

Lily Freer Verbally Commits To Play Soccer At Stanford - Is An Auto Butler Car Wash Athlete Of The Month

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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ALTON - Alton High girls soccer standout Lily Freer has made some big decisions, but arguably none bigger than the one she just made.

The AHS junior, still a grade too young to sign an official NCAA letter of intent, made a verbal agreement to continue her soccer and academic career at the prestigious Stanford University.

"I'm very excited and feeling really good about it," Lily said. "It is a very competitive environment."

For her accomplishment, Lily is an Auto Butler Car Wash Athlete of the Month for Alton.

Stanford plays in the PAC-12 conference against other Western United States powerhouses like UCLA, USC, Colorado, and Washington State, all teams ranked in the top 25 in NCAA Division I.

Stanford currently sits ranked No. 3 in the nation according to the latest United Soccer Coaches rankings and will begin play in the NCAA DI Tournament this weekend.

"I was blown away because they are a top top school," Lily's former Alton High coach Gwen Sabo said.

Former coach because Lily decided not to play soccer for the Redbirds last Spring, instead pursuing the select soccer path with the St. Louis Scott Gallagher ECNL Navy team where she helped them reach back-to-back national championships.

Sabo wanted to make one thing clear. She respected Lily's decision.

"I was never upset with her, ever," Sabo said. "I was just sad because I know how good of a player she is. She's an impact player for sure."

"The fact that Stanford is pursuing, I feel like they see something in her that they need," Sabo continued. "She's insanely athletic, a workhouse, and extremely skilled. She's the total package."

In her only season as a Redbird, one where she played alongside her older sister Taylor, she was a key part of Alton's midfield, scoring 16 goals and assisting on 16 more as Alton went 17-5 that year.

Taylor continued her academics at Baylor University.

Sabo jokingly said that the girls' parents are going to be racking up those frequent flyer miles.

Lily said her mom, dad, and grandparents are extremely excited about her decision both from the athletic and academic standpoint.

"Stanford has one of the best engineering programs in the country and also one of the best athletic programs in the nation," Lily said.

"When I think of me as a 13-year-old player and now to see myself in this kind of position, it is a dream come true and amazing," she continued. "I got a call in mid-July and when I visited I just knew it was the right place. I loved the coaches and the players and felt really comfortable on campus. It is really beautiful there."