

The new goalkeeper

Cira was an 8-year-old girl full of energy. She loved running, jumping, and playing with her friends in the schoolyard. But what fascinated her most was soccer. She didn't just enjoy playing; she also paid close attention to every move—especially those of the goalkeepers. She was captivated by how they would stretch to catch the ball and how bravely they defended the goal.

One day, while walking through the school hallways, she noticed a poster on the wall. In large, colorful letters, it read: "After-school soccer! Sign up!" Cira's eyes lit up with excitement. She ran home and, bursting with enthusiasm, said to her parents:

"Mom, Dad, can I sign up for soccer? I want to be a goalkeeper!"

Surprised by her determination, her parents said yes. And so, Cira's adventure in the world of soccer began.

On the first day of practice, the coach asked the children which position they wanted to play. When Cira raised her hand and said she wanted to be a goalkeeper, some of her classmates laughed.

"A goalkeeper? But you're way too small!" they said.

But Cira paid them no mind. When it came time to put on her gloves and defend the goal, she showed just how determined she was. She leaped to stop a high shot, dove to intercept a ball along the ground, and made a spectacular save with her fingertips. When training ended, the coach approached her and said:

“Well done, Cira! You’ve earned the spot as goalkeeper.”

Cira worked incredibly hard. She practiced every day in her yard, using the garage as a goal. She did stretches to become more agile and asked her older brother to kick balls at her so she could improve her saves. Friday afternoons—training time—became the highlight of her week.

One Saturday morning, Cira’s team played a friendly match against the town club. It was a very intense game, but Cira made some incredible saves that rescued her team on several occasions. When the match ended, a man wearing a jacket with the local club’s logo approached her and her parents.

“Hello, I’m the coach of the town’s futsal club. I’ve seen Cira play, and I think she has a great future as a goalkeeper. Would she like to come and train with us?”

Cira was so excited that she couldn’t speak. Her parents were delighted to accept, and she began training with the club. The training sessions were more demanding, but that didn’t scare her. She learned how to position herself better, how to time her jumps, and how to communicate with her teammates to organize the defense.

Over time, she became one of the best players on her team. During the final of the regional tournament, Cira’s team was leading by one

goal, and only a few seconds remained. The opposing team took a powerful shot toward the top corner of the goal. Cira leaped with all her might and, with a spectacular save, prevented a goal. The referee blew the final whistle, and her team won, thanks to her. The entire arena erupted in applause, and her teammates hoisted her up in their arms.

Now 12 years old, Cira is recognized as one of the best futsal goalkeepers in the region. But for her, what matters most isn't trophies or titles; it's the satisfaction of defending her goal and seeing the smiles on her teammates' faces. When someone asks her how she achieved this, she always replies with a smile:

"Through hard work, passion, and not being afraid to put yourself to the test!"

Questions for discussion with children

How do you think Cira felt when some of her peers laughed at her for wanting to be a goalkeeper? What would you have said to her?

What do you think helped Cira improve as a goalkeeper? What could we do to improve at something we enjoy?

Why do you think Cira says that the most important thing isn't trophies, but rather having fun and helping her team?

Would you like to try a sport or activity, just as Cira did? How would you put in the effort to enjoy it?