



# SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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## Despite last minute setback, it was a stellar career

*State championship proves elusive but Leworthy earns other honours*

By STEVE LeBLANC

Special to The Champion

The hardest question for any athlete to answer — and the toughest to live with — is simply 'What if?'

In the world of sports, the 'What if?' can be followed up by just about any possible situation. In Milton lacrosse player Robin Leworthy's case, the question reads, 'What if I had been able to play? Would we have won?'

The question came two months ago at the Pennsylvania All-State Championships at West Chester University, where Leworthy's Shippensburg Lady Raiders' field lacrosse team took a 18-9 beating at the hands of the Division I powerhouse.

It was the second straight season that Leworthy and the Raiders had reached the all-state championships. Unfortunately she wasn't quite able to compete for the conference title this time around.

The 23-year-old had been rendered unconscious just days before in a match with Lock Haven and suffered a third-degree concussion. Despite it being the final game of her four-year university career — and her being one of Shippensburg's top players — the team's doctor sidelined her for the championship game.

"It was horrible, having to sit out the last game of my career," recalled Leworthy, a midfield centre with the Raiders. "Some people came up to me after the game and said things could have been different if I had played, which was nice to hear. I guess I'll never know."

The May 3 game also brought a feeling of deja vu for Leworthy, as her Lady Raiders had lost to West Chester in the all-state finals the previous year as well.

That aside, she enjoyed an outstanding senior season at Shippensburg, where among many other accolades she was named team captain at the start of the year.

She went on to prove herself worthy of this honor by anchoring her crew to an impressive 9-5 record in the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC). "We

really had a great season, considering the team was made up of mostly freshmen and sophomores. We weren't expected to do very well at all," explained Leworthy, who graduated this spring with a major in communications and a minor in coaching.

Leworthy's individual efforts were even better than in her junior campaign, when she garnered conference all-star status.

She scored 29 goals, drew eight assists and was one of the premier defensive players in the PSAC. She also tied the school record of most draw controls in a game (13), and broke the record for most in a season (58). She had set both records just last season.

These accomplishments combined to earn her a spot on this year's First Team All-American squad. "Making All-American was a great honor, it's the highest accomplishment possible in the NCAA. Playing in the all-star game against the country's best players was really exciting."

Earning All-American status also earned her the right to tryout out for the U.S. National team this summer, but Leworthy decided not to pursue that course, saying that she had already gone that route years earlier with the Canadian team.

With all of her accolades this past season, Leworthy says the best memory of her 1996 campaign came off the field. As captain, she gave an inspirational speech to her teammates just prior to the all-state championships.

"I just wanted to say how proud I was of them this season. It gave me a warm feeling."

With her playing days now behind her, Leworthy is focusing her attention on a career. She has been presented with offers to coach at several universities in Pennsylvania, but has recently found full-time work in town and is likely to stick around. If she does, she'll probably start coaching at either the minor league or high school level.

"I think whatever you take out of the sport you've got to put back in," she said.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Now that her college career is over, Milton lacrosse star Robin Leworthy wants to give something back to the sport.



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