

Olson wins Metro Spotlight award

Written by Metro Sports Report

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Cedar Rapids Jefferson junior Alyssa Olson is this week's winner of the Metro Spotlight award for high school girls, the Metro Sports Report announced Sunday.

Olson emerged as a star pitcher for the Jefferson softball team this past season and helped the J-Hawks finish fifth at the Class 5A state tournament. She compiled a 21-4 record and 1.03 ERA with 237 strikeouts in 161.1 innings.

Olson fired a shutout with 13 strikeouts when Jefferson upset top-ranked Muscatine, 7-0, in the regional finals to reach the state tournament. She was named first team all-state, all-Metro and all-Mississippi Valley Conference.

Here is our Question-&-Answer session with Alyssa Olson:

MSR: What has been your favorite individual highlight in sports?

ALYSSA: My favorite highlight would have to be after getting hit by a line drive to the upper thigh in our first consolation game at state, being able to stay in and end up pulling off the win.

MSR: What has been your favorite team highlight in sports?

ALYSSA: My favorite team highlight is no doubt after the Muscatine game celebrating with my team. We still look back at those pictures and still get chills.

MSR: Who has had the biggest influence on your sports career?

ALYSSA: I have two people who have influenced my sports career. The first one is Coach Erbe

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(Jefferson Coach Brian Erbe). He is so supportive and there is no way I could be where I am today if he wouldn't have given me a chance to show what I can do. He has also shown me that you have to also have fun. Yes, winning is always fun but it also has to be fun to go to practice where we improve because if noone wants to be at practice how effective will it actually be?

My second influence is my pitching coach, Ben Sorden. There is no doubt in my mind that if he didn't believe in me there is no way I would be where I am today, being asked questions for athlete of the week. I started with him when I had to hop three times just to get the ball to the plate and sometimes it didn't even make it. I've worked with him for quite awhile and he has also taught me this: How can you enjoy it if you don't have a smile on your face? He has also told me so many inspirational quotes that I tell myself before I step on the field, before I take the mound and before I pitch. I do not think there is any way I could thank either of those two men enough for all they have done for me.

MSR: What are your favorite subjects in school?

ALYSSA: My favorite subjects in school are math and science. I'm hoping one day to become a doctor.

MSR: What are your future goals in sports?

ALYSSA: My future goal is to go back to state with my team and win the state championship.

MSR: What has been your favorite community service project?

ALYSSA: My favorite community service project would have to be when the entire softball team went to the Salvation Army around Christmas time and helped serve meals. I think this really opened not only mine but the entire team's eyes to see how lucky we are to have supportive families.