

# ATHLETE *of the month*

Ashley Culp, freshman catcher, has been playing softball for most of her life. She enjoys being competitive. Culp participates in other athletics when she's not playing softball, she knows the importance of working together on a team and she feels that her team performs better when they can laugh together.

by Lily Shaver

**The Clackamas Print:** How long have you been playing softball?

**Ashely Culp:** 14 years.

**TCP:** Are there any other sports that you enjoy?

**AC:** I do CrossFit. So it's kinda just working out, but it's a sport, so I compete in it. So it's just who can work out the best. Pretty much, it's a competition of who can work out harder.

**TCP:** What do you think are the qualities of a good softball team?

**AC:** Everybody working together, and going towards a common goal and meshing well. I've been on so many teams that had the most talent in the world, and then they couldn't get along, and so we ended up fizzling out and losing. Getting along and just respecting one another is so important.

**TCP:** Who is the most influential person in your life?

**AC:** My parents, oh my parents. They work so hard, and they're so supportive. And they've just filled my brother and I up with so much positive reinforcement that we could conquer the world with how high they lift us up.

**TCP:** What advice would you give to someone who wants to play softball in college?

**AC:** Focus on your schoolwork first, and then talk to your coaches about it. So just focus on your schoolwork, 'cause if you don't then you're not going to be able to play.

**TCP:** Was it always the plan for you to play softball in college?

**AC:** Yeah. I just like being really competitive, and the higher competition I can get to, the better. I mean I love competing so, yeah, it was.

**TCP:** How do you incorporate homework into your schedule?

**AC:** Our coaches are super understandable, so they don't really cut practice that long, and they give us a lot of time to do it. So I either get up super early and go to a Starbucks and do my homework, or I'll just go home and stay up pretty late. But it gets done.

**TCP:** Do you have any other hobbies besides softball?

**AC:** CrossFit. On my down time I just do CrossFit, I competed in my first ever competition and I swept it, so, I mean, I'm pretty good at it. Doing CrossFit had made me a better softball player, so I've gotten stronger and faster and more mentally tough, so when I'm put in hard situations in softball, it's a lot easier to overcome than it was.

**TCP:** What does it mean that you "swept it"?

**AC:** I won every event. I won five events. I took first place in five different events, so I ended up sweeping and getting first.

**TCP:** Do you feel like your softball team is pretty tight-knit?

**AC:** Yeah. We're really goofy, and we do so much better when we're funny and having fun in the dugout. We all have little

cheers that we give each other, just little handshakes. It's pretty awesome, so yeah we get along so well. I think we're going to go pretty far because of it. We play for one another. We don't play for ourselves. Jessica Buel is awesome, by the way, Jess is my favorite coach I've ever had.

*This article has been edited for clarity and space.*

photo by CCC Athletics



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