

Johnson ready for next step with College of Saint Mary soccer



Louisburg grad Baileigh Johnson is excited to continue her soccer career with College of Saint Mary.

Baileigh Johnson never thought too far ahead when it came to soccer.

She loves the sport and was always focused on taking that next step in the tall, long staircase of life. However, as her high school career was nearing an end, Johnson realized there were still more steps to take.

The 2025 Louisburg graduate decided she wanted to play on the college level and began looking for a home. Johnson eventually got the offer she was looking for.

Johnson signed her letter of intent with the College of Saint Mary, an NAIA program in Omaha, Neb., and she is looking forward to the opportunity at playing at the next level.

“As a kid I always thought I would play soccer for as long as I could, so initially I guess that’s where my goal started,” Johnson said. “However, throughout my four years in high school I had mixed emotions about continuing into college. By the end of my junior season, I was set on ending my soccer career after high school, but at the beginning of senior year I realized I wasn’t ready to give it up. Seeing this dream come to reality is such an achievement that little me is extremely proud of.”

Johnson felt she would be comfortable at her new home, and for good reason. She will have the opportunity to play with her older sister, Reese, who signed on with the program for her final season.

The two were only able to play together one year in high school and the reunion opportunity played a big part in Johnson’s decision.

“Being able to play with Reese again brings me so much joy and excitement and I know we will have so much fun,” Baileigh said. “Knowing there was a chance of her also committing to Saint Mary made it even more preferable. Like every sibling relationship, she gets on my nerves a lot, but the way she pushes me to be a better player will always be something I appreciate so much.”



Louisburg grad Baileigh Johnson signed her letter of intent to with Saint Mary College earlier this year. Seated next to Baileigh are her parents Matt and Tiffany Johnson. Standing is Saint Mary coach Jamison Parkhill and her sisters Cortney and Taylor.

The Johnson family was also familiar with Saint Mary head coach Jamison Parkhill, who not only coached Reese for two years at Iowa Western, but is a Louisburg graduate himself.

“What brought me to even apply to Saint Mary was the fact that Coach Parkhill was the head coach there,” Johnson said. “He was familiar with my family so I thought it would be the easiest way to get noticed by a college. It was the first college visit I ever took, and at the end of the day, I subconsciously knew that it was the place I wanted to go without even reaching out to more colleges.

“The campus was pretty and the perfect size, along with the soccer team being very welcoming and it had felt like I wasn’t a stranger. Saint Mary has everything I need for the future,

so the decision to commit there was easy.”

Johnson had a big senior season as the Wildcat forward posted 10 goals on the season to go along with six assists to earn first team All-Frontier League honors and was named to the Class 4A all-state second team. As a team, Johnson was a captain on a Wildcat squad that also finished fourth at the Class 4-1A state tournament.

It is that type of success that Johnson hopes will transition to the college level as she settles in with her new team.

“My expectations for myself are to just continue to put in hard work every day, stay coachable, and become a better player,” Johnson said. “I’m very excited to be a part of a college team that will open me up to such a different level of the game and to be able to meet new people. It’s an environment filled with people who choose to be there, so I’m excited to be pushed to my fullest potential and see how far we can get as a team and for me as a player.”