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NORTHEASTERN NETMINDER AERIN FRANKEL NAMED BOB ALLEN WOMEN'S PLAYER OF THE YEAR

By Heather Rule , 06/10/21, 8:59AM MDT

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Frankel was also this year's Patty Kazmaier winner as the top player in women's college hockey

Playing in the midst of a pandemic, Northeastern University goaltender Aerin Frankel and her teammates finished the year making history at the program's first Frozen Four. For Frankel, she was simply grateful to play.

"I think just being able to play was incredible," Frankel said. "And I think we took advantage of that and just being grateful every time we had the chance to get on the ice, whether it was practice together, play games and compete was just an honor.

"I appreciated it more this year than I ever have before, given that other teams weren't competing."

Frankel was named the 2021 Bob Allen Women's Player of the Year, an award that annually recognizes the accomplishments of an outstanding women's hockey player from the United States. It's named in honor of the late Allen, an ardent supporter of women's hockey in his career. Frankel said she is honored to receive the award.

"I think it's such an incredible award named after such an incredible person," Frankel said. "As I learned more about Bob Allen, he's just truly had such an impact on the women's game, and there's just been so many elite players that have come before me."



The last goaltender to win the award was Olympic gold medalist Maddie Rooney in 2018. It's "super special" when a goaltender can win an award that could be won by any player on the ice, Frankel said.

In addition to this award, Frankel won the 2021 Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award, which goes to the top women's college hockey player. She was also the Hockey East Player of the Year, WHCA National Goaltender of the Year and Hockey East Goaltender of the Year.

"A lot of times, goaltenders don't get singled out for these bigger awards," said Katie Million, director of women's national team programs for USA Hockey. "She's really in great company there with the other recipients and goaltenders receiving those awards."

The 5-foot-5, 22-year-old goaltender from Chappaqua, New York, finished her fourth season in between the pipes for the Northeastern Huskies, leading her team to its first-ever Frozen Four appearance and national title game. Northeastern took a 22-game unbeaten streak into the national championship game as the No. 1 seed but fell 2-1 in overtime to Wisconsin and finished the season 22-2-1. Frankel made 81 saves in three NCAA Tournament games, with 35 in the championship game.

Not only was this season history-making for the Huskies, but it was record-shattering for alternate captain Frankel. She recorded five consecutive shutouts and nine for the season, leading the nation. Her 27 career shutouts broke a school record. She led the NCAA in goals against average (0.81), save percentage (.965) and goalie winning percentage (.891). She finished the season 20-2-1 with only 19 goals allowed and 526 total saves.

"I think given that strange and unusual year, Aerin's performance definitely was noticeable," Million said. "Right down to the NCAA Tournament and her performance in all the games there. She was phenomenal."

Frankel has a 78-18-8 overall record with Northeastern in four seasons, never having a GAA higher than 1.92 in a single season. She found more consistency within her game over the course of her college career, ironing out the ebbs and flows throughout what can be a long college season.

"You have to not get too high or too low, really, at all throughout the entire season," Frankel said. "As a freshman, there's maybe a mindset that I didn't really fully capture, and I think I grew as a player over my time at Northeastern."

Frankel describes herself as passionate and competitive with an athletic style in the net that some might call unorthodox, she said. She likes to do whatever it takes to stop the puck, competing for every save.

Acceptance Remarks

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"I hate being scored on," Frankel said. "It's one of the worst things. So I think that drives me to be better, to get scored on as little as possible."

For Million, she was just as impressed with Frankel off the ice. She said Frankel's mindset, drive, will and want to be better every time she steps on the ice stood out to her.

"I love hockey, so I think I'll want to be around the game for a long time," Frankel said.

Story from Red Line Editorial, Inc.