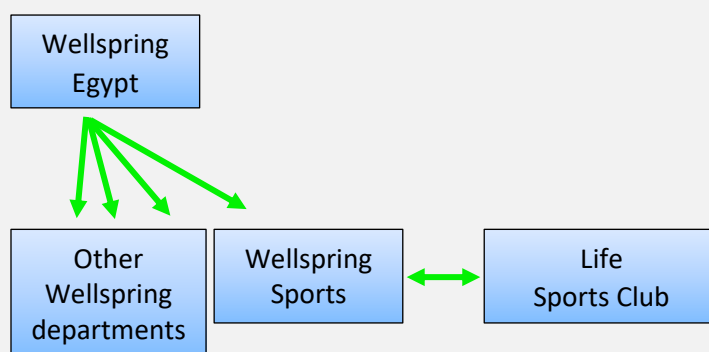


Hello!

It has been a little over one month since I moved to New Cairo, the eastern and more modern part of Cairo, in Egypt to start working as a Soccer Coach. A lot has happened already and so I figured it is time to start writing a little letter to friends and family! This has a couple of purposes really, the first one serves you, to keep you in the loop of what is happening in my life. The second reason is that I want to create a little community around this project and want to ask for continued conversation and prayer. Please feel free to reach out to me any time for a chat, I would love to be in touch!

Let me start by explaining the organization structure here and who I am actually working for. Officially, I am employed by the sports department of the organization WellSpring Egypt. A Christian organization, that has a global network of connections and runs operations for different institutions, everything from local churches to even the United Nations. WellSpring employs around 60 full-time staff members, and they recently divided up into different sub departments. Some of those are WellSpring Expeditions, WellSpring Camps, WellSpring Consulting, or WellSpring Sports. WellSpring Sports' goal is to sell products like sports camps or education to clients. You can find more info about WellSpring here: <https://wellspringegypt.com/>. About a year ago, the newly founded Life Sports Club proposed for WellSpring Sports to operate the youth

teams (age U7-U19) of their different sports teams, including for example Soccer, Basketball, Gymnastics, or Volleyball. These require full-time staff additions for WellSpring, which is the job position that I accepted.



Because the club is very new, they are also only in the beginning stages of the construction of a large complex that will house all sports. This is the 25-acre complex that is being built at the moment:



The business side of the club is already moving along pretty quickly, but the specific sports still have to be developed. To do this is also one of my responsibilities, even though I was not fully aware of that at the beginning of my time here. This made for some



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exciting first weeks, full of surprises ;-). Even though I was a little caught off guard by this, I started loving the process. It is up to me and a Brazilian Coach to come up with a full concept, a “Life- Methodology”, of how exactly we want the Soccer to be run from a content- and from an almost psychological perspective. A lot of times I have questioned why so many youth clubs

were run like they were. To me it has felt like a lot of times they were serving the club more than the players, on and off the field. That is why I can really appreciate the fact that this project is a blank page that is just waiting to be filled with ideas and visions. If you want to read more about Life Sports Club, you can do that on their website: <https://lifesportsclub.com/>.

Last week we presented our vision for the Soccer piece of Life Sports Club, including specific strategies about training local Coaches, involving parents, marketing and scouting for players, and how a whole season may look like. The plan got approved, so we now moved on to a Phase 2 if you will, which is to actually attract players and rent fields to practice and play on until Life’s complex is finished. So, for now, I am still spending a little more time in the office than I anticipated or want to in the long term - at this same time it is necessary though, and you can always make that fun too. In the picture on the right, you can see the social media



NEW ADDITION TO OUR ACADEMIES

Our academies are getting stronger by the day! We welcome on board this month **Simon Wieschemann**, our new football academy German coach. Simon holds a US coaching license and has coached in Germany and the USA. Enjoy a free football tryout with Simon and enroll your kids throughout the month of August at any of our academies.

announcement about me joining the Life staff! It might be good to also explain the “Christian responsibilities” I have here as part of WellSpring. Per law, it is legal to be a Christian, but it is strictly forbidden to evangelize. It is prohibited for a Christian to marry a Muslim, and it is also prohibited to officially change the religion displayed on a government ID to ‘Christian’. Life Sports Club is also not a religiously affiliated Club. Therefore, it is a very fine line here to live out a Christian faith without creating too many waves that could potentially draw attention. First and foremost, it is safe to say that simply embodying what Christianity stands for already makes a difference a lot of times. That is what I am concentrating on, and otherwise I can trust that God would open doors which might lead to other conversations that may allow me to share all the hope and peace I get to experience for myself.

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Otherwise, there are still many other things happening here! I am currently trying to figure out if it is possible for me to continue playing here also. I should know more about that within the next few weeks. My living situation here is something I really value highly. Me, the Brazilian Coach, and a Basketball Coach from Canada share an apartment in New Cairo. Everyone has their own bedroom and restroom, and all of us share a kitchen and a living room. Malls, restaurants, or gyms for example are all pretty close. Every morning we take a Taxi or public transportation to the office in downtown Cairo and at night we do the same to get to practices and to go home again. Both, Taxis and public transportation are very cheap here in Egypt.

Culturally, the transition was not quite as smooth as I pictured it to be in my head. Even though I know the culture is different from what I am used to, it

does take a lot of patience and recharging to get accustomed, things like traffic, the language (even though a lot of people here speak English), or the food. It is also interesting to note what “10 minutes”

can mean in different countries, what a professional environment looks like over here, or how deadlines are being treated. So far though, I have really enjoyed meeting people, and I also started to learn Arabic at a local language school. In terms of sights, I really have gotten a fair share of experiences already! It felt pretty surreal to ride (and kiss!) a camel by the pyramids of Giza, to go down to the graves of former Kings and Queens, to see the incredible detail of Hieroglyphs painted on walls some thousands of years ago, or to eat a typical Middle Eastern meal on a boat right on the Nile. For sure memories that I will carry with me for a very long time!

You may or may not have noticed three different logos in the header/ footer section! Let me tell you about the one I have not mentioned yet. SURGE Soccer is a sports missionary organization I got to know during yearly summer Soccer camps. For the first time in 2018, SURGE Soccer and SRS, a German sports missionary organization I worked with for many years now, planned a weeklong refugee and kids Soccer camp in Austria. Every summer when it was possible for me since then, I joined the same camp again. This summer, we ran camps in Austria and also Greece to bring people “Hope through Soccer”, which is also SURGE’s mission statement. Check out more information about SURGE and my profile on their page at: <https://www.surgesoccer.org/surge-people/simon-wieschemann/>. Before starting my time here in Egypt, I wanted to ensure a kind of partnership with a sports missionary organization, as I understand my



role here to be very mission- motivated. Therefore, I was very happy to hear that SURGE would love for me to represent them in Egypt too, as a global ambassador and hopefully even join some of their projects in other African countries. Through them, I hope to continue to learn more about how significant of a platform Soccer can be. To enjoy, but more importantly to connect with people and create that basis that God may use to show people how much more than Soccer He has in store for each of us! On top, SURGE provides a service that can ensure people the needed documentation to file donations with their taxes. This is a service I also started to make use of, since Wellspring Egypt does not provide any form of insurance. I currently am still on my German insurance plan that covers me globally. With my monthly salary in Egyptian Pounds, I am not able to cover that all by myself. Whether you are be interested in contributing towards that to be covered, or simply want to reach out to say hi, please do reach out via email, WhatsApp, or iMessage! Thank you so much for your thoughts and prayers, I am praying that God may hold His hands of you and bless you. Hope to see you soon!

