

## A Freshmen Student Athlete in the Coronavirus Pandemic

Living in the time of the Coronavirus Pandemic has been very odd to say the least. After being told I was not going back to college last March, it seemed crazy, and it finally felt like “wow this is very serious”. Not going to school meant no field hockey for me, and I did not know how to feel about that. Living at home meant waking up, logging on to my 8:00 AM Bio lecture every Monday and Tuesday, and debating whether or not to fall back asleep. When I was at school, it was easier, because I was forced to get up and take notes, now it was all just too weird. I would log on one class session just to wait ten minutes to log onto the next, without even having to leave my bedroom. There was no “real” interaction and it didn’t even seem like normal college. Also, having to stay on Zoom with my Bio Lab professor for three hours once a week was not exactly something I’d describe as “fun.”

Before, when we attended class in person, my roommate and I would dread heading to class, but hey at least you get to move around and actually look at real stuff with real people around you. Instead, we watched videos of dissections -- *Woohoo!*

The gyms in New York where I live were closed, so I made the most out of my basement exercise area. I would do workouts, and did my best to stay pretty consistent. I am typically one to stay motivated on my own when it comes to exercising and personal health, but it was so different without a team to do it with. Obviously, I couldn’t do as much as I did at school either, not having a full gym, and only a few dumbbells to work with. It got to be a bit boring, but as it got warmer outside, I started going to a field to practice field hockey- but obviously I had to play it alone. My high school turf field was closed from March through September. I had to drive an extra 15 minutes to be able play on a different field that was open.

This did not stop me though, anything to get out of the house after being stuck in it for months was okay by me.

By June, my boss called me back to work! I was so excited. I used to dread going to work, and did not like being with all the kids. I work at a daycare and have done so since 10th grade in high school. I always thought it was terrible. But, once I realized I could go back, I was so happy to be able to get out of the house for even work and the interactions.

Being in quarantine in the summer was not as bad as the March-May period, because it was warmer outside and just a better atmosphere in general. March, April, May, and the beginning of June kind of really stunk. Once I got to work in June though, and the sun was out, I was feeling much better. All I did was wake up, go to the basement to workout, came home, and sat outside. I always thought "Oh I'll be in shape for preseason, the gym will open soon!" But - no, the gym never opened, and preseason never happened.

I was excited for the beginning of August, because my field hockey preseason would be starting at my new school (college). Transferring was scary, and kind of weird during this time but I was still excited to meet everyone. As the preseason date approached, we sadly found out we'd have no season. Therefore, moving in was delayed and we would ultimately arrive on campus with everyone else at the end of August. As the weeks went on my local gym never opened either; Governor Cuomo hadn't opened them until I left for school.

When I finally got to school, it was weird because everyone I met had a mask on -- how would I know what all these new people really looked like? How would I remember everyone's name? My roommate introduced me to a bunch of people, and she was a returning sophomore, but it was still very weird, and definitely not a normal feeling to me. I met the rest of the sophomores on the field hockey team through my roommate though, and that helped make it

easier to get to know and remember all these new girls. Socializing on weekends though, note – it just doesn't happen. It feels weird and not exactly like college and remains very different from my freshman experience last year.

So far field hockey practices and lift-days are alright. We are grouped into small “pods” of teammates and cannot scrimmage on a full field yet. During lifts we are all spaced out and can only use certain weights assigned to us. Other than that, I am glad to be able to practice with a team, even if we cannot play.

Overall, the Coronavirus Pandemic has been a very strange time, and everyone adapts differently. I think without it though, I would not be the person I am today. I wouldn't wish such a difficult world event or situation to occur at any time-period of period, but if there is a bright side, it did allow me and others that I am close with, to learn and grow from such a challenging event. Even though it is weird, I think it can be helpful if we all do our best to relax, accept the situation which we cannot control, and in the end all we can do is make the most out of it.