
Lauren Heria - Activities Team Leader @ DSU



What course did you do at University?

Politics, University of Nottingham

Did you take part in sport whilst you were a student?

Throughout my time at University I played Football and Futsal for the University 1st team. I also got involved in a number of intramural sport leagues, my favourite being the weekly Volleyball League.

I was also heavily involved in the organisation side of university sports. As a student, I developed our Women's Futsal Club offer to increase our capacity to 3 women's BUCS teams and also set up and ran the only weekly women's football intramural league in the country. In my final year I was also elected into the sabbatical position of Sports Officer which meant I was the lead representative for all the students engaged in sport and a member of the University of Nottingham Sport Senior Management Team.

What made you want to get involved in sport at University?

When I joined University my main motivation for getting involved in sport was to make friends. At the Activities Fair the Women's Football Club told me they were 'a no cut club, so anyone who wanted to join could'. I still remember how this reduced my anxiety about getting involved and encouraged me to attend the taster session. Then I made the first team, and also made a number of friends whilst at university.

Have any females in sport inspired you and how have they inspired you?

Lots of famous female sporting stars have inspired me and still do. However, growing up my biggest sporting role models were always my female coaches. As they were experts in the sport and also great role models who were giving back their time through coaching.

What advice do you have for any other females looking to get involved in sport or physical activity?

Trying a new sport for the first time can feel outside of your comfort zone, and a little scary. I still feel it when I try a new sport. However, don't let that put you off, be brave and give it a go. You will not be the only one trying something new. Ultimately, sport is all about having fun, so pick something that seems interesting, if you can, ask a friend to come along, and get involved. Then if that is not the sport for you, try something new. There are thousands of sports, so you are bound to find something for you! I would definitely recommend looking at the DMU Active programme as well as the programme has over 20 sports, all tailored for beginners, including some women's only sessions.

Would you ever try another sport?

Definitely! I love trying new sports. This year I have started playing Basketball through the DMUactive programme and absolutely love it.

How has playing sport helped you in your day to day life/career?

Sport has so many benefits for me. However, a main one is it is a massive de-stress. Also it's a sad fact but playing sport is one of the few times I have no phone on me and can completely switch off from any distractions, and that has a really positive impact on my mental health.

Playing and coaching sport has allowed me to develop confidence and lots of skills and experiences that employers want. Such as team working skills, leadership skills, creative thinking and problem solving. It also resulted in me getting my first fulltime job as 'Sports Officer'!

Favourite personal sporting moment?

In one of my final seasons playing for Charlton Athletic we went the whole season unbeaten, beating the likes of Chelsea and Arsenal. We were a great team who worked hard at every training session and game and we always played for each other. That is why it is still one of my best sporting moments even over 7 years later!

Favourite female sporting role model?

Steph Houghton – England Women's Football Captain