

Byron, Carlson, Petri & Kalb Female Athlete Of Month: Freshman Lyla Hickam Helps Power McGivney State Title Run

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GLEN CARBON - Lyla Hickam was a freshman for the girls soccer team at Father McGivney Catholic High School this season and made key contributions to the Griffins' IHSA Class 1A state championship season as a defender, which ended with a 3-0 win over Pleasant Plains in the final on June 6, 2026, at North Central College in Naperville.

During the season, Hickam also scored one goal and had two assists for four points, providing a lift of energy throughout the season as a freshman starter. She also represents the future of the program, as she is part of the team's youth.

In an interview conducted June 8 at a reception honoring the team and its championship at the Griffins gym, Hickam described the night of the reception as one that meant everything to the team and its players.

"It means everything to us," Hickam said. "At the beginning of the season, we were asked, 'What was your goal?' And from the very first day of preseason, we were planning that this was our goal. We wanted to win state, and we weren't going to settle for anything less. It feels amazing."

Hickam is the Byron, Carlson, Petri & Kalb Female Athlete of the Month for the Griffins.

When the Griffins went up 3-0 over the Cardinals in the second half and the feeling on the team was that it had all but clinched the state title, Hickam had a very apt description of the feeling on the sidelines.

"It was surreal, to be honest," Hickam said. "It was like a feeling you could never dream of, like it was the best feeling ever. It's what all the seniors have worked for all of their years, and everyone before them. And it felt like a full-circle moment going in."

Hickam personally felt she had hit the pinnacle just by being part of the state championship club.

"I felt like I was on top of the world," Hickam said. "I felt like everything I had ever done in my soccer career had led to this moment, and it felt so amazing."

As a freshman, she still has three years left to help build the legacy of the McGivney program, and bringing a championship back to the St. Louis area, where soccer is an important part of the sporting culture, was very important.

"It feels amazing," Hickam said. "It's just crazy that the whole season was just leading up to it, and it was just a great feeling."

It's way too early to predict what will happen next season, of course, but Hickam is confident that the Griffins will be able to build on the success of this season into a lasting legacy for the team and school.

"I just want us to all come in," Hickam said, "work as hard as we did this season, continue to build on the program, and continue to just create our legacy for many years to come."

She also thanked her teammates and coaches for helping create the championship for the school and the team.

"I just want to thank all of my teammates," Hickam said, "because it wouldn't be possible without all of them, our coaching staff, and just our McGivney family."