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[GI's Senn scoring, saving goals, too](#)

By Ryan Nagelhout Niagara Gazette

After years enjoying the best view on the field, Stephanie Senn is finally using that vision to score goals herself.

The Grand Island senior had played keeper her entire career, but with her future decided with a scholarship to Kent State, Senn has decided to have a little fun with her last year with the Vikings.

“Stephanie is returning first team All-Western New York, and she’s already committed to play Division-I,” coach Dave Bowman said. “She’s one of those goalies that is just technically solid. I have just as much or more confidence in my goalie as I’ve ever had.”

Bowman raves about his defense in general, and that includes Senn’s backup, Megan O’Leary. Having faith in O’Leary means putting Senn at midfield is a viable option when the team needs a spark.

“That’s the beautiful thing about the team,” Bowman said. “I believe we have a strong enough defense where we can make that sacrifice. We have a good up-and-coming young goalie, so when you have that experienced veteran in front of her you’re willing to do what’s best for the team.”

That has meant moving Senn to the middle in the Vikings’ home opener against North Tonawanda. A scoreless tie at the half, O’Leary went between the pipes and Senn went into the field. Three minutes into the second, Senn scored Grand Island’s first goal of the season.

“It’s funny, at halftime Bowman said ‘Who is going to score the first goal of the season,’” Senn said. “Three minutes out there’s no one on me. I take two touches and hear Kaitlyn (Holt) say ‘shoot it.’ I pick my head up and just lob it over the keeper’s head.”

Senn said watching the game develop as she stands in net has helped her discover what works best against teams.

“I spend so much time back in the net watching and analyzing the game that when I’m out there I try to make the runs that other people don’t usually see, or I try to communicate to the others what I’m watching from the back. I saw something when I was standing back there so in the second half I tried to fix it.”

Fixing it meant a win for Grand Island, and Bowman is happy to give his senior keeper a chance to do something different. Especially when it happens to make the team better.

“She’s watched more good soccer than probably most people around,” Bowman said. “She’s a special player, both on the field and in the net and in the net you know what you’re going to get. She’s solid.”

After a Class A championship and a trip to the Far West Regional last year, Senn hopes her Vikings can make another deep postseason run but also continue to build the program moving forward.

“I just want to do the best with what we have and where we are. I want to make the team as strong as I can and make it as far as we can,” Senn said. “NFL champions would be fun again but it’s about having fun, getting the team together.”

After all the hard work she’s put in over the years, her coach hopes she can have fun this fall as well.

“I want her to do as much as she can for me and she’s planning on doing that,” Bowman said. “Most of that will be in goal but like I said she’s looking to have fun. I think playing a little bit of field is going to bring a smile to her face.”