

My name is Samantha Cebulski (everyone knows me as Sam) and I have been officiating for 4 seasons now, ranging from Illinois grassroots through USPHL and NCAA D3.

As some of you may know, I never played hockey growing up but have been around the sport since I was little because my dad and my husband both played (and continue to play). I have been in skates since the time I could walk, being a competitive figure skater for many years. Only when I graduated college, did I make the transition to playing hockey. I joined a senior women's league and fell in love with the sport, not as a spectator, but as a player.

A couple years after I started playing, my husband (a former official) recommended I try officiating for some extra cash. It wasn't until I met Erin that I decided to take the plunge and put on the stripes.

Over the past few years, many people have taken me under their wing for both development and mentorship. I grew to have such a passion for development that I became a mentor to give back in a small way. Over time, I started to supervise as well as instruct to give back to a sport that has done so much for me.

I want to continue this path of development for others more than myself. Illinois currently has an amazing development program in place and I want to see that continue to grow. My hope is that with successful development comes retention and we all know that we need more officials in Illinois.