

Former Baton Rouge Soccer Club/Ole Miss Player Danielle Johnson drafted by the Sky Blue FC of Women's Professional Soccer.

NY/NJ Sky Blue FC player Danielle Johnson truly is a rarity. An actual "Dime and Dozen" if you would like to go a step further.

Baton Rouge native and former Baton Rouge Soccer Association/Club player Danielle Johnson has truly made the best out of every opportunity that has come her way. She has even created her own opportunities as well. Beginning at the age of 5, Danielle had a true passion for the beautiful game which has taken her from a young recreational soccer player in the Baton Rouge Soccer Association into playing on her first boy's premier which was then Baton Rouge United.

After exploding onto the premier scene with the Baton Rouge United club, Danielle took her first step into the Baton Rouge Soccer Club where she would play out the rest of her pre-collegiate soccer career.

While playing for BRSA/BRSC, Danielle was one of the main catalysts in her team's abilities to win 5 Louisiana State Championships, most of which were accomplished while she was playing up a year in age. Danielle also took part in 6 Region III tournaments resulting in 1 quarterfinal and 1 semifinal appearances. "Training for and playing in those Regional events provided me with a great amount of experience" Johnson said. "The two a day sessions, team bonding, and then the chance to play against and with some of the best players in the South/country, was great for my development."

Danielle earned the respect of coaches and teammates alike. "Coaches sometimes take for granted how special a player truly is to the overall success of a team and club" Willie Davis (Johnson's club coach for 3 years with BRSC) stated. "For me it was easy to see, Danielle is not only a great player, but a great person as well."

"Danielle was always the hardest worker and most tenacious defender in training" states former BRSC and Texas A&M standout, Melissa Garey. "What made Danielle such a successful teammate was her attitude." "She never quit, or gave less than 100% and something about the way she played was contagious....watching her was motivation in itself." Garey adds.

"I'm overjoyed to have had Danielle not only come through the Baton Rouge Soccer Association, but to also have her continue to pursue her dream in the WPS." Director of the Baton Rouge Soccer Association/Club Gary Buete states. "To have players like Danielle and

Jason Garey (former BRSA/BRSC standout) represent Baton Rouge at the highest levels is great for them, their families, and the Baton Rouge area.

After a well decorated individual and team youth career (All-District, All-State, Region III ODP pool player) Danielle went on to be a stellar college player at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss).

At Ole Miss, Danielle became the only female soccer player to earn All-SEC and All-Region honors all four years of her career. Johnson also did all of this while maintaining a 3.55 grade point average, playing in the W-League for the Ottawa Fury, and leading her team in the 2009 NCAA National tournament. "What you put into it is what you get out of it." That 's Johnson's key to success, simple and effective.

So, after such a great youth and college career, what's next for Danielle Johnson? A chance to pursue her dream as a professional player with Women's Professional Soccer's defending WPS champions Sky Blue FC in Piscataway N.J (where she will also team up with another Baton Rouge native Ashleigh Gunning).

Drafted 35th overall in the 2010 WPS draft was a dream come true for Danielle and to do so with the defending champions is the challenge that Johnson strives for.

If Danielle truly gets out of it what she puts into it, then Baton Rouge will be lucky enough to witness a former youth star transform into a terrific professional player.

Willie C. Davis Jr.

1/28/10