

# Eyes on the Goal

## The Story of Abby Wambach



Written by Andy Minshew  
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**1980-1985** Abby Wambach was born in Rochester, New York. She had six big brothers and sisters. After her oldest sister started playing soccer, Abby fell in love with the sport too.

When she was five years old, Abby joined her first soccer team. Even at a young age, she was not afraid to play with kids who were bigger than her.



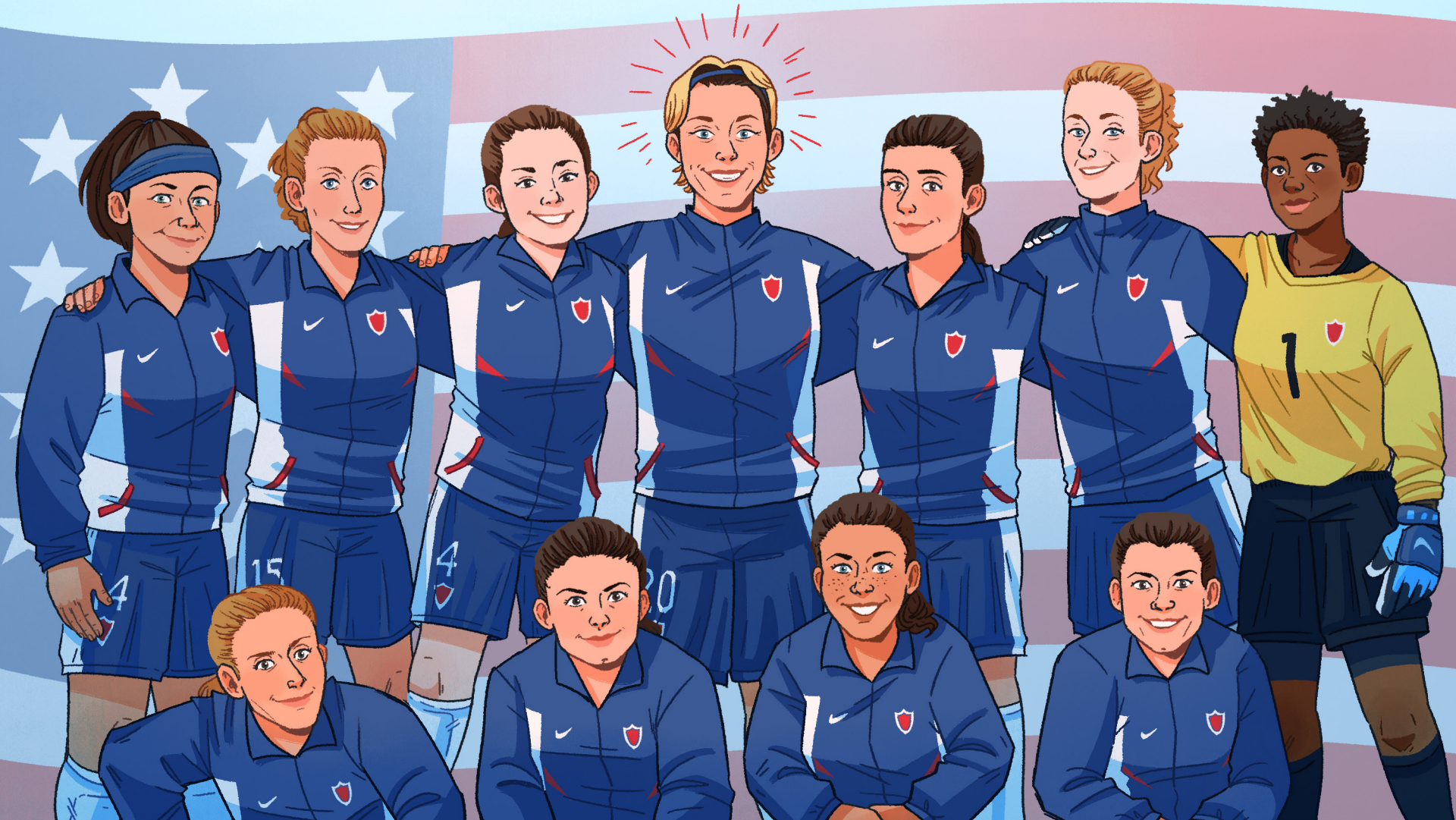


**1985-1998** Abby was happiest on the soccer field. There she felt like she was a part of something bigger than herself. She was only one player, but she could do huge things with her team.

**1998-2001** After high school, Abby kept playing soccer. She chose to join the women's soccer team at the University of Florida. She is still her school's all-time top scorer. Her record? 96 goals.



**2003** The United States women's national soccer team noticed Abby's talent. They asked her to play, and Abby joined the team. At the time, the team was new. Becoming a pro athlete meant Abby would make her own path.



When someone made a goal for Team USA, Abby cheered for all of her teammates. Everyone had a role in making the goal happen.



**2004** Abby played in her first Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. Her team faced talented players.

The final game was tied until the last seconds. Then Abby's teammate kicked the ball to Abby, and Abby headed it into the goal. Team USA won a gold medal!



**2007** Abby's team practiced hard. They were asked to play in the FIFA World Cup—the biggest soccer competition in the world. Her team took home the bronze medal.

Abby and her teammates were paid for playing. But they got far less money than players on the men's team.



**2008-2009** Before the next Olympics, Abby broke her leg. She couldn't play because her leg had to heal. Abby wrote letters to encourage each of her teammates. She watched them play on TV and cheered when they won the gold medal.

When her leg healed the next year, she returned to the team.





**2011-2012** Abby and Team USA went to the World Cup again. They were certain that they could do better than bronze. This time, they won silver.

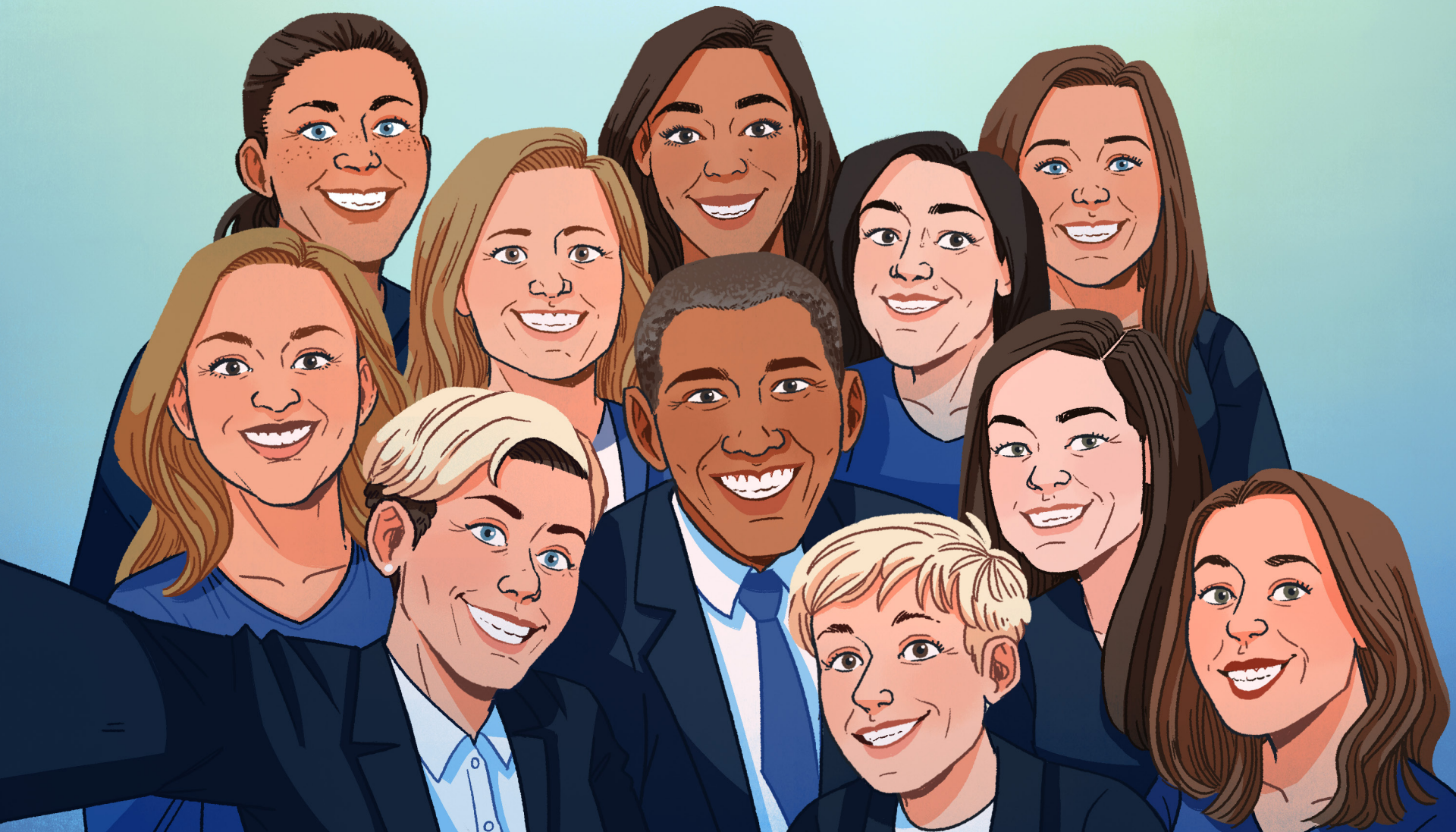
For her success on the field, Abby was named the FIFA Women's Player of the Year.



**2015** Abby played hard at her last World Cup game in Canada. When she left the field, the entire stadium cheered for her.

Team USA went on to win the gold medal. They were champions! Yet they were still paid much less than the men's team.

Abby and her teammates celebrated their win at the White House. After 12 amazing years as a pro athlete, Abby retired.



**2016** Abby became a speaker and author. She wanted to inspire others to reach their goals. She also fought for women to get equal pay and fair treatment.





**2022** The hard work of Abby and many others paid off. The women on Team USA will now earn as much as players on the men's team!

Abby and her family continue to fight for all people to belong and be treated fairly.



**Andy Minsheu** is a writer from Utah, where he lives with his family (including two chihuahuas). Although he hasn't played soccer since his childhood community rec league, he loves to be active by taking hikes and going on bike rides.



**Sarah K Turner** lives south of Seattle with her dozens of sketchbooks and potted plants. She loves waking up each day to create work that inspires and entertains both children and adults. Her biggest goal is to promote diversity, acceptance, and love through her artwork.

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