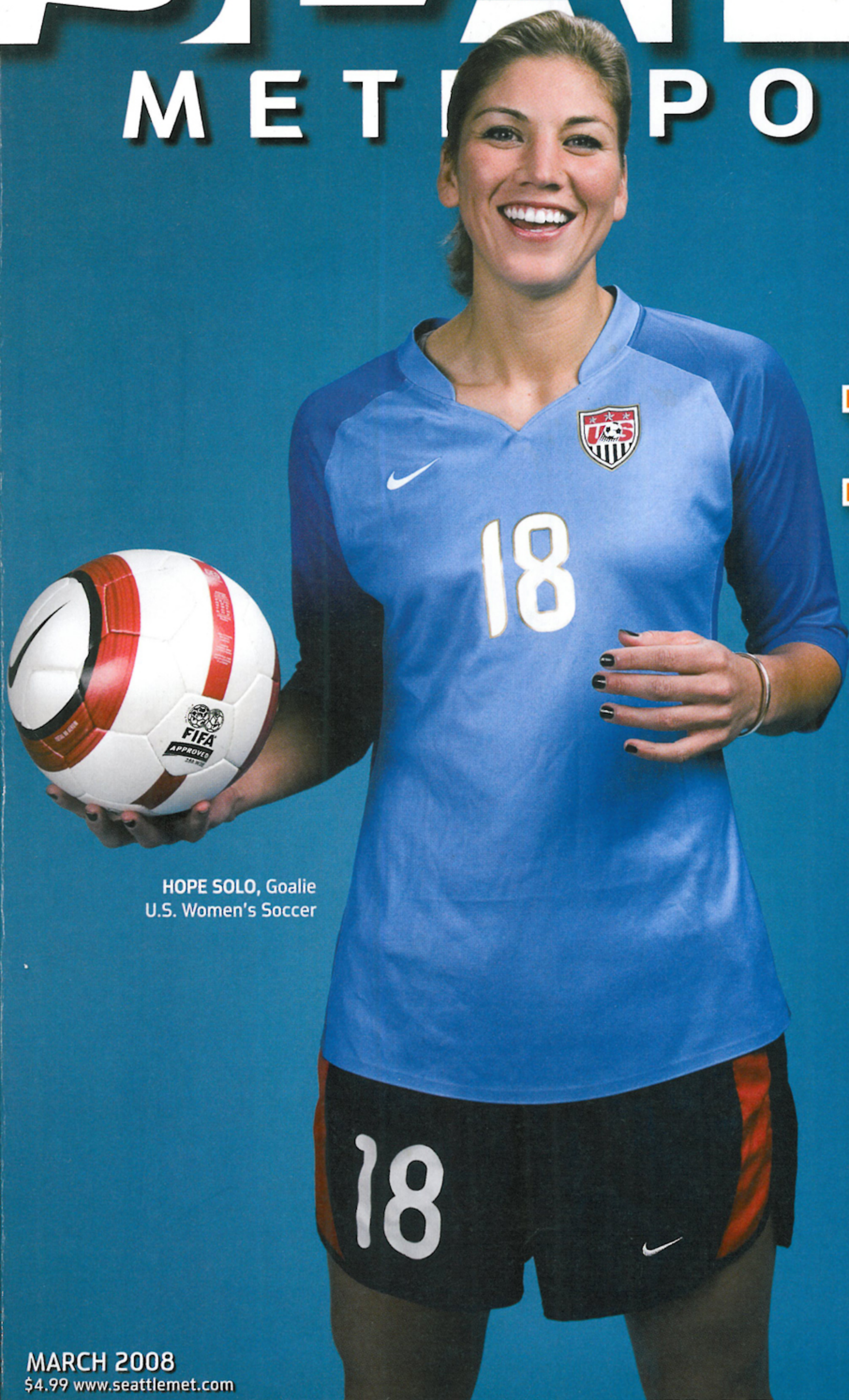


OLYMPIC HOPEFULS SHARE FITNESS SECRETS

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The Italian Job

Questions for Gian DeCaro of DeCaro Sartoria.

What kind of men come into your shop seeking custom-tailored suiting and bespoke Italian cashmere? It's not old guys. Our clients are reading the fashion magazines and seeing the classic Italian look—tighter fitting pants with the shorter length and bigger cuff, the very tailored jacket. It's not the Thom Browne look—that's more cartoonish. Three hairdressers in Soho can wear that look, but it doesn't appeal to a 46 long.

What's the first order of business then? I like to start with an elegantly cut navy or charcoal suit, because that's the foundation of any

THEIR DADS MAY NOT HAVE TAUGHT THEM HOW TO TIE A TIE. THEY COME TO ME TO BE THEIR SARTORIAL FATHER.

wardrobe. Then we show them that the blue blazer is hip, not square. We show them how to wear it as they do in Italy or on the boulevard in Paris with white slacks or red cotton pants.

Is the blue blazer a hard sell? Not when we show them all that. Many of these men come in as mounds of clay to be molded. Their dads may not have taught them how to tie a tie. They come to me to be their sartorial father. Some men simply don't know what to wear. It wouldn't work if they didn't have the desire to learn, right? I would just be a nagging father.

Your father was a designer and tailor as well, so it's especially fitting that you're filling that role. My father started this business many years ago in Spokane. He wore a suit to the grocery store and never owned a pair of jeans.

So what's the missing piece? What do you know, by virtue of your European heritage, that Seattle guys are missing? In Italy it's the man who's the peacock. It's not considered effeminate to be well dressed. Have you ever seen a cop directing traffic in Italy in that starched white outfit? It looks like he's in an opera. It's all about appearance there, and it's all about disappearing in America. You know Emanuel Ungaro? He wore navy blue suits all the time because he worked with color so much, and for his pocket square he would walk through the ladies' atelier, cut a piece of fabric, and put it in his pocket. That's sprezzatura. Studied nonchalance.

What's the rule on the pocket square anyway? You're not dressed without one, but it shouldn't be matchy-poo. I always say complimentary-poo.

What about the ascot? Yes. I'm the last man on earth to wear an ascot. But you know, when it's cold, a little bit of silk around your neck is really nice. I'm almost always in a tie, but I wear an ascot every once in a while on a Friday.

That's your version of dress-down day, huh? Have you always been so buttoned-up and perfectly pressed? I was a rocker as a teen, so my style was more like Rod Stewart and the Faces, with long hair and velvet jackets with jeans. I was trying to get chicks, not be a tailor. ✿

