

## **A strong start for female athletes - Unique Mountville gym focuses on girls**

BY AMANDA KENNEDY, Staff Writer, *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal/New Era*

Tell Jordyn Bibiloni and her athletes that they "play like girls," and they will take that as a compliment.

Bibiloni is a coach, trainer and owner of The Training LÖfte, a gym in Mountville geared specifically to girls.

"There just seemed to be a real need for this type of training atmosphere," she said.

While there are women-only gyms across the nation, the focus on girls makes the facility, which opened in May, one of a kind.

"To my knowledge, there's nothing like it in the nation," Bibiloni said.

The Training LÖfte concentrates on three athletic areas -- strength, skill and what Bibiloni calls "spirit," a combination of nutrition, hydration and mental prowess.

Rewards are given to athletes who earn good grades or succeed in games "to show them that their performance is just as important as their training," Bibiloni said.

Also a softball coach for both York College and a U16 team called The Shooting Stars, she specializes in softball but helps girls train for all kinds of sports at The Training LÖfte, including ice hockey and running.

Women beyond their high school years also can train there.

"From the young to the old, we want to build relationships (and) positive experiences," Bibiloni said, "and so we do that through training and through sports."

Courtney Ricci, 13, feels comfortable working out at The Training LÖfte.

"It's really awkward when you go to the gym with the guys," she said. "It's like they tell you to put more weight on because you're a sissy, or if you have so much weight on, they call you a dude for doing too much."

An ice hockey player who competes with tournament teams out of Baltimore and North Carolina, Ricci said becoming a member at The Training LÖfte has been "the best thing that's happened to me." She works out with Danica Schmeck, 17, an intern at the facility.

"There's so much companionship, and they're willing to talk you through your workout and tell you what you're doing right and what you're doing wrong," Ricci said. "I've

noticed an improvement already, and I've only been here for three weeks. It's really awesome here."

Sarai Figueroa, 11, came to The Training Löfte last week for her first pitching clinic. She is excited to begin pitching on a softball team in the fall.

The workouts are "really intense," she said. "We work really hard to achieve our goals in whatever sport we're playing."

"Löfte" means "commitment" or "promise" in Swedish, said Bibiloni's husband, David, the facility's vice president of operations. Their slogan is "Committed Training for Girls."

A former teacher in the Lampeter-Strasburg School District, Jordyn Bibiloni aspired to create an athletic training facility specifically for girls after watching the students she has coached grow older.

"I want to continue creating these positive relationships with those girls," she said, "and basically (give) girls the opportunity to be our next generation of leaders through sports and through training and through endurance, the commitment, the hard work. All of those things I think happen in sports."

She also was concerned with the rising rate of anterior cruciate ligament injuries in female athletes. Of all ACL injuries within the past year, 90 percent happened in females, Jordyn Bibiloni said.

David Bibiloni said female-specific training will allow girls to "compete at an aggressive, 21st-century level and remain injury-free and be strong."

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