



FFLOP's Griffin named Player of the Year

All-Bee Girls Hockey

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by PATRICK NAGY Sports reporter



Maya Griffin, the 2024-25 All-Bee Girls Hockey Player of the Year, led Section VI with 26 goals and 27 assists for 53 points, and helped Frontier/Franklinville/Lake Shore/Orchard Park reach the state semifinals. The senior right winger finished her five-year career as the league's eighth all-time leading scorer with 128 points. Photo by Joe Eberle

When Maya Griffin stepped onto the ice as an eighth grader for tryouts five years ago, Frontier/Franklinville/Lake Shore/Orchard Park girls hockey coach Bob Klimowicz knew he had someone special.

Fast forward five years later and the 2024-25 All-Bee Girls Hockey Player of the Year finished her high school career eighth all-time in the Western New York Girls Varsity Ice Hockey Federation with 128 points. The senior right winger played 82 games and recorded 58 goals and 70 assists for a 1.56 points per game average.

Griffin, an All-Bee First Team recipient last year, recorded 26 goals and 27 assists for 53 points this season, which is first all-time for FFLOP and fifth in league history, and was a driving force in FFLOP reaching the state semifinals.

“She is my type of player,” Klimowicz said. “When I was playing high school hockey and college hockey, I wasn’t gifted with a lot of skill, but I was gifted with a good work ethic. I’m not saying Maya does not have skill – her shot has gotten better

over the years – but what Maya brings to the table is a work ethic that is non-stop. If she’s going to be in the corner with you, she’s going to come out with the puck. She is not going to be that girl who is going to try and dangle you and try to do all those things.”

Klimowicz said Griffin built a great chemistry the past two seasons with her linemates, eighth graders Gabby Sojda and Peyton Forcucci, and learned she can be successful by cycling the puck and generating offense from it. Sojda, an All-Bee First Team selection, was second in the league in scoring with 26 goals and 26 assists for 52 points, while Forcucci tallied 16 goals and 17 assists for 33 points.

“We put them together two-thirds of the way into last season and there was an instant chemistry between all three of them,” Klimowicz said. “If you watch them play and the way they cycle the puck and move the puck, they are tough.

“I’m sure she was getting a little frustrated but because she is a team player and leader, she didn’t care if she was not on the scoresheet sometimes,” Klimowicz continued. “The big thing to her is getting the ‘w’ and that is what matters. You never heard her complain. She went out there shift after shift working hard. Her work ethic created opportunities for other girls on her line to score.”

Griffin, who received the league’s Offensive Player of the Year honor, opened the season by recording four goals and five assists for nine points in FFLOP’s 10-1 win over Williamsville on Dec. 2, which Klimowicz said is a team record and likely a section record.

Griffin also was a top player on FFLOP’s power play and penalty kill.

“This year, our power play was working at a 25% rate, and she was one of the key stakeholders in operating and moving it,” Klimowicz said.

A team captain for the past two years, Klimowicz said Griffin is not a very outspoken person but stepped up by being a little bit vocal.

“She led our pregame warm-ups and our team cheer when we were in huddles,” Klimowicz said. “She was probably more of an on-ice leader showing by example than being a vocal leader.”

Griffin will be playing college lacrosse at Youngstown State University. Griffin has been a three-sport athlete at Orchard Park, also playing soccer in addition to girls hockey.

“You are talking about three demanding sports,” Klimowicz said. “During the hockey season, she’s playing travel hockey with the Amherst 19U team with her dad and plays some lacrosse during the winter.

“She is just a fantastic girl,” Klimowicz continued. “She was like a daughter to me and is going to be missed. If I had to mold a hockey player the way I would like a hockey player to be, it’s her shift in and shift out giving her all.”