



Senior Basketball Player Claire Sykes Is Stillwater Senior Living Female Athlete Of Month At Granite City High School

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GRANITE CITY - Senior basketball player Claire Sykes was a key player for the girls team at Granite City High School in 2019-20, averaging 1.9 points and 1.6 rebounds-per-

game, all while dishing out six assists, having 16 steals and two blocked shots in 17 appearances for the Warriors. She's an all-around athlete and one of the hardest workers on the team.

For her accomplishments both on and off the court, Sykes has been named the school's Riverbender.com female Athlete of the Month for January, 2021.

Sykes, who plays for head coach Whitney Sykes-Rogers and assistant coach Greg Vaughn, believes that being an all-around athlete helps her in whatever sport she's playing at the time.

"I thing just being an all year-round athlete has tremendously helped me stay in shape for every season," Sykes said.

Sykes thanked her family for helping her along the way in her development as a player and a person.

"I would like to thank my parents, and my cousin, Whitney, for always pushing me to be the best person I can be on the court and in the classroom," Sykes said.

Basketball has always been a part of Sykes' family, and the sport has always been around her in one form or another.

"I've been playing basketball for about 10 years, and I love that my entire family was involved in their own career at one point," Sykes said. "Basketball is a family sport on my dad's side, so it's always something I grew up around, always playing a game of horse after we eat on every single holiday the family spent together."

The support system that Sykes has, whether it's her parents or her coaches, has played a major role in her development, both as a player and as a person.

"Growing up, I've always been told to try as hard as I can to be the best as I can," Sykes said, "and I'm thankful that throughout all the practices, games, quizzes and tests that I have had that type of support system to be there for me. Whether it was my parents or coaches, they've always been there pushing me to become the best version of myself possible."

Sykes' classroom accomplishments are numerous as well, starting with a 4.9-grade point average in her time at Granite. She's also a member of the school's National Honor Society chapter, has earned Secondary Honors, and is a member of the Saturday

Scholars. She's also ran both cross country and track for the Warriors, swims, and has played for the girls soccer team, alternating between a sweeper and central defense and being on the forward line.

In her spare time, Sykes love to bake and spend time with her teammates on the cross country team, and plans on attending Central Methodist University in Fayette, Mo. She's hoping to play basketball at CMU, but will be concentrating exclusively on both cross country and track, and also plans on majoring in Marine Biology and Biological Oceanography, with a minor in Spanish.

She also shared a story about a family game of horse, where she accomplished something very big.

"There was one time when I was maybe 13," Sykes said, "and was somehow in the final two of a game of horse until my uncle beat me, but it was the furthest I had gotten, even beating my dad. Oops."

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