

Springfield S.C. recently had the chance to catch up with one of our former players who has made the transition to college soccer. Maddie Senkosky is currently in her freshman year at University of Missouri.

*What was the biggest transition to college(not soccer wise)?*

The biggest transition into college was trying to balance the new schedule. Now, instead of having classes which I did everything during class, I had lectures, readings outside of class, soccer, weights, study hall, social life, and trying to fit in that thing called sleep. Living out of the house wasn't as hard as many perceive it. When you are a part of a team, it's like having a family. As athletes we still get nice pre-game dinners, our soccer stuff set up for us before each game, teammates and coaches to always be around - so that was the least difficult I think.

*What is the biggest difference between youth soccer and college soccer?*

I would say the biggest difference between the high levels of youth soccer and college is the aggressiveness and the speed of play. Everything here is one and two touch. If its not, you'll get stuck pretty quick. Plus, everyone here is so much bigger, faster and stronger.

*What is a typical week like during the fall season?*

A typical week during fall season is never sleeping. Just kidding, but here we have an intense routine. If we are at home for the weekend, practice is every Tues, Wed, Thurs @ 7 am, followed by weights on Tues and Wed. Fridays we get to sleep in but we still have to get up and go to class and then to a pre-game meal in the afternoon. We'll play our game and then head to Shakespeare's Pizza with our families afterwards. Then Sat. we wake up and are at the facilities by 10 am doing a light practice and walk through. Sunday we wake up and have another pre-game meal and then play our game. Sunday nights are our only night to stay up as late as we want because we have Mondays off.

On top of that, as a first semester freshman we had to serve 8 hours of study hall. We literally spend all of our first semester lives at the athletic facilities. We have to wake up by 6:25 to be at the field in time for practice (earlier if you need treatment) and sometimes won't leave for class until 10. Then we just come back to study or ice bath or whatever and could be there as late as you need, but you quickly get to know other athletes this way... so in a way its a good thing.

*If there is anything you would have changed during your youth career to maybe prepare yourself better for college soccer?*

My biggest struggle coming onto this team was my fitness level. Sure, I was fit to play in my club games and all of the HS games, but not at this speed. I didn't have the endurance to outrun some of the upperclassmen who have been training at this level for a couple years. So I would have changed the outside training I received and done extra fitness when I had the opportunity. I think I would have tried to maximize my ability before I got here.

Otherwise, always work on your skills. I had the benefit of having coaches who drilled our foot skills into us, but at this level, your skills may be how you compete.

Interview Continued....

*Who is the best player you have gone against?*

Sounds pretty lame, but I would say one of my teammates - Jennie Nobis. She is one of most hard nosed players in the Big 12. She has the ability to take on anyone one and one, and some how or another beat them. She is incredibly fast which gives her an extreme advantage, but she is just scary to go against. She'll come back from up top to win a ball a midfielder could be defending and then take on the whole back line to get a goal. She is also really strong in the air making her an extreme threat on corner kicks. I would never want to defend her in game.

*Any advice for players from Springfield looking to continue their playing careers in college?*

Start the recruiting process early! I am already hosting recruits on their unofficial here that are juniors. Other than that, train hard... condition yourself more and harder

than you think will be enough because you can never be too fit at this level. We are an extremely fit team and we have outplayed teams simply because we could run forever. Lastly, find a school that you know you would fit in with.