Coach Schaeffer says, “I had no clue what I was in for. I learned and played in a program where soccer was life. I loved practice, I slept and breathed the game. There was nothing more that I loved than playing, competing, and winning. Imagine my horror when I inherited players that had no skill and few had the desire to get better. The future of the program was dim… at best.

Hint: We have and always will, regardless of how badly we want to cheat… start here.

Year #1 - “I’m not kidding when I say the first year has been blackened from my memory. Perhaps it is a defensive mechanism to the abomination that was called a varsity soccer team. The Shawnee Soccer Team was littered with girls who just wanted to do something but had no work ethic and certainly had no skill with a soccer ball. I try not to look back, but when I do, I see a team like National Trail or Yellow Springs. It’s amazing that we even survived the first couple years of soccer.

Hint: Well, after every beaten path… where do we go?

Year #2 - “We were bad in year one and in year two. We have only won two or three games in each year. I had one decent player, who would be resigned to a deep back-up role if she were to play in 2015. But, that’s what we lived with. One player, no help. Imagine her frustration. If I wanted to compete with Carlisle or Eaton, I would, literally, need an act of God.

Hint: Half-time speech anyone?

Year #3 – Seven games where we lost by 8 or more goals. SEVEN. Yes seven. What do you say to a group of girls that are down seven to zero versus Valley View at halftime. What do you say to a group of girls who are down six to nothing at halftime and the other team is upset because they didn’t get their seven goal goal by halftime? What do you say to your girls after the game when they have lost 11-0 to Bellbrook and Bellbrook has spent the last twenty five minutes of the game playing keep away? It was not easy. In fact, it was downright painful. But, you know what? We powered on. No one quit that year. The game was enough motivation. We kept on showing up and getting beat. Even when it would have been much easier to simply quit, we stayed true to our focus and tried to get better.

Year #4 – Hint: Go here for a breather?

Coach Schaeffer says, “Right here… Danielle Winkler gave me the first goose bumps I have had as a coach. We were playing Oakwood, ranked 4th in the state at the time, and it was halftime. The score was 1-0. Only 1-0. We had been absolutely dominated for the first 40 minutes, but, again, the score was only 1-0. Despite getting pummeled for forty minutes, being outmatched in strength and speed, we were down 1-0 at halftime against one of the best teams in the state. I was headed to the east end of the field and I looked back. There was Danielle, standing right here, on top of this same bench, staring into the crowd waving her arms up and down at the fans encouraging them to get into the game. The game ended 2-0, Preble Shawnee getting blasted for another forty minutes. But, maybe this game is what kept me involved in Preble Shawnee Soccer. I saw the passion and the desire for the game that I love so much. Maybe there was some reason to stick around and fight it out?

Hint: Ugh… the road wouldn’t be that easy. We still weren’t good, so, I figured if we can’t out skill them, let’s out condition them. Coach Jamie Hughes coined this run ‘a complex’.

Year #5 - “Did we enjoy our run? We aren’t even one-third of the way through yet. Are we tired? Do we want to quit or keep moving? In year four (2002 I think), Shawnee Soccer was introduced to the first class of non-quitters in the program. Jessica Gamble, Stephanie Speessen, and JJ Mills started their careers in the Preble Shawnee Soccer Program. Despite the 4, 5, and 6 win seasons they endured, they stuck with it and kept fighting. It’s time we, too, keep moving. Let’s go!”

Hint: Continue following the “Golden Brick Road”. About ½ a “complex” down.

Year #6 - “The year is 2005. Hope rears its head. I have told this very team that at halftime, the other team (Your Newtons, your Carlisles have hope. Hope is a scary thing. Hope also can be a knife in the back. When you have hope, hope can get crushed. Imagine going into a game and thinking that you have a legitimate chance of beating a team you have always dreamed of beating. After the game… you look at the scoreboard and it reads 7 to nothing. Not even close. Hope? Hope is nothing but an illusion for the weak. No hoping we win league this year. Let’s just do it.”

Hint: Through the woods and over the river?

Year #7 - “This is the year we actually had a significant victory. Can you imagine playing 87 consecutive games and never beating a team that is recognized as ‘good’. Well, it happened. This year alone, we have beaten Carlisle twice, Madison, Eaton, Piqua, Fairborn, and stood toe to toe with Badin and Waynesville. One time in 87 games we beat a “decent” team. Think about that. If that were true today, our seniors would be lucky to have won ONE game against just a decent team. But, it was our turn against Milton Union. We won the game 3-2 and we shouldn’t have. The want and the desire had arrived at Preble Shawnee and to this day it has not left.”

Hint: Ugly Injury Troll?

Year #8 – Chelsea was a player that had average skill and a huge heart for the game of soccer. I think that she never thought she was going to be the best on the team. A few years prior and she would have been one of my better players, but on this up and coming team, she wasn’t ever going to be the star. She was at peace with being designated as that second midfielder off the bench when a sub was needed. She knew twenty minutes a night would be generous. But, she played and practiced as hard as anyone I’ve ever coached simply because she loved the game. In 2005, as a sophomore she sprained an ankle three games in. She came back in game seven and in her first 10 minutes sprained her other ankle. She was done for the season. In 2006, she sprained an MCL about five games in. Two games after coming back, she get a nasty concussion – out for her junior year. In 2007, she got another sprain right before the season started. We held her back for five or six regular season games before running her back out there. It was her choice not to rush back. She played eagerly and sparingly in games 8, 9, and 10. Things were good. In practice, just one day before a big league match, she stepped on a cone as she was backing up. She tore her ACL. Chelsea never played again and she was devastated. But, she put the team first. She went to every practice and games. Kept stats and cheered the team on. She personified the true spirit of what it meant to really love the game.

Hint: Park it here.

Year #9 - There was a player that graduated from here in 2006 or 2007… She was a big girl. Not very good at soccer. Loud, often obnoxious. She really only had a couple girls on the team that I thought she might have been friends with. She didn’t get to play very often. Her home life was not a good one either. Why do I bring her up? Regardless of her personality, the fact the she wasn’t very good, and apparently wasn’t very popular, she always… and I mean always supported the team and the players on it. When she put on a Shawnee uniform, she defended her team and teammates with every ounce of her being. She smiled while doing it even if she was angry at an opposing player or berating a teammates ex-boyfriend. Two years after graduating, I had heard she had died in a car accident. I like to think that the Shawnee Soccer Program gave her something positive to be a part of – a family that she was proud to be a part of. You all, don’t take the positives in your life for granted.

Hint: Freshmen spend more time here than anyone else…

Year #10 - 2011 – It was our first win against Waynesville. I was happy but not thrilled, thinking that we could have possessed a little better or finished a little more frequently. You all know Dean Ketring. Dean is a great guy. Supportive, reserved, calm. I was here putting stuff away after a hard fought win versus Waynesville. He pulled up behind my car and hopped out of his. I made eye contact with him and he let out this holler of excitement and pumped his fist in the air. “Woo-hoo! Great win tonight coach! Keep it up. Girls look great!” He shook my hand vigorously and got back in his car and left. I think at this moment, I realized that maybe I had taken our long, ugly history for granted. Work hard and enjoy your victories. This team needs to know when to celebrate, but most importantly we need to NOT be content with our successes. We went on that year to not win league and we lost in the sectional finals.

Hint:

Year #10… Our first year of dominant seniors had arrived!!

Kaitlyn Ketring says about our team (our 2013 seniors) at graduation... “Our soccer team has had a great family experience and no one can take that memory away from us.” Kaitlyn turns and faces her fellow classmates at the graduation ceremony… “I hope everyone has a similar experience because our team’s experience was so special, so irreplaceable. If you haven’t had that experience, I hope you all do in the near future.” Be thankful. Consider ourselves fortunate. We have ALL had this experience this year. Please do not take it for granted. We march onward, seniors.

Hint: Public Acknowledgement of our first player of the year, our first All-State player, and our first Channel 7 Player of the Week?

Year #11 - Well, here it is girls. This is the spot where we can see that Preble Shawnee Soccer has been firmly entrenched on the Who’s Who Soccer Map in the Miami Valley. I spent 12 years going to meetings and voting for other team’s players for all-area and all-state. Four hours each meeting, 12 meetings and Preble Shawnee didn’t even get a sniff. It wasn’t necessarily because we didn’t have a player worthwhile. It was simply because the team was never recognized as one of the best. Well, that has changed. We’ve had four consecutive all-state players and in the past six seasons, we’ve seen several league players of the year and a dozen or so senior all-stars. These are only partly personal accolades. These are also recognitions that Preble Shawnee now has the respect of every team in the Miami Valley. As a TEAM, we should be proud of these recent accomplishments.

Hint: The clock expires on history…

Year #12 – Right here. The ball rolls out of bounds. The clock ticks :5, :4, :3, :2, :1, :0. It was surreal. The volleyball game had ended and the fans and volleyball team had just clinched a league title of their own and they came out to catch the end of the game. EVERYONE was here. The stands were packed. We had just won league with a win over Milton Union and the celebration had begun. We stormed off the field, fans streamed on to the field. The school celebrated two league champions that night. We stayed for at least forty-five minutes after the final whistle just reveling in our accomplishments. We were ecstatic.

The memory lasts forever, but the joy was short lived. We were undefeated to that point and played a VERY good Monroe team in the last regular season game. We lost 2-0. We entered the tournament as the #1 seed and we hosted a #7 seed – Bethel. We failed to show up. Partly because we were content? The same mysterious illness that has plagued us at points this year. Bottom line: we lost 2-1 to a team that we should have beat. We ended the best season ever with two losses and a 13-2-2 record.

Hint: Banner time!

Year #13 – You all know the story – except you freshmen. We had a mediocre year in league. We had a few let downs in league play and ended up in third, but we entered the season tournament with high hopes. We didn’t have much depth in 2014 and we were struck with some key injuries in the middle of the year. Those struggles equaled some league results that kept us out of the title hunt. But, we were healthier leading into the tournament. We cruised to the school’s first sectional title with a 4-1 win over TCN and a 2-0 win over Bethel. Again, the feeling was great. Making history yet again. But, I think we were a little dissatisfied with the lose to Lehman Catholic 2-0 in the District Finals. I love that! Lehman Catholic, 7th in the state, beat us 2-0 in a competitive game and we were disappointed! I think that we all since that point have had revenge on our mind. We are hungry for a district championship. We want to create new firsts for the Shawnee Program. And I think that will lead us to the final piece of the puzzle.

Hint: Put the puzzle together.

“I am a piece of the puzzle.”

Read team messages.

Freshmen read alumni messages.