

'Scholar All American'

by Emily Jacobs
Staff Writer

Winston Churchill High School senior Jenna Cantor was recently named a National Soccer Coaches Association of America Scholar All American for her accomplishments on and off the soccer field.

Cantor, 17, was one of 35 student athletes chosen by the NSCAA out of the 4,000 eligible teens in the United States. She also made the Maryland All State First Team, and the *All Gazette* First Team.

Cantor, who will head to Cornell University in the fall to play soccer, first stepped on the field when she was 4 years old, beginning her competitive career at the age of 8. She not only captained her high school soccer team for both her junior and senior year, but played for the Bethesda Freedom, a local travel team, for three years.

If that wasn't enough for this high-schooler, who said that in addition to playing soccer she loves doing normal teenage things like shopping and hanging out with her family and friends, she was invited to play on the Maryland Olympic Development team, which selects the best players in the state to play together against other states.

Fondly called Jenna Jet or "JJ" by teammates and coaches for her speed on the field, Cantor can play any position with ease and scored more

than 40 goals for her high school team in the last three years. She attributed her love for the sport to her teams that she "loves to play with," and added "I think that I love soccer because it's a team sport. I could've never become the player that I am today, both on my club and high school teams, without my teammates and coaches," she said. "Whether it's practice or a game, soccer is fun because every time you're out on the field, you have to give it 100 percent and have no regrets."

Although her high school soccer career has come to a close, Cantor still practices two to three times a week to get herself ready to play at Cornell, where she has been committed to since her junior year. Cantor explained that she was attracted to both the athletic program and the academics at the university, making her college decision pretty easy.

"The coach at Cornell is amazing and the school itself has really good academics. I'm really excited to be a part of something at Cornell and be a part of something on the soccer field. I'm also excited to play with a really talented group of girls," she said. "I want the team to accomplish its goals, and I know that it's also important to do well academically and represent my school, which is my job as an athlete."

Parents Mark and Lisa, who proudly call themselves "soccer parents," explained that soccer has taught Jenna valuable life skills that they know will help guide her in the future.

"We think it's great that soccer has kept her on the straight and narrow throughout high school," Mr. Cantor said. "She has learned leadership and has also learned how to take both defeat and accomplishment in pride."

Cantor and her family (she has an older and younger brother) have traveled across the world for soccer tournaments, visiting places as far away as Denmark and Sweden.

"We're a complete soccer family," said Mr. Cantor. "It's been an incredible ride with Jenna since she was 8 years old. It's really cool to have a top-level athlete in the family who has given us so much pleasure and happiness, just by allowing us to see how happy she is on the field."

Cantor, who has also coached at the Special Olympics since eighth grade, wanted to thank her parents and family for supporting her.

"My parents are really the most dedicated parents ever. They have supported me and believed in me and have been so amazing and understanding. You can tell that they care a lot about all of their kids. I'm sure they'll be taking a lot of trips up to Cornell."



Winston Churchill's Jenna Cantor will be taking her soccer-playing skills to Cornell University in the fall.

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