

Sarah Will

Skiing and Lacrosse

Class of 1983

Sarah Will excelled in lacrosse at Nyack High School, and was an avid equestrian during high school; her passion for horses and lacrosse has a legendary story. An early Sunday morning lacrosse practice at MacCalman field had a special viewing guest - her horse. Sarah rode her horse to practice, along the streets of Nyack because she was in need of being ridden and her attendance to practice was mandatory! She was the person who was able to multitask in a unique way even then!

Sarah was a member of the high school lacrosse team from 1981-1983. During that time, she started off in the attack position and transitioned seamlessly into one of the best goalies. During the 1981 season, she primarily played attack, occasionally Coach Pez using her as goalie; she helped the team achieve a 8-3-1 overall record, and with an Association record of 7-2-1. The 1982 season proved to be the best year for her and the team, most likely because she was the goal keeper full time. The team had a record of 10-0 earning Association Undefeated Champions title with an overall record of 13-1-0. The team achieved the honor of Section IX Champions, and New York State Girls Lax Champions.

Will's exceptional 144 saves and allowing only 92 goals that year was a significant factor for the team's success, particularly impressive because when Sarah played goalie, she used a regular field stick, full size goalie sticks were not allowed until years later. Her dominance earned her All-Association Team, All-County Honors, and Honorable Mention Rockland/Westchester Team.

However, despite her high school successes, her greatest athletic achievements came after she faced a life-changing injury.

In 1988, Will was paralyzed from the waist down in a skiing accident in Colorado. Just four years later, she competed in the 1992 Paralympic Winter Games in Albertville, where she won two gold medals in downhill and super-G alpine skiing. This marked the beginning of a career that would span four Paralympic Games and earn her 12 gold and one silver medal, making her the most decorated Paralympic skier in U.S. history.

At the 1994 Lillehammer Games, Will won three gold medals in downhill, super-G, and slalom. She followed that performance with another dominant showing at

the 1998 Nagano Games, winning three golds and a silver. Will's crowning achievement came at the 2002 Salt Lake City Paralympics, where she swept all four alpine events, bringing home gold in downhill, giant slalom, slalom, and super-G.

Her contributions to the sport enshrined her into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame and the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Hall of Fame. She is also a mono-ski instructor at ski centers across America, and has served as a spokeswoman for the General Motors "Barrier Breakers" program for people with disabilities.

The toy Mattel company leaned on Will as a product expert consultant in designing its Para Alpine Barbie Doll, showcasing how Sarah Will has helped uplift representation for people with disabilities. Sarah is also the recipient winner of the Best Athlete with a Disability ESPY Award.

She currently resides in Colorado where she actively advocates for persons with disabilities.