



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Baytown Junior student 'stands out' on football team

Football uniforms are bulky, full of padding and equipment that hides player individuality and reminds people it is a team sport.

But when the helmet comes off and Ramsey Barton shakes her hair free, all that hidden individuality fades away.

Then the stares, points, and whispers follow from the boys on the other sideline. A girl? Playing football?

Ramsey Barton got used to it all. The Baytown Junior student played lineman for the 8th-grade B team, her first year on a football team.

Encouraged by her friends, Ramsey signed on to play this year — much to the surprise of some her coaches and teammates.

"A couple of my friends said I should play football" and that's what she did. Why not, she thought, her brother played football and it looked like fun.

"Girls can do anything that they want to do, anything that they put their mind to," Ramsey said.

Ramsey, 13, was new to Texas when the season began, having moved to Baytown this past summer from Colorado.

At first, she said, "Coach (Robert) Mack did not think I was serious." But she was.

"She approached me about playing football when school started. I told her she would have every opportunity but will have to do everything that the boy's did," Coach Mack said. "She accepted the challenge, working very hard during practice which encouraged other members of the team to work as hard. Ramsey played special teams and offensive line and did a great job at both, and was a very important member of the 8B team.

"Her future in football is up to her," the coach said.

Ramsey is the first girl to play football at Baytown Junior since 2003.



Goose Creek CISD photo by Carrie Pryor-Newman

Baytown Junior School eighth-grader Ramsey Barton stands next to the school mascot. Ramsey is the first girl to play football at Baytown Junior since 2003.

Ramsey wore No. 66. Though not a starter, she did get her share of playing time in all the games, and had the bruises to show for it.

One of Ramsey's teachers, Teresa Black, said, "we are very proud of her, and the boys say she is a beast."

Ramsey says she enjoys hitting people on the gridiron. She said her teammates did not treat her like a girl — but rather like one of the team.

For Ramsey's parents, knowing their daughter would be OK was the top priority.

"I think participating in sports will help her to be successful in high school," said Ramsey's dad, Thomas Barton.

Ramsey says she aims to play football at Goose Creek Memorial High School next year.

"If I put my mind to it, I can do it," she said.

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