

Hockey's Miller seeks perfection

For field hockey All-American Carol Miller, being good is not good enough.

"I strive for perfection," said Miller, 1978 and 1979 member of the United States field hockey team.

At the left inside position, the East Petersburg, Pa. native also leads the women stickers in scoring with five goals and one assist. Alongside seniors Patty Wilkinson and injured Nancy "Buzz" Harrington, Miller, a junior, is tri-captain of the Hen squad.

Besides scoring, Miller's job is "more for assisting and setting up scores for the 'cherry picker' (Sharon Wilkie)." Miller tallied 15 goals from that position in her freshman year.

"I like the challenge of hockey," Miller said. "I feel it is one of the most challenging games because you control the ball with the stick. In this day and age, it's starting to become the controlled kind of play you find in soccer."

Recently, Miller has been hindered by bone spurs on both heels. That is one reason she didn't try out for the U.S. team this year. To make the national squad, a player must advance through a series of summer developmental camps, starting with "C" and ending at "A".

"The heels really messed up my summer training," said Miller. "I didn't go to the camps because I couldn't move laterally like I used to, and that was too frustrating. My heels couldn't take the three two-hour practices a day."

Miller took up field hockey her freshman year at Hempfield High School because it was the only girls' sport that was offered. Added incentive came from her mother, who played four years of varsity hockey in high school, and from a neighbor on the team, whom she admired, Miller said.

After making the All-League teams her last two years in high school, Miller entered the summer camp sequence.

"To go to the camps you had to have a coach's recommendation," said Miller. "My high school coach wouldn't give me one. She didn't think I was any good. I had to go to Nan-

cy Stevens" (now the Franklin and Marshall hockey coach).

Stevens and Miller trained together, their workouts involving 110 and 220 sprint intervals, stick work, weight training, and distance running.

"She was the one person who had the most effect on me in field hockey," Miller said. "It was nice to have someone who believed in you."

Delaware and F and M challenge each other yearly. Knowing the coach just "provides a little more incentive to play well" for Miller. The situation is similar in the Delaware-West Chester confrontations, since Miller knows many of the players from camp.

"You're not just playing another team in kilts out there," commented Miller. "You're playing against one of them. Friendly competition. I love it."

Miller says her most exciting moments in field hockey were "last year against West Chester on the turf, under the lights, in front of the biggest crowd for a field hockey game ever in the United States." Delaware won, 4-1.

"I just go berserk on turf," Miller said. "I think you can tell who the better players are. It takes more skill to control the ball."

Miller is full of praise for her own team. Many of her teammates also attended the developmental camps, and learned the same strategies.

"We think alike," she said. "if you think alike, someone is there where you want them all the time. It's a controlled team."

Miller sees a field hockey game as a sequence of "little games all over the field." When she gets by one opponent and another comes up, it's a whole new game."

After graduation next year, Miller, a physical education major, is considering pursuing her master's degree, possibly in "psychology of sport." She wants to become a coach of field hockey on the collegiate level.

"You don't get to see good hockey until you reach this level," she explained.



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