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TRINITY - As the ball left her foot from just inside the midfield line, Wheatmore High School soccer standout Ellie Garrison was hoping it had enough to get over the goalie's head, who she noticed was playing way in front of the goal line.

As the high-arching shot flew in the air and nestled into the net behind the goalie, Garrison had not only scored one of the most amazing goals in her high school career, but that score gave her sole possession of the NCHSAA career scoring record with 218 total goals. She added another that game and now has 219 career tallies as the Warriors enter Spring Break with a 4-3 overall record.

Garrison, who is headed to Appalachian State in the fall, broke the NCHSAA recognized record of 217 career goals held by Carolyn Lindsay of South View, who played from 2000-03.



Wheatmore senior Ellie Garrison. Photo provided.

"Without a player having that kind of an IQ, it doesn't happen," WHS coach Rick Maness said. "I never had a goal like that at this school. It's very rare. That one was simply amazing."

Garrison scored the record-breaking goal after missing two games because of an ankle injury suffered during a club match the previous weekend.

"It was really cool," Garrison said of her nearly-midfield shot. "Obviously the week before, I had to take two games off and I wanted to get it in those games, but coming back and getting it in the first half, especially the way I got it, was nice. Really, after that I was just thinking about scoring more goals."

The team, parents, faculty and fans celebrated after the game, presenting Garrison with a signed poster.

Scoring has never been a problem for Garrison, who set a NCHSAA single-season record with 96

goals in 24 games as a junior. She had a sophomore-record of 77 goals after tallying 29 goals as a freshman. This year she has 17 goals in just five games.

"She is one of those rare breeds of kids," Maness said. "I have had good kids who could play soccer, but she is the type of player who will take a weight lifting class, leave there and do more weight lifting or conditioning. With her strength and her attitude it's always possible. Academically, she is very, very strong, so she is just an all-around player. Having a player who is all-around like her is just rare."

Garrison points to all her high school and club coaches for her incredible career. Maness, Amber Poplin and Matt Pencola are among those who have guided her WHS career.

"Rick has been super supportive and not just a coach, but someone I can talk to about anything," Garrison said. "Rick, Amber Poplin, Matt have all been supportive and believed I could do what I am doing. They saw what I could do."

Garrison also pointed out her two older brothers as reasons for her success. The three would constantly be in the backyard with the soccer ball and neither brother, who both are now in the National Guard, would take it easy on their younger sister.

"It wasn't easy," Garrison said. "But they helped shape me into the player I am today."

The Warriors advanced to the state finals last year where they dropped a 5-3 decision to Manteo. They finished the year 24-1.

The team lost a lot of talent due to graduation and with a tougher non league schedule this year - Northwest Guilford, North Davidson and Bishop McGuinness - the Warriors are one game over .500 and one-half game behind Uwharrie Charter Academy for the Piedmont Athletic Conference lead.

"We lost a lot of key girls from last year and some of the girls have had to step up this year and they have," Garrison said. "Me and the other seniors are leading them and talking them through the games. It's a big step being a starter and playing the whole game and they have done amazing."

There is still one player who reportedly has scored more goals during her high school career. Although it is not recognized in the NCHSAA record book, Woods Charter's Isabel Pearce, who scored a then-record 80 goals in her senior season, finished with 226. It is not known why that total has not been registered with the NCHSAA.

Garrison now has a total of 219 after her two-goal game against Bishop-McGuinness.

"That's just the next goal and once I beat that, there's no second-guessing that," Garrison said.

Garrison is simply one of the top soccer players to ever play in Randolph County. No one can second-guess that.