

CARLI LLOYD

Carli Lloyd doesn't believe in luck – only hard work. The US Women's National Team captain and two-time World Player of the Year is famed for her dedication, grit and the effort put in 'When Nobody Was Watching' (as her autobiography was titled).

And for Carli, that hard work has paid off. The New Jersey native has won it all on the world stage, and carved out a reputation as one of the ultimate big-game players. Most notably, her 16-minute hat-trick in the 2015 World Cup Final win makes her the only woman to score three goals in football's biggest game – and only the second player in history to do so.

Add to this winning goals in the finals of the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games and a goal in the 2017 FA Cup final, and it's easy to see why her national team coach Jill Ellis described her as a "leader by example".

The 35-year-old shows little sign of slowing down either. After recently reaching 250 caps and closing in on 100 national team goals, she insists that with the 2019 World Cup in France and 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo approaching, her best may be yet to come.

2017
Won the FA Women's Cup with Manchester City

2016
FIFA World Player of the Year

2016
Named in the FIFPro World XI

2015
CONCACAF Women's Player of the Year

2015
FIFA World Player of the Year

2015
U.S. Soccer Player of the Year

2015
World Cup Golden Ball winner

2015
Won the World Cup with the US Women's National Team, becoming the first woman to score a hat-trick in the World Cup Final

2012
Won Olympic Gold with the USA team

2011
Runner-up at the World Cup with the US Women's National Team

2008
Won Olympic Gold with the USA team

2008
U.S. Soccer Player of the Year

2007
Third place at the World Cup with the US Women's National Team

Tell us a bit about your early experiences in football?

My parents signed me up at 5 years old and from then on I have loved the game. I practiced every day on my own and played for a local team. In my teens I moved on to a high-level team called the Medford Strikers. We won the State Championship and were one of the best teams in the USA.

How important has role of the club doctor and medical staff been to you in your career?

I think it's super important to have a full-time doctor and medical staff at your club. The reality is we are playing a sport that is physically demanding and physical contact is part of the game. My teammates and I have gotten injured during games and training over the years, and having medical staff there to immediately



Image: Carli Lloyd celebrates after scoring for the United States Women's National Team in a friendly against Mexico, in April 2018.

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diagnose the issue has helped prevent any further damage, and in getting us back out on the field at the right time.

You have played for several different professional clubs in the USA, in your opinion what are the most important qualities for a club doctor/medical staff?

The most important thing to me is not to rush injured players back. To let the injury heal and then rebuild to minimise the chance of the injury reoccurring.

Your recent loan to Manchester City was your first time playing outside the USA. Were there any differences in the medical provision?

“ **The most important thing to me is not to rush injured players back** ”

In Manchester there was a full-time medical department that consisted of a staff of 16 or so people that worked together to diagnose, rehabilitate and monitor injuries. I have not seen such a big crew of medical staff in the USA, but I do value the medical staff we have with the US Women's National Team.

You broke your ankle in 2010, was that the worst injury of your career? What was the recovery like? Does it still cause you any problems?

I would say that was the worst one of my career. It was a clean break which did not require any surgery. I was casted up to my knee and on crutches for 6 weeks. Because of that my whole leg had muscle atrophy. When I came out of the cast I went into a walking boot for several weeks. It was painful to walk because everything around it had stiffened up. Once I started walking pain free I could then start to lightly trot, then jog and then start to get back into normal training. I was back fully fit and ready in 3 months but I was still feeling it every time I kicked. I would say around 5 to 6 months is when that completely went away.

ACL injury is common among footballers and female players have an even higher risk, do you do any targeted injury prevention training for this or any other injuries?

I work on all areas of fitness to assure I am an overall strong athlete. Working on my aerobic power, non-aerobic power, leg power, upper body strength and agility has helped me stay strong throughout my career and has definitely helped limit my injuries.

What is your recovery process after a game?

Post-game recovery is something I pride myself on and I feel has helped me tremendously throughout my career. I love ice baths, use compression garments, eat protein-filled meals and hydrate heavily.

Do you ever struggle to sleep if you have played an evening match?

Yes, after games my adrenaline is pumping and keeps me up until the early hours of the morning. But I have realised that drinking some chamomile tea and putting on a movie helps relax me and get me to sleep.

Do you have a nutrition plan or pay attention to what you eat?

Yes, I have a very strict diet that is loaded with organic food. My diet consists of healthy snacks, vegetables, fruits and protein. I stay away from bread and pasta, and drink tons of water throughout the day.

You are known as one of the most talented footballers in the world, but also one of the hardest working; how much of success at the top level is down to talent, and how much is hard work?

I don't believe in talent. You create your own talent through hard work and sacrifice. Nobody is born a champion. I am who I am because of the hard work I put in when no one was watching.

How has sports science developed in women's football over the course of your career?

I think sports science has helped in the small details that can boost your physical performance on the field. Being able to look in detail at your physical condition and physical fitness levels has helped us understand the body and how it performs much better.

You have been playing at the top level for around 18 years now, how has sports science/medicine helped your longevity?

Just knowing how my body is performing from a sports science point of view has helped in how I train, and how I recover and prepare for an upcoming event.



Left: Carli Lloyd strikes the United States' second goal as they beat Japan 2-1 to win gold at the London Olympic Games.

Right: Lloyd poses with her 2015 FIFA World Women's Player of the Year award alongside Ballon d'Or winner, Lionel Messi.



Image: Carli Lloyd hold off Brazil's Ester during the gold medal match at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

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You have had a very close relationship with your coach, James Galanis. Before you met him, you had considered quitting football altogether, can you tell us about how you started working with him and what makes him the perfect coach for you?

I started working with James in 2003. My father watched him conduct a session and approached him to ask if he could work with me. Luckily for me he accepted and has been my personal coach since. He is special because he is not only great at building you technically and physically, but he also knows how to turn your mind into a mental machine. I would not be who I am without him.

Is it true you never repeat the same workout – every one is different? Is there is a technical or tactical advantage to this, or is it just to avoid boredom?

Yes, it's true! As part of James' methodology, he keeps developing the training environment as you improve. He is a master of designing sessions that are challenging in the beginning but achievable at the end. I think this is simply the evolution of improvement.