



RAIDERETTE OF THE GAME

Mackenzie

ROOKIE

BY JENNA ANGELO

Perseverance and positivity got rookie Raiderette Mackenzie where she is today. This isn't just her first season as a Raiderette, it's her first time on a dance team. Mackenzie was not involved in dance growing up, "I cheered three years in high school then decided to take some dance classes at a local junior college," Mackenzie said. Her introduction to professional dance and cheer was at an NBA dance clinic, "That was the first time I heard the word pirouette! After that I enrolled in as many dance classes as I could and started auditioning for professional teams."

Mackenzie already has her associate degree in health sciences and is looking to obtain her bachelor's degree in nursing. She hopes to become an Obstetrics Nurse or a Geriatric Nurse and work abroad. Mackenzie's dream of becoming a nurse and, ultimately, her general caring nature, stems from her relationship with her childhood best friend who was chronically ill. "I was constantly at her hospital bedside making her laugh and feel light when the situation was heavy. My angel Carley made me realize that I want to help people feel happy during their scariest or saddest moments," Mackenzie said.

Mackenzie is half Mexican and half Croatian. Though she hasn't been to Croatia yet, she said it's definitely on the list. Her favorite travel destination so far has been Spain. Mackenzie and her two older brothers spent an entire summer there studying abroad together. She looks back on it as one of the most memorable experiences of her life ... aside from hearing her name called during Raiderette audition finals of course.

Though she has tried out for many teams, Mackenzie claims the Raiderettes were the first team she ever laid eyes on. "[My friends] and I would say 'we're going to be Raiderettes when we grow up!'" Mackenzie said. Mackenzie even got the opportunity to cheer at the Coliseum with her current "Big Sis" Jonni during the Raiders former High School Spirit Explosion program. "Since being on this team I've learned that I'm capable of more than I realize. Being involved with such a passionate organization that is 'committed to excellence' drives me to be my best self. Taking that passion and commitment into my everyday life has allowed me to grow into a stronger, more capable, and more compassionate individual," Mackenzie said. Mackenzie proves that if you never stop pursuing your passions, never stop working toward what you want, and you maintain a positive attitude, you can truly accomplish anything.

