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## Miramonte sophomore lacrosse player named to All-American team



Boo DeWitt Photo provided

*By Jon Kingdon*

Midway through the 2018 girls lacrosse season at Miramonte, Anna "Boo" DeWitt went down with a serious knee injury forcing her to miss the rest of the season. Though only playing 12 of the team's 21 regular season games, DeWitt, a midfielder, still led the team in goals scored with 31, scoring on 58 percent of her shots on goals.

Despite her absence, the Miramonte team went on to win the NCS tournament and DeWitt was named to the US Lacrosse High School All-American team. The award is voted on by Northern California coaches and is all the more impressive in that DeWitt has only just finished her sophomore year and is in fact the first ever All-American from Miramonte.

Miramonte head coach Jackie Pelletier attributes DeWitt's success to an amalgam of athleticism, commitment and a passion for the sport. Says Pelletier: "I have never seen a player as passionate as Boo. She works extremely hard and is the first player that I have ever seen that wanted to get up early and run sprints."

DeWitt suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament that required surgery and a long rehabilitation but DeWitt has not taken the time to feel sorry for herself: "The injury has made me appreciate the sport more than I did previously and it made me realize how much I love the sport. It's been tough but my knee pushes me to work harder to get back out there and play. Everyday, I do wall ball (throwing the ball with your stick against a wall and catching it) even as I am rehabbing."

Says Pelletier: "Even after she was hurt and on crutches, Boo would sit on a chair and play wallball." Boo, who got her nickname from her father, began playing lacrosse in the sixth grade: "I had been playing ice hockey but after going to the Lamorinda fall ball clinics for lacrosse, I found lacrosse to be very challenging. Once I was able to catch and throw the ball, I fell in love with the sport because even though it's such a skill sport, it also rewards athleticism, speed and physicality."

It was immediately clear to Pelletier that DeWitt was a special player: "As a freshman, her talent was clearly evident but she is so humble that she was even worried about making the varsity even though it was clear

that she was one of our best players even then. Boo is left-handed which is rare in the sport and is a real advantage for her. Defenders are not used to defending left handers. She has worked hard on her stickwork that she is equally adept either right or left handed. If teams prepare for her as a left hander, she can switch to her right hand."

Though DeWitt is well aware of her physical talents, she does not live on her laurels: "I'm left-handed so that gives me an advantage but I have also worked hard on my right hand so the opponent never knows which way I'm going to go. My speed is an important component and I hustle and never give up even if we're down. I always try to keep my head up and am constantly hunting down the opponents."

With all of the effort expended by DeWitt on her lacrosse game, academics is certainly not overlooked: "Balancing school was hard even before the injury. The key for me is that I don't procrastinate. When I have a lot of games upcoming, I try to get the work done ahead of time. With practice from seven to nine in the evening, I always made it a point to do my homework prior to practice."

Though her season was cut short, DeWitt was still able to display her talents earlier in the year on her club team, Tenacity, where she was first exposed to the sport. The team's coach, Theresa Sherry who coincidentally was Pelletier's coach at the University of California, saw early on DeWitt's potential: "Though new to the sport, Boo was obviously athletic. Her work ethic and the tenacity she displayed in her preparation in learning to play is what started to set her apart. Part of what we do is train the girls to train themselves so it is important that they take ownership of the process and Boo took it to heart. In fact, I would have to tell her to take a day off and not go to so many of the camps. Boo thrives on working hard and wants to be the best athlete she can be."

Though still two years away from college, DeWitt has already attracted the attention of the recruiters: "I have received general interest from some schools but I cannot be officially contacted until my junior year but I do want to play for a Division I school."

Pelletier and Sherry both appreciate the rare qualities that DeWitt brings to the game combining a love of the sport, a competitive attitude, the athletic skills and an incessant drive to constantly improve.

Oddly enough, Sherry sees DeWitt's injury as a way to further impress the colleges: "College coaches want to know how an individual handles pressure situations and how you handle adversity. The way that Boo is handling her injury is very telling as to how full a package she is. The knee injury will give her the final piece."

Next season at Miramonte, DeWitt will be taking on a new responsibility. Along with three seniors, DeWitt was unanimously named co-captain, the first non-senior to be accorded such an honor. Says DeWitt: "I'm excited about being chosen one of the team's co-captains for next year. I want to be there for the underclassmen, answering any questions they might have and leading the team by example."

It is an honor well deserved according to Pelletier: "Boo puts the work off the field and is a natural leader on the field. Boo makes stick trick videos which has led her to want to push her teammates and is very welcoming to the newcomers by showing them her love of the sport. She is the nicest, most inclusive teammate and has been a pleasure for me to watch and coach."

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[back](#)

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