

COSETTE MORCHÉ: A TRAIL OF SUCCESS BLAZED BY CHARACTER

This season, the Texas A&M Women's Soccer team has blazed a trail of success. Out of 14 games so far, 13 victories have been celebrated and 11 of those have been shutout wins. Sacrifice, repetition, and the collective hard work of talented athletes are what make up the foundation of this winning team. A key element of this strong foundation has proved to be its goalkeeper: Cosette Morché.

After transferring to Texas A&M in the spring following her sophomore season at University of Louisiana at Lafayette, it didn't take long for something more than her 6'2" frame and athleticism to set her apart: her character and teachability.

"She came in and she was really eager, her ears were wide-open to hearing any information she could get. She continues to ask more questions and strive for more. I am really proud of her," said head coach G Guerrieri. Her teachable spirit and aptness to learn is what has enabled her to grow quickly into the machine fans witness on the field.

"She is an absolute dominator in the air. Anything that is flighted into our penalty area, it's a dead ball because she has it," said coach Guerrieri.

Still more than this, though, her character is what makes Morché a valuable athlete to have on the team.

"First and foremost, she is a really kind person. She cares about people, and that comes across in the way that she handles her teammates."

The tone of kindness set by Morché has fostered a respect and comradery that the team needs to be successful.

“They really respect her and they want to please her with their performance,” said coach Guerrieri.

According to junior center midfielder Grace Piper, the respect of her teammates has not only been earned through kindness, but by maintaining a high standard of integrity off the field.

“She is a leader in just her presence. She is always doing the right thing, always doing the things off the field like eating right and fueling herself right, and keeping drama out of the team.”

Doing the right thing off the field has meant sacrificing some typical college student experiences. None of those sacrifices, said Morché, compare to being an excellent contributor to an excellent team.

“I can’t go and stay up really late, binge watch Netflix, all the crazy things people do, and not understand what the consequences could be. I know what my goal is.”

That goal is soccer, always.

“We are here to play, that is always on my mind. We wouldn’t be a good as we are right now if we didn’t keep a high standard.”

Morché’s example of leadership and commitment to her team is the product of a journey laden with years of determination and consistency. Her journey, however, has not been without its hurdles. After a negative coaching experience the year before her freshman year of high school in Lawrenceville, Georgia, Morché made the decision to leave the sport.

“I lost touch with soccer. I didn’t think I wanted to play anymore because I didn’t think I loved it.”

Thankfully Bill Holleman, the head varsity girl’s soccer coach and athletic director for Peachtree Ridge where Morché would soon attend high school, saw too much potential in her to let her slip through the cracks.

“When you see someone with her athletic ability and size, you don’t find that kind of goalkeeper in the female game very often.”

After meeting with Morché, he said he realized the pressure and expectation that often follows great talent had become burdensome. He wanted her to know that being on his team would be different.

“There’s no pressure here,” Holleman recalls telling Morché. “I hate to see you walk away.”

That conversation inspired Morché to give soccer another shot, and she has never looked back.

“I ended up getting my love back for soccer. I went from really disliking it to loving it again, and wanting to pursue it in college. My coach in high school helped me get my love back for soccer, and I will always remember him for that.”

Holleman, like many others after him, came to see that it was more than her raw talent that made her a successful player. Her concern for others is what stood out more than anything else, he said.

“She always put everybody else ahead of herself. The other side of it was the fact that she was just such a hard worker,” said Holleman.

Morché's example of hard work and kindness is what made her invaluable to his team.

"She turned out to be a godsend," said Holleman.

After pursuing her dream of collegiate soccer at University of Louisiana-Lafayette during her freshman and sophomore seasons, Morché knew that there was still more growth to be had elsewhere. After making her transition to Texas A&M, Morché said that she found exactly what she was looking for, and so much more.

"The 12thMan is the coolest thing. We have thousands of people come to our games, and its insane. I love that feeling of playing *for* people. We want to perform our best not only for our team to go far, but for the 12th Man. We want to show them that we are fighting not only for ourselves, but for the school," she said.

Morché said that the chemistry and a family atmosphere of her team are also what enabled Morché to bond with ease.

"When I first came in I was shy and nervous because I was starting fresh. I didn't know any of these girls, and they were just so open to me. They became my friends right away and I felt comfortable with them," she said.

Being comfortable off the field is an essential key to their success, said Morché.

"That chemistry is something our team has. I think that a lot of other teams maybe don't have it, and that is the reason why we fight so hard for each other, because we care about each other. They made me want to be a leader, and I would

do anything for these girls. That connection that we've made is super special," she said.

This connection with her team and her love for the sport provides the motivation it takes to pour herself out on the field, in practice or in a game, day in and day out. Morché has not just discovered what she does, but why she does it.

"The reason I am out here is to improve everyday. Having great coaches help push me, and my teammates, being on a team, there is something about it. You want to push yourself to be the best you can be, for them. I want to make sure that every time I step on the field for practice I am putting my whole heart into it because I want to make sure that we go so far," she said.

As a senior, her desire to see her team go far comes from an especially tender place. With each passing game Morché feels the season slipping through her fingers, and the only way for her to combat the sadness that may bring is to give her all on the field every week.

"I don't want it to end because I love it so much. This program is amazing and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. I smile thinking about it because I know how exciting this season is going to be. We've been kicking butt and I know we are going to keep kicking butt," she said.

Morché has high hopes for her future in soccer after her last season with the Aggies.

"Honestly I cannot imagine life without soccer. Whether its playing or coaching, I want to do both," she said.

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In an effort to be present and maintain her focus on the season, she doesn't let her self think about it too much.

"But it's exciting," she said.

Keep an eye out for Cosette Morché in the coming years. Hard work, leadership, and kindness seem to follow her wherever she goes, and success has marked the trail blazed thus far.