



In 2020, Lauren Caffé toured Maine attempting to see every lighthouse (about 65) as part of a fundraiser for children and adults with disabilities.



Lauren Caffé at a 2017 Fillies Varsity soccer home game.



Lauren Caffé's first year playing travel soccer for FC-Barrington at age 9.

“It’s a Barrington Saturday Night!”

A BHS GIRLS SOCCER ILLINOIS STATE CHAMP TAKES
HER SUCCESS TO MAINE

I WILL NEVER FORGET when the announcer for the 2017 Class 3A Girl's Soccer State Championship bellowed this through the speaker after we had won the state championship for the first time in Barrington's history.

Little me, who started playing soccer in third grade, first with BASA, then onto FCB, and then with FCX as I got older, didn't know what I was getting into. But it felt like soccer carved out a serious spot in my life (despite my intense whining when my mom brought me to my first practice).

Throughout my years of playing in Barrington, I met my best friends, challenged myself as a player and person, and became connected to the town in many special ways. Soccer was the foundation that kept me steady. Winning the Class 3A State Championships in 2017 and 2018 and being ranked as the #1 girls high school soccer team in the nation was incredible. But what stayed with me even more was how the Barrington community wrapped itself around our team during those years. I felt so supported by my teammates,

coaches, and really, by everyone else. Getting two stars for Barrington still fills me with so much pride. I can't believe it's been almost 10 years! I think about those days all the time.

INTRODUCING MAINE MYSTICS FC

Soccer eventually brought me to Maine, where I went to Bowdoin College with plans to keep playing. My knee injuries had other ideas, starting with tearing my ACL and meniscus in my first game for Barrington of the 2018 spring season. After multiple surgeries thereafter, I decided to retire in 2019.

Today, I'm a founding member of the Maine Mystics FC, a new soccer club. Despite the injuries, my family always joked that soccer was my first love, and nothing can keep me away from the field. This club has come together for a few reasons. We are passionate about the sport and it's an exciting moment for soccer in Maine and across the U.S. Soccer is becoming a bigger part of Maine's sports landscape. Our hope is that this club feeds off this

enthusiasm to provide even more opportunities for people, young and old, to play.

And, on a deeper level, my love and passion for this sport is rooted in the belief that soccer is a teacher. It teaches women and girls how strong their bodies are and can be. It teaches effective communication in times of intensity and stress. It facilitates community building and the formation of deep social bonds. Soccer asks its players



Front row from left: Barrington Varsity Soccer Co-Captains Lauren Caffé, Michayla Herr, and Samantha Schmitz carry the State Championship trophy in 2018 after becoming back-to-back state champs, a feat never done before in the history of any BHS sports.

to leave differences (cultural, demographic, economic, or other) at the door. Communities, especially those who have struggles beyond accessing sports, benefit greatly from the opportunities soccer provides. Maine, and arguably all places, needs soccer as a teacher.

The biggest lesson I want soccer to teach is how to come back from failure and gain resilience by doing so. Soccer is a game of many mini-failures. Passes that don't get completed, shots that go far over the post, getting beaten by an opponent on a one-v-one. But in those moments, it's never about that you failed. It's about what you did after the failure that matters. If you lost the ball, you must work to get it back. If you missed a shot, take another one. This mindset directly translates into the real world: *what do you do when things don't go exactly your way?* You persevere. You learn from the failure and you keep going. This is one of the most important lessons I learned in Barrington with Coach Stengren. If we lost a game or had a bad play, he'd say: "This is only a loss if you don't learn from it and come back stronger." I use this lesson every day and hope to share it with others.

BARRINGTON SOCCER

My time playing soccer in Barrington was foundational to my growth as a player and as a person. I'm very excited to bring my experiences and skills into Maine and invest them in the community. The founding of Maine Mystics FC is a project outside of employment, but a dream pulling me closer to the game in a new way. While I want more than anything to run up and down the field, I'm finding immense fulfillment in coaching and starting this club.

Since Maine Mystics FC is a new club, we're grateful for contributions from the soccer-loving community and from anyone who believes in the community-building power of sport. If you're interested in partnering with us, please reach out. I'd love to talk about all things soccer with you in 2026. And as always, Go Fillies! 🍀

Lauren Caffé grew up in Barrington and participated in soccer since a girl. She was a team member of BHS Girls Soccer that won back-to-back state championships in 2017 and 2018. To reach her, email laurencaffe@gmail.com or call 847-347-0716. Visit online at mysticsfc.org and follow @mainemysticsfc and on Facebook: Maine Mystics FC.



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