

# Runner Claire Sykes Is Stillwater Senior Living Female Athlete Of Month For Granite City High School

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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GRANITE CITY - Claire Sykes, a recent graduate of Granite City High School, had a very accomplished senior year running on the girls' track team for the Warriors. Her season was climaxed by runner her personal best time of 1:03.79 in the 400 meters at the IHSA Class 3A sectional meet at O'Fallon.

In addition, Sykes was considered to be one of the team's hardest workers and one of its leaders, leading by example to help the younger runners.

For her efforts on and off the track, Sykes has been selected as the school's Athlete of the Month for June 2021.

Sykes, who ran for head coach Aaron Werths, had a very good season and earned many accolades for her performances.

"Yes, she did," said Sykes' mother, Ann, in a recent interview. "She had a very successful one, she worked hard to earn a scholarship at Central Methodist University (in Fayette, Mo.), and she worked even harder to improve her times."

Sykes was a multi-sport athlete for the Warriors, playing five sports in all during her four years at Granite, and she worked very hard in each of her sports as well as in the classroom, a tribute to her personality.

"Absolutely," said Ann Sykes, her mother. "She's an all-around great kid, she studies hard and participated in five sports in her four years in school."

Although she didn't qualify for the state meet, Sykes' personal record at the sectional meet was the highlight of her season, and another favorite memory will be of being with her teammates, working together to get better each day.

"I think they weren't only teammates," Ann Sykes said, "but family. "The kids worked together to build each other up and to push each other. Those bonds last forever."

Sykes' family legacy is a very proud one as well. Her grandfather, George Sykes, Sr., was a longtime member and president of the Board of Commissioners in the Granite City Park District, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, was very active in the District's softball program, and the main softball field at Wilson Park is named for him. In addition, her uncle, George Sykes, Jr., played basketball for the Warriors in the early 80s, and her mom was a soccer player for the Warriors during the same time. Her dad, Craig, keeps the family legacy alive by currently serving on the Board of Commissioners for the Park District.

"One of her goals is to run a sub-19 (minutes) in the 5,000 meters," Ann Sykes said, "and to have another (personal record) in the 400."

Claire Sykes is planning on majoring in marine biology and minoring in Spanish while at CMU, and has some ambitious goals as a runner.

*Riverbender.com's Athlete of the Month program is made possible by the generosity of our sponsors and the cooperation of our area high schools. This is a great accomplishment and one to be very proud of. Please join us in congratulating this young athlete. We at Riverbender.com wish you continued success in your future!*

