

# **SHARING LOVE FOR ANNA: Soccer match a tribute to fallen player**

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**JERSEYVILLE – The Jersey girls’ soccer team** has had a difficult week after the loss of a teammate **Anna Hausman** who was involved in a fatal car crash, but the group pulled together and put themselves back on the field on Friday against North Mac.

Hausman, 15, died at 9:10 p.m. on Saturday, March 19, from injuries that occurred in a vehicle crash in Jersey County. She was the daughter of John C. and Susan Hausman.

Jersey Community High School always supports its sports teams and the game Friday was well attended. The fans and student body were there to support the rest of the soccer players as they returned to competition. The most touching part of the entire match came prior to the start when both Jersey and North Mac girls circled together and joined hands in mid field for a moment of silence.

For those couple of minutes of the moment of silence, only a breeze in the air and birds chirping out the beauty of spring were all that could be heard. Some teardrops formed on the faces of players and those in attendance. It was difficult to imagine that someone so vibrant as Anna at age 15 had lost her life.

North Mac won the contest 5-0, but the team was as good a sport as any squad could possibly be, supporting the Jersey girls before the game started. It seemed the North Mac players felt Anna’s loss in some way almost as strongly at that moment as their

opponents. **Jersey head girls soccer coach Brad Kimble** said the players are thinking about Anna a lot at the moment and on Friday played with a lot of heart against a tough North Mac team.

“We are all drained right now,” the coach said after the match. “This has been an emotional week and soccer is, well, just a small distraction. The moment of silence was just another step in the long process of getting to a ‘new normal’ around here. Obviously, there is no returning to how things were before. So we are trying to find a new normal. It will take some time.”

Kimble said he hopes slowly but surely the girls will heal where they can perform like Anna would want them to play.

“We have had very light practices, if you would even call them that, just to get on the field,” he said. “We have had our moments when we just stand around and talk. We have had our moments where we try to just get basic ball touches.”

The coach said, “honestly, the best moments have been off the field.”



“We have spent a lot of time together just to be supportive of each other. Monday, we had counselors at the school to help with the process,” he said. “But our girls spent three hours on Sunday night together just crying, hugging, talking about memories, and just sitting silently with each other. As a team, we have been to the crash site. We all went to the visitation and funeral together. We have had meals together. These girls have been fantastic for each other and they know they are not alone in this painful process.”

One thing Coach Kimble and his staff has made sure this week and since the accident with Anna is the girls hear the coaches love them.



“The girls need to hear that over and over,” he said. “The best way to get through this is together. We are all going to be angry, confused, in denial, overwhelmed and the what if thoughts; every variation of the stages of grief.

“We will all experience it at different times, but one thing they will know is they are not going through these things alone. This is one of the reasons I encouraged them to spend as much time possible together.”

The coach saw the biggest victory for the Panthers was simply being there to play the game and take the field.

“Our biggest personal victory was the fact that we were there,” he said. “One of our coaches, **Dan Drainer**, spoke to the girls tonight before the game. He gave a fantastic challenge and reminder to the girls. In short, he told them that this whole week has been about Anna – and it should be. But tonight was about each of them.”

Drainer challenged the Panthers with a story of a man who lived with “no reserves, no retreats, and no regrets.”

“Basically, measure yourselves one moment at a time,” he told the girls. “It was a great reminder before stepping onto the field before this game.”



