

2011 All-Metro Girls Volleyball

No laughing matter: Bowers named player of year



MEG BOWERS

Position: OH/MH **School:** Atlee **Year:** Senior

The skinny: The Capital District player of the year served 95 percent this season with 36 aces. Bowers, an all-region pick, compiled 198 kills and 198 digs...

Meg Bowers didn't believe it for a second. "You're kidding," she said to Atlee volleyball coach Curtis Carpenter after he told her she had been selected as All-Metro girls volleyball player of the year. "She thought I was pulling her leg," Carpenter said with a laugh. It took a little reassurance and a few words of praise from the veteran coach before Bowers realized it wasn't a gag. "That's what we did all the time," Carpenter said. "I could always start saying something to her and she'd get about halfway through it and realize, 'Oh, you're just kidding me, aren't you?'" But all kidding aside, Bowers' numbers this season were no joke. The skeptic standout completed her senior season with a 95 percent serving rate, 198 kills and 198 digs. She was named Capital District player of the year and earned all-Central Region honors for her efforts. "Meg is a special player," Carpenter said of the four-year varsity standout. "She's a really hard worker," said close friend, teammate and All-Metro honoree Hailey Brooks. "She was always focused and a pleasure to be on a team with." As instrumental as Bowers' on-court contributions were in helping the team reach the state semifinals for a second consecutive year, Brooks said, so too was her attitude. "She's a really lighthearted girl," Brooks said. "Always in a good mood and having fun." And though the Raiders' state title bid ended in the semifinals in heartbreaking fashion — they dropped a 15-point fifth set to eventual state runner-up Ocean Lakes — Brooks said Bowers' confidence in her teammates never wavered. After Atlee twice let one-game advantages over Ocean Lakes disappear, Brooks said "Everyone was getting down on themselves. But Meg seemed to stay positive." "Me being a setter, she was my main outlet," Brooks said. "I knew I could count on her to get the ball in or get a kill in those crucial times when I really needed it." Bowers always was quick to encourage her teammates, which proved especially imperative this season. "This is the closest team I've ever been on," Bowers said, citing Atlee classmate Cole Sydnor as a great source of inspiration who brought an already tightknit Raiders' team even closer. Sydnor suffered a spinal injury in August, leaving him paralyzed from the chest down. His triumphs in the face of adversity, Bowers said, "Really did help this whole community." Though Bowers was looked upon by her teammates as consistent and strong, she did have one especially tough critic: herself. "She'd do something that was fantastic and it was business as usual," Carpenter said. "But if she did something wrong, she would beat herself up about it." That's just part of the "passion" Carpenter said he's going to miss in how Bowers plays the game. But perhaps what the Raiders will miss most is her sparkling sense of humor. "Meg's easy to laugh at, and she laughs at herself," Brooks said. "So it makes it fun to mess around with her a little bit." Bowers deserved all of the success she enjoyed and the title of All-Metro player of the year, Brooks said, adding with a laugh, "I'm not surprised she didn't think it was real, actually."

Past All-Metro Players of the Year

- 2010 — Chaney LaReau, Deep Run
- 2009 — Maggie Murphy, Mills Godwin
- 2008 — Kristin Carpenter, Hanover
- 2007 — Alyssa Lang, Deep Run
- 2006 — Brittney Grove, Deep Run
- 2005 — Catherine Hanners, D. Freeman
- 2004 — Catherine Hanners, D. Freeman
- 2003 — Josie Hanners, Douglas Freeman
- 2002 — Amanda Snead, Mills Godwin
- 2001 — Elizabeth Aldredge, Mills Godwin



CAROL PYSZKOWSKI **Position:** Outside hitter **School:** James River **Year:** Senior

The skinny: A serving percentage of 93 paired with 42 aces helped Pyszkowski nab first-team Dominion District honors. She also was efficient on offense, posting 294 kills en route to a 45.3 percent kill ratio. Pyszkowski finished the season with 100 blocks.

What you should know: "I used to sail before I played volleyball" when she lived in California.



HAILEY BROOKS **Position:** Setter/outside hitter **School:** Atlee **Year:** Junior

The skinny: Brooks recorded a generous 442 assists through 92 matches. She had 199 service aces and posted 26 blocks. The first-team Capital District and Central Region pick posted 208 kills and 184 digs.

What you should know: "I met (professional volleyball player) Misty May" in Virginia Beach in the summer of 2010.



GABRIELLE HOLT **Position:** Outside hitter **School:** Cosby **Year:** Junior

The skinny: The first-team Dominion District player accounted for a hefty 249 kills. Holt, also a first-team Central Region selection, served up 31 aces and had 78 digs.

What you should know: "My role model is my brother, Matt."



EMILY REBUCK **Position:** Libero **School:** Mills Godwin **Year:** Junior

The skinny:The Colonial District player of the year averaged 4.19 digs per game and finished the season with 331. Rebeck had 38 kills and 41 aces, and was named to the all-Central Region team.

What you should know:“I got my tooth completely knocked out with a softball last spring.”



HARPER SMITH **Position:** Outside hitter **School:** Clover Hill **Year:** Junior

The skinny:The Dominion District player of the year drove down an incredible 334 kills with just 88 errors in 74 games. Smith finished with 133 digs, 119 aces and 158 no decisions.

What you should know:“I work at Sonic and I take the food out on skates.”



KARLIE SUBER **Position:** Setter/outside hitter **School:** Atlee **Year:** Junior

The skinny: In 90 sets this season, Suber served 89 percent with 60 aces. She tallied 248 digs, dished 153 assists and recorded 112 kills. She was named first-team Capital District and first-team all-Central Region.

What you should know:“I am kind of obsessed with eating ice.”

Second team All-Metro Girls Volleyball

Jaelyn Jackson, Matoaca; Krystal Marshall, Powhatan; Ebony Scott, Powhatan; Lauren Biagioli, Clover Hill; Conner Beightol, Deep Run; Stefanie Froelich, J.R. Tucker; Alex Georgiadis, Maggie Walker GS