



Companion curriculum for GOALS “Hockey Stories”

This week’s feature is focused on the inspiring story of Lera Doederlein. Cunningham. Her hockey story is another in the GOALS series which will showcase people or aspects of the



hockey community that are distinctive for many reasons – be they talent, courage, perseverance or leadership – or in most cases ALL of these great attributes. There are lessons to learn from these great players as outstanding people who set examples for all of us.

Remember, greatness is not always about being the best player – it is about trying your best, sticking with something and not giving up. Greatness is about overcoming what many may think are weaknesses, but you can turn them into strengths!

If you can print this page out, please do so then fill in the blanks to complete the full summary story. First make sure you watch the GOALS Hockey Story VIDEO though! If you can’t print it, you can still get a sheet of paper and fill out the correct answer when you come to a missing word in the story! Let’s go!

Lera Doederlein is a young (16) year old who is currently a player on the USA sled hockey women’s development team. Lera was born in the beautiful city of Saratov which is located to the southwest of Russia’s capital city – the city of _____.

Lera was a nickname given to this wonderful girl when she was put up for adoption at a Russian orphanage. She was always happy and positive and very quickly a family in the state of _____ with the last name Doederlein was only too grateful to be able to adopt this gem of a child.

The proud new parents, David and Fami, decided to officially make Lera the official first name of this cute baby who was originally named Chueva Valervina. So off they went to join the Doederlein’s other children. Do you remember how many children they already had in the family? _____

As little Lera grew, her legs became more and more painful from the physical condition she had been born with. Even though she was brave, strong and very athletic she decided that in order for her to continue her life and sports career, she should undergo an optional medical surgery. This involved the amputation of _____ of her legs above the knees. How many people would have had the courage to do this?

Answer – not many!

The amputation of her legs did not slow Lera down one bit. In fact, she was now free of pain and dedicated her energy to new sports! Her favorites were biking on an adaptive bicycle, and playing a fun type of ice hockey called _____ hockey. Soon Lera was the best player around and she was invited to visit the USA women’s development team in California. Incredibly she made the team and works out regularly as she prepares with the team for international competitions.

As her skill has been recognized, so has been her amazing journey. This past season the Anaheim Ducks NHL team named her as their _____ player. This is an honor they make each year to a very special fan. She was honored at the Honda Center and got to practice with all of the Ducks players. Josh Manson of the Ducks surprised Lera and shared with her that his own grandfather had lost one of his legs in an accident. So, Hanson particularly was impressed with Lera’s great spirit and skill! GOALS applauds Lera and maybe next year we can invite her to speak and skate with us at Anaheim ICE!!!!