

2020 Senior Spotlight: Lily McDaniel



Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.

Lily McDaniel was entering her fourth year with the Louisburg girls soccer program, but it feels like it just got started.

That is because it kind of has.

McDaniel suffered season-ending injuries her freshman and sophomore seasons and never really got a chance to play with her teammates. That all changed her junior season as she helped the Wildcats on their memorable run to the state championship game, where they finished second.

That all set up another promising season for Louisburg as McDaniel was one of 12 returning seniors.

“I was really looking forward to this season especially because my freshman year I had a very bad injury and my sophomore year I repeated the same injury,” McDaniel said. “So I have really only had one full season to play. I was really looking forward to this season as my last season ever playing soccer.”

It was supposed to be one final run in a sport that she has grown up in. Instead, she saw her senior season wither away as

the spread of COVID-19 cancelled spring sports and ended her senior year prematurely.

The loss of a season has been difficult to bear at times for McDaniel, but she is appreciative of the sport that has taught her a lot growing up.

“Soccer has always been the biggest part of my life,” McDaniel said. “Both my parents played soccer and all of my siblings play. I would say that we are a soccer family. I have been playing soccer since U6 and it has made me the person I am today. I am very grateful to play.”

McDaniel saw a lot of time for the Wildcats in the midfield last season and was an integral part of their state runner-up team. She finished her career with two goals and an assist.

“Lily had two major injuries her freshman and sophomore year,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “She worked extremely hard to come back and prepare for last season, but was really focused this season. Lily appeared in 16 games and the majority of them were from the 2019 season.”



Lily McDaniel was one of 12 seniors of this year's Louisburg girls soccer team.

However, what has been even more difficult was the opportunity to be able not to play with her senior teammates – many of which have played together in one form or another since the rec level.

“This senior class is amazing,” McDaniel said. “Most of us seniors have played soccer together since U8 and we were all really looking forward to finishing our last season together. Our class would have been the second class to have played four full seasons with Coach Conley and Pickman.

“I was really excited for this season. Coming out of last year's season with the state runner up under our belt really gave the team the energy and confidence for this season and the state championship game this year.”

McDaniel has been a part of, and seen, many memories with the Louisburg program. She has been a member of three straight state tournament teams, along with back-to-back state runner-up finishes.

Still, there are many other parts of the team she has enjoyed over the years and that is something that McDaniel can take with her as she leaves LHS.

“It would be really hard to pinpoint a favorite memory with this amazing team because everything we do is amazing and well worth the memory,” she said.

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Lily on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

LSZ: What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

LM: The one thing I miss the most is my team. Our team was a family. We were there for each other no matter what and we always had each other’s backs – that is the hardest part about the cancellation.

LSZ: What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

LM: The most memorable moment is getting to know all of the players you play with and the coaches. You can learn a lot from the people you spend every day with.

LSZ: What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

LM: I really love painting. I have always loved it and it helps me get my mind off of everything.

LSZ: What are your plans for after graduation?

LM: I am really looking forward to going to college and getting my degree and coming into bigger and better things in my life.

LSZ: What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

LM: I would say my love for helping others. I really got into helping out classrooms at Rockville these past two years and getting to grow with those kids really made me feel like a better person.

LSZ: What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

LM: I am a really quick learner. I am always up for something new and really only because I can learn it a lot faster than others. Sounds weird, but I am a really quick learner.

Lily's Favorites

Pro athlete: Carli Lloyd

Pro team: USA Women's Soccer Team

College team: North Carolina Tar Heels women's soccer

Movie: Forever My Girl

TV Show: Criminal Minds

Song: Cover Me Up by Morgan Wallen

Band/Musician: Morgan Wallen

Pregame meal/snack: Pickles

Class/subject: Math or science Teacher and why? All of the teachers are amazing teachers who know what they are doing, but if I had to pick one it would be Mrs. Butts just because she and I got along very well and I just love her.

Previous Senior Spotlights

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field

Erin Lemke – Soccer

Luke Wickersham – Golf

Skylar Bowman – Soccer

Gabby Dugger – Softball

Sydni Keagle – Track

Olivia Chase – Soccer

Colin Cook – Golf

Morgan Messer – Soccer

August Daniels – Softball

Carter Anglin – Track and Field

Hannah Straub – Soccer

Reilly Ratliff-Becher – Softball

Madden Rutherford – Baseball