

# A Roadie Thank You

Your Honor,

I want to start off by saying thank you from the bottom of my heart for believing in me. God knows the actions of my past have shown that I did not deserve another chance. But you believed in me and for that, I will be grateful for the rest of my life.

Please know that I have not taken for granted this opportunity. I continue to give back to others that struggle with the same things that I have. It would appear that I have had an influence on others that have witnessed my recovery.

I also want you to know that I'm not the only one that has benefited from your decision to give me another chance. My mother has gotten her son back.

I have also rekindled relationships with good people that wouldn't have me in their lives when I was the person I used to be.

As for competing in the Homeless World Cup in Amsterdam, it was one of the best experiences of my life. All of the players (48 teams from all over the globe) coaches and volunteers stayed in a small village called Vollendam about 25 miles outside of Amsterdam. A village built around a soccer stadium or as the rest of the world calls it "futbal."

The accommodations were first class. I met so many people from all over the world who share the same struggles I have. I still keep in contact with many of them on Facebook. From Sweden, Holland, England, Wales, India, Ireland and Scotland. I especially connected well with the Irish lads.

Our national coach took our team to an Ajax (pronounced "Iax") & Celtics game, a professional Champion's League football game.

I visited the VanGogh museum and took a canal tour. I must say the most memorable part of the trip was an NA meeting in candlelight with 25 recovery addicts from 10 different countries sharing their stories in 4 different languages. It was powerful and emotional. It really put into perspective the scale of the disease of addiction.

The role that soccer played in the recovery of all the folks in that room was huge. I left that meeting feeling wonderful, humbled and grateful.

The friends I made during that trip are irreplaceable and I now find myself in a family that share in the same struggles in life, is global and share a bond that is powerful enough to lift people out of addiction and homelessness and onto their feet again. I have to thank you for this and I am eternally grateful.

Thank you very much, Michael

P.S. The US placed 23<sup>rd</sup> in the tournament. We were beating Mexico in the quarter finals before we lost 2 players to injuries. Mexico went on to win the cup!