallow"
from *A Star Is Born*

"There's been a lot of hard work and sacrifices from everyone," says Girma, whose parents emigrated from Ethiopia, "not just me."



←
ALYSSA THOMPSON, 18

POSITION: Forward

HOMETOWN:

Studio City, Calif.

GO-TO KARAOKE SONG:

"Irreplaceable"
by Beyoncé

As the second-youngest player ever to make a U.S. women's World Cup team, Thompson is learning from veterans (like Megan Rapinoe, inset with Thompson in 2022): "They are powerful women ready to win."