

Soccer star UCLA-bound – with USC dad's blessing

By **Kevin Gemmell**
STAFF WRITER

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It won't be easy, but Miles Lovelace must accept the fact that his oldest daughter will attend – gulp – UCLA.

“I think I need to get a new license plate frame that says, 'USC grad, UCLA dad,'” Miles said.

Courtney Lovelace, the playmaking lefty from Westview High, is headed to Westwood on a soccer scholarship. And, yes, it's with her father's blessing.

Before Courtney heads north, there is unfinished business for her and the Wolverines.

For the playoffs, Westview has moved up to Division I this year, home to six of the Top 10 teams in the San Diego Section – including the No. 2-ranked Wolverines (16-2-4, 6-0-1 Valley League).

Lovelace understands the difficult road ahead for Westview, the two-time defending Division II champion.

“There are so many good teams and so many good players,” said Lovelace, 18. “It's going to be a lot harder this time around. But I love this team and I think we can do it.”

Coach Peter Stogsdill always knew Lovelace was a good player. That's why he brought her on to the varsity squad as a freshman. Her ability to play defense or attack made her a valuable commodity. This year, she's elevated her game.

“I don't know what it is, but this year she's at a whole new level,” Stogsdill said. “She's left-footed, which already creates mismatch problems. But when you add that to her vision and creativity, you can see why one of the best programs in the country wants her. I definitely think she can make an impact at the next level.”

The oldest of three children, Lovelace is comfortable in a leadership role. With five seniors on his team (only three returning seniors), Stogsdill has looked to Lovelace to mentor a talented crop of underclassmen – the same as seniors did for Lovelace when she was younger.

“Watching the way she plays makes me want to work harder,” freshman **Sarah Adams** said. “She's someone that me and a lot of the girls really look up to. In the heat of a game, she's amazing with the creative ways she scores or finds opportunities for others.”

Lovelace doesn't lead the team in goals or assists. Yet somehow her left foot – or her voice – usually plays an important role in the Wolverines' offense.

“She's the leader of this team,” Stogsdill said. “Her passion and work ethic is impressive. Everything is coming together for her right now.”

With nine goals and six assists, Lovelace said she understands her job is to do more than produce stats.



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Westview's **Courtney Lovelace** (right) gets the jump on Torrey Pines' **Chelsea Smith** in a game this season.



“When I was a freshman, it would have been so strange to think of myself as a leader of this team,” said Lovelace, a self-proclaimed Southern California girl who loves the show “Gossip Girl” and going to the beach. “But it’s a natural thing for me. Right now, it’s about this team and doing whatever we can to win another championship.”

As for Miles, who did his graduate work at USC, he’ll have to start cheering for Bruins blue.

“I guess from here on out I’m a UCLA soccer fan,” he said. “But at least I’ve still got the Trojans football team.”

At least until UCLA football coach Rick Neuheisel starts scanning the women’s soccer team for a kicker.