



Danielle Olsen
Girls Softball

When did you start playing your sport and how did you get introduced to it?

I started playing softball when I was 7 in the Naperville Park District League, and moved up to the Naperville Diamonds the next year and have been playing travel softball ever since.

Do you play any other sports?

Not anymore, I played basketball for 4 years up until Freshman year, and I played volleyball for 5 years and played on the team at Neuqua my freshman year. I had to stop both because softball took up all my time in both winter and fall (when basketball and volleyball season was).

What has your sport taught you and what lessons have you pulled from it?

This sport has taught me how far hard work can get you. I have had seasons of softball where I haven't practiced much, and it has showed by my lack of success on the field, whereas I have also had seasons where I have worked hard every single day at practice, and it has always paid off. This game has taught me teamwork and to work with everyone, even if you don't want to be friends with them outside of the sport you still need to be able to work with them because you are a team. Lastly, this sport has taught me and shown me that I can do so much more than I even think I can, and I am capable of things I didn't ever think I was.

What do you wish you knew when you were just starting?

I wish I knew that hitting and working out every day would truly be the key to being confident and successful. When I started hitting and working every single day was when I started being successful and having more fun.

What quote/inspiration do you resort to when things get really hard?

There was an article from a college softball player that I read a few years ago where she talked about how she didn't realize how much she would miss the game of softball until it was done. So, when I am having doubts about wanting to play or wanting to practice, I think about that article and make the most of every moment because soon, I will never be able to play softball again.

Share something about you that isn't well known.

My brother is one of my biggest fans, and one of my biggest motivators. Everyday after a game, he asks how I did and tells me good job, or gives me advice or tells me that I will be better tomorrow or the next game. He is truly an angel and has helped me through some of the hardest times in my life.

Where do you go from here? College plans?

I will be attending Western Illinois University to play softball and study Special Education. I plan to teach High School Special Education somewhere that the program needs improvement and hopefully be able to help programs for Special Education to grow and improve in schools that need it.

Do you have a role model?

My role model is my dad. He will always (even though it may get old) talk about how hard he worked in sports in high school, and how hard he had to work at Marine Boot Camp to succeed, and how he stopped everything he loved to do to be with my mom and have a family with her. He is the reason I am who I am, and he is extremely hard on me, but I have come to realize that it is because he sees the potential that I have to succeed in the future.