

2008 BFS Female High School *Athlete of the Year*





Academic and athletic success define *DeAnn Loree Pertz*

BY KIM GOSS

There are some who believe that it's not possible to achieve the highest levels of athletic and academic achievement at the same time. After all, there are only so many hours in the day, so you have to focus on one or the other. Proving this theory wrong is DeAnn Pertz, a senior at Titusville High School in Titusville, Pennsylvania.

In the classroom DeAnn carries a 4.13 GPA, is class vice president and has received offers for academic scholarships. She has a love for chemistry, biology, physics and math and has aspirations of going to medical school and into forensic science.

In other words, she's freaky smart and is on the right track for a successful career in the medical profession. Equally impressive is her athletic accomplishments.

Although she is a multi-sport athlete and has been a three-sport state qualifier with 11 varsity letters, the sport that DeAnn has made the biggest splash in, so to speak, is swimming. She holds numerous school- and regional records. Her specialty is the freestyle, and her best times in this stroke include the following: 50, 24:75; 100, 55:00; 200, 1:58.13; 500, 5:31.37.

In the summer DeAnn makes the 90-minute, round-trip drive to Erie,



DeAnn Pertz accepts her statue for the BFS Female High School Athlete of the Year. Shown, left to right, are her coaches: Rhonda Laird, swimming; Scott Salvo, strength and conditioning; Ernie Axton, cross-country and track; and Kevin Dawson, swimming and strength and conditioning.



DeAnn's primary sport is swimming, but her participation in distance running events has helped her overall endurance, so there is little drop-off in her performance when she returns the pool.

Pennsylvania, to do club swimming with Coach David Schultz. Says DeAnn about club swimming, "Our training up in Erie is a lot harder than the training in high school, but I do better in high school events because I'm more focused on it." Asked what she likes about swimming, DeAnn replied, "I like how I can concentrate on myself, but it's still a team sport and you have a team to support you."

DeAnn's other sports include track and cross-country, which she says keeps her endurance level high so that when she returns to the pool there is little drop-off in her times. "You have to get adjusted, but running helps my aerobic endurance for the distance swimming events." She also says that when she first started lifting she was worried about getting bigger, but she soon found that was not an issue. Her favorite BFS core exercises are the box squats, where she regularly lifts over 210 for reps, and the power clean. DeAnn's strength coach, Scott Salvo, has high praise for her accomplishments.

"DeAnn's work ethic is unmatched," says Salvo. "A lot of high school athletes look at professional athletes as their role models. Athletes at Titusville High School do not have to look too far when searching for their role model because DeAnn is definitely someone they can look up to for leadership qualities, both in athletic competition and in the classroom. DeAnn puts it all together with her attitude, her personality and her willingness to help teammates and classmates."

DeAnn is a normal high school girl, likes to hang out with friends, listens to all types of music, does scrapbooking, is involved with many school and church activities, and puts her strength to good use by doing chores for her neighbors.

"Shoveling snow is not one of my favorite activities," she admits, "but I get paid!"



The Pertz family: Jay, Karen, DeAnn, Jayla

Good Beginnings

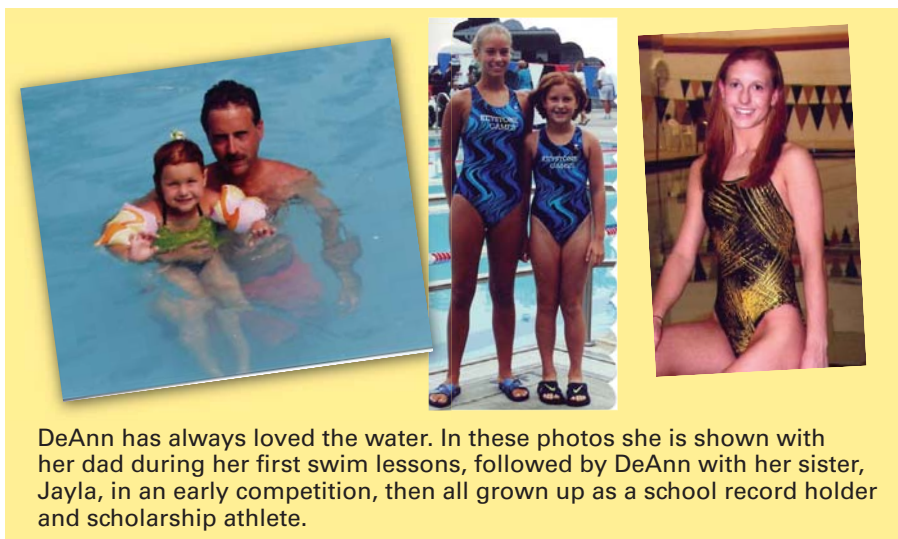
To reach the highest levels of athletic achievement, athletes have to start young. DeAnn is no exception, says her mother, Karen. "DeAnn was athletic from the get-go. She's done a lot of different sports growing up: soccer,

softball, volleyball, golf, and she even tried gymnastics. And she always excelled in everything she did and has a quiet, humble personality.”

In middle school, Jay, DeAnn’s father, says the athletic focus for DeAnn started leaning towards swimming. “In eighth grade, DeAnn came to us and said that she wanted to swim in a summer program, which wasn’t offered in our area. The closest one was in Erie, so we contacted a coach up there and we brought her up for an interview, and he accepted her. This opportunity to train and compete with better swimmers was very helpful.”

Academically, Karen provides some insight into her youngest daughter’s success. “We have expectations of our children, but both DeAnn and her sister, Jayla, have always been excellent students. DeAnn is very disciplined and has really good time management skills.” Karen says DeAnn would accompany her to the library when she was young and competed in math and spelling bee competitions. “And it’s not that we were telling her to enter these competitions – she wanted to do them.”

To explore potential career fields, DeAnn has been involved in the job-shadow programs offered through her school. Her first program was in radiology, and then she explored orthopedics (even being able to go into an operat-



DeAnn has always loved the water. In these photos she is shown with her dad during her first swim lessons, followed by DeAnn with her sister, Jayla, in an early competition, then all grown up as a school record holder and scholarship athlete.

ing room with an orthopedic surgeon) and pathology. She even did a job shadow with a coroner, which could be considered familiar territory, as her father is a funeral director. As a result, DeAnn visited five colleges last summer, looking for a good medical program that was close to home with a swimming program. For these reasons she decided to attend Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

When BFS began the Athlete of the Year program nearly 20 years ago, we wanted to select athletes who excelled in not just sports but also academics. We wanted well-rounded young men and women who could serve as role models. DeAnn Pertz of Titusville, Pennsylvania, has so many positive qualities that she is our obvious choice for 2008. Congratulations, DeAnn! BFS



DeAnn’s hard work with the BFS program has helped make her our number-one choice for our most prestigious award.



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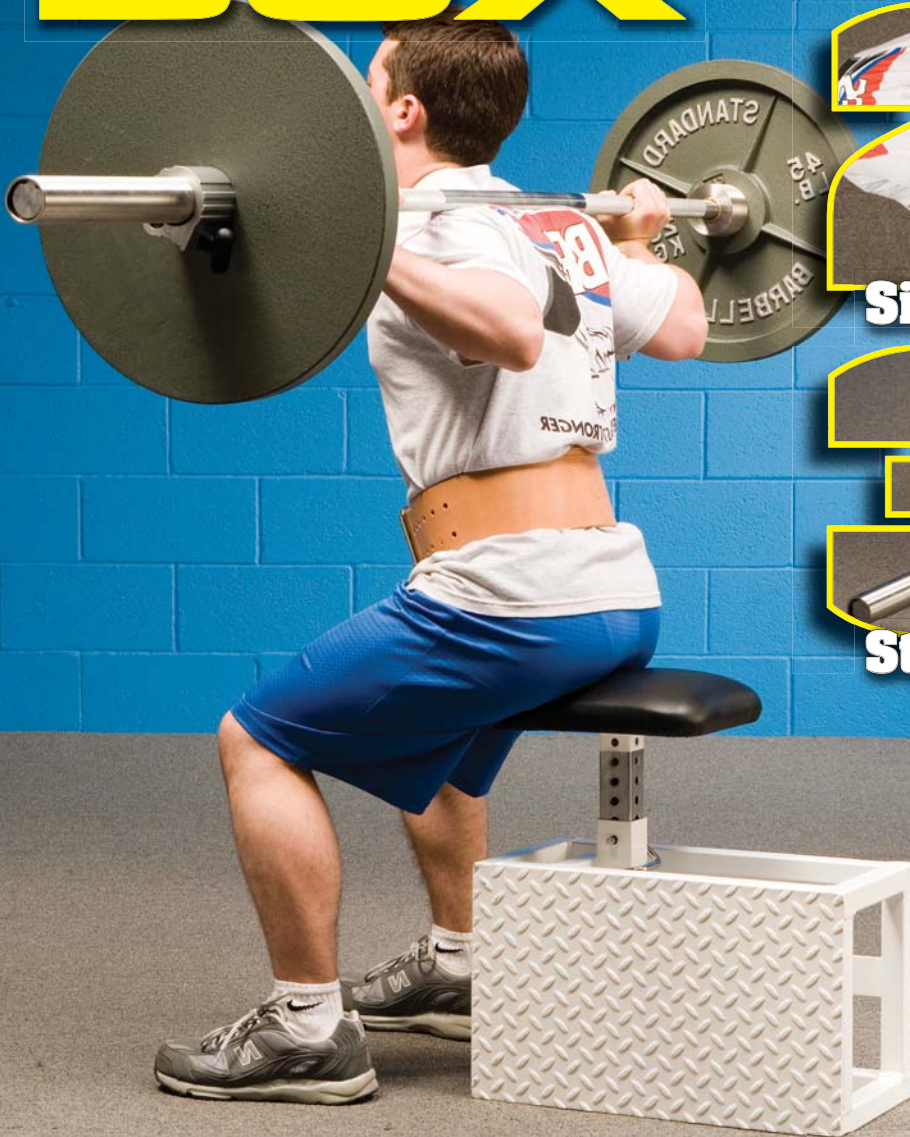
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