

Aurora Barbarians fly-half is off to British Columbia

Chloe Daniels works at The Briars Golf Course in maintenance. She's been working there for the past few summers. It's a fun job as she finishes up her high school career.

Her rugby career, on the other hand, the one she adores and where she feels completely at home, is her utter joy ? and it is the part of her life currently on pause.

Much like plenty of other athletes seemingly holding onto hope as it has never been held before, Daniels is heading off to Langford, British Columbia in August.

It isn't for vacation. The 17-year-old fly-half is joining Team Canada Rugby 7s.

?It's an awesome opportunity. I'm super excited for the challenge. Just to move out to Langford will be super fun and a great experience within itself. The rugby will be great. I'm excited to learn a lot and learn from the older girls that are far more experienced,? Daniels said.

When asked if she expected this, Daniels says this is what she has always wanted. She has always aspired to move out to B.C to join the program and accomplish a life-long dream of Olympic glory. She never expected it, but she always wanted it.

The Sutton native says her father played rugby growing up. Her sister, Hannah, began playing in high school, earning a place on U-18 Canada 7s roster and U-20 Canada 15s roster respectively.

When asked if she wanted to play, Daniels says she was emboldened by family success and joined the Aurora Barbarians at the age of 12.

?After playing rugby when I was in Grade Six, I really loved [that] the game has a place for everyone. It has different skill sets. I really like that aspect of it and just the contact and speed of it is super fun and exciting. It's super exciting to watch and to play.?

In particular, she loves the space on the field.

With only seven players on either side of the pitch, as a fly-half, Daniels is able to take control of the game. She is able to make decisions and facilitate the ball. But she knows how challenging it can be as well. It's a lot faster. It's a lot more physically demanding.

In what has been a huge part of her life, Daniels praises

the Barbarians organization for everything members, staff and players have provided for her.

?The Aurora Barbarians have done a lot for me to get to where I am, especially Khalil Ajram. He was a big part in that and he helped to get people involved in the game.?

It's a tightly knit, supportive family. She has made her closest friends through the sport.

Daniels is ready to train and pick the brains of Canadian veteran players. It's a stepping stone in further developing her game. While doing so, she'll also develop further as a person, living with a billet family recommended by a teammate.

She isn't totally nervous. Well, it's a fusion of nervousness and pure excitement.

Daniels says the 2021 Olympics don't seem to be in her sights, as much as she would want them to.

She looks into the future at the 2024 Olympic games with the goal of representing her country on the biggest stage.

By Robert Belardi