

Laney Harshany Battles Back From Injury To Help Lead Lady Knights - Is An Axes Physical Therapy Athlete Of The Month For Triad

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
March 24 2023 8:45 AM



TROY - Senior midfielder Laney Harshany has been a staple for the Triad High School girl's soccer team and has seen a lot of success.

The COVID-19 pandemic canceled her freshman season, but when it was time to get back at it in the 2020-21 season, she, and the rest of the team, got to work.

Laney scored 14 goals and had 13 assists in her sophomore season as Triad went undefeated and won a state championship. She was a key part of all that.

Then came her junior year. Things started off well for her and the team. She had scored four goals and assisted three while her team began the season on a 15-game win streak.

As seen in the photo above, she is sporting a protective knee brace this season. That's because she tore her left ACL and meniscus in May of 2022. She could only watch on as her team went and won a second straight state championship.

"It was a great experience," Laney said of last season's playoff run. "I still got to travel with them even though I was on crutches."

After the injury, she had to wait six weeks before receiving knee surgery and then the estimated nine-month recovery period for dealing with such a physical blow.

She worked hard and recovered well to return just in time for her senior season.

"This is my first couple games back so I'm starting to get back into it, starting to get my fitness levels back up, and learning how to connect with the team again. It's a new learning experience," she said.

Thanks to a 7-0 win over Highland in Triad's third game of the season, Laney has already netted two goals and has two helpers.

"I actually feel great. All the battles you had to go through with the injury and you just get on the field and you're like 'wow, did I really go through all that?'. During the injury, it feels like forever, and then you finally get there and you're like 'okay, you're back and ready to go', so it's an awesome feeling," she said.

Still, her team sits at a rather disappointing 1-3 start to the 2022-23 season after only losing one game in the past two years.

Two of those losses came against some top-tier talent in the O'Fallon Panthers and the Fort Zumwalt South Bulldogs, two-time defending Class 3 MSHSAA state champs.

"It is a whole new lineup and it's still the beginning of the season," Laney said.

"We still have to learn how to connect with each other and learn how to play with one another, but we have faith in each other and we believe that we'll get there. We just have to keep working hard and we're not going to give up."

The Knights' schedule isn't going to give up either. All season it is stacked with some more top-notch teams. Games against Class 3A Southwestern Conference giants like Alton and Edwardsville. A game against another defending IHSA state champ Matea Valley. And of course the bruising Mississippi Valley Conference rivals like Waterloo and Mascoutah.

"That's what you need, that's what's going to make you better. We love the competition," Laney said.

Laney looks forward to the rest of her senior season. Post high school graduation she's committed to playing soccer at Marian University in Indianapolis. She tentatively plans to study biology.