

Jade McCarthy '02

A Sports First in Philadelphia

Jade McCarthy '02 knew that she was making an impact her first week on the job. While interviewing Philadelphia Eagles fans after the team's loss to Seattle, a man driving by rolled down his window and yelled, "Finally—a female doing sports in Philadelphia!"

It was about time, indeed. Last year, Jade became the first female sports reporter in the history of Philadelphia's major television networks when she joined the sports team at NBC-10. The city had had female sports writers and cable sports news anchors but never a woman sports reporter on a local network.

"When I was interviewing, they asked, 'Do you think you can handle going into the locker room or club house and asking the tough questions? Can you handle the light that will be shone upon you as the first woman in this city to do this?'" Incredulous, she guaranteed her abilities and hasn't looked back.

The job is a dream come true for Jade. Despite a lifelong passion for sports, her first years in the competitive broadcast news business were spent doing straight news reporting. She worked at WGGB in Springfield during her senior year at Mount Holyoke, then after graduation joined an ABC affiliate in Huntsville, Alabama, for two years. The experience worked in her favor.

"When I first spoke with [NBC-10], they said 'we're looking for someone with a news background because we don't want a stats geek,'" she said. "[The job] was a great opportunity, a chance to get into a top-five market in the country, but it was also a chance for me to try to do sports,



which is something that everybody had encouraged me to do along the way. I'm loving it."

Jade was prepared for sports mania growing up near Boston, a city known for its rabid baseball fans. In fact, her first story for a journalism seminar at Mount Holyoke was on Pedro Martinez, then a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. The seminar's professor, North Cairn, encouraged Jade to consider a career in television journalism. "In part because of her encouragement, I interned at Fox News in New York City, and I was hooked," said Jade. "I realized that this was what I wanted to do with my life."

Philadelphia has also warmed up to McCarthy. "Once you prove that you know what you're talking about and you can do the job, people embrace you," she said.—Meg Massey '08