

News and Information for the Town of Goffstown

Athlete of the Month - Goffstown High School star is a record setter

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BY [RYAN O'CONNOR](#)

If numbers don't lie and records are made to be broken, Olivia Smith has made a career out of reinforcing sports cliches.

Indeed, six games into the 2008 girls volleyball season, the Goffstown senior setter has already broken a handful of school records and has led her team to the best start in program history.

In fact, the Lady Grizzlies have never so much as won three contests in a row, nor have they compiled more than five total victories or finished the season with a .500 record or better.

Yet they currently maintain a 5-1 record, including a fourmatch winning streak, and coaches and teammates agree, Smith has been the catalyst to GHS's recent success.

A four-year starter and second- year captain, Smith has combined with her twin sister, Chelly, and their teammates Jackie Borrer and Amelia Raymond, to create a culture of positivity and trust absent in years past, said her coach, Matt Leonard.

The fact that Goffstown's gymnasium was flooded prior to the season, forcing the Lady Grizzlies to hold all their practices and games on the road, makes Smith's leadership that much more imperative.

"A lot of girls would complain and use that as an excuse," said the coach. "Livvy's taken that in stride. She's made clear that it doesn't matter, and we're going to go out and win wherever we play."

And she leads by example, added Leonard, who said Smith has been – hands down – one of his top players since she was a sophomore. Statistically, there's no one better.

Smith's 643 career assists are 200 more than the previous GHS best. In fact, she set the single-season mark in 2007 with 284 helpers, 150 more than the previous high. She's contributed 30 assists in a match, also a record, six times in her three-plus years. Her 95 aces also rank tops all-time at Goffstown High School, and she needs eight blocks to surpass the current record of 78.

Her 46 aces last season also set a record. She's contributed seven in a contest twice. Smith is currently second overall with 250-plus digs, and is in the top five with more than 100 career kills – no small feat for a setter.

With Goffstown's 3-1 win over Merrimack, Smith broke the school record with 205 games played.

Smith said she knew nothing of the records. Her focus remains on a different type of accomplishment.

"After losing so many seasons in a row, we're doing so well (as a team) right now," she said. "We're all rooting for each other. We've got so much potential this year, and I'm so excited to see what we can do. I think we can go all the way." For her personal success, and for leading Goffstown to its best month in team history, Smith has been named the **Indian Head Athletics** Athlete of the Month.

"I wouldn't give (the honor) to anyone else than her," said Borrer, who has played with Smith for three years, in addition to competing with her in the Junior Olympics in the off-season. "She is our team. To be honest with you, our team would be totally scattered and unorganized without her," Borrer continued. "She knows everything on the court, where the open spots are, what's going on in everyone else's minds, and she always knows how to fix a problem."

It's Smith's ability to raise her teammates' spirits, however, that may be her greatest asset of all.

"It's hard to explain. She's a great leader in the sense she knows the balance between pushing you until you want to quit and being soft and supportive when she needs to," said Borrer. "She knows how to make you feel better when you miss a point or you aren't playing your best. It's not the typical, 'Oh, you'll do better next time.'" She takes it to a personal level."

*(Editor's note: The Athlete of the Month receives a \$50 gift certificate courtesy of **Indian Head Athletics**.)*

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