

CHRISTIE RAMPONE

1999 U.S. WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM



As the longest-standing active women's soccer player in the world, Christie Rampone is the only remaining player from the illustrious 1999 Women's World Cup championship squad to still don a United States uniform. Her storied 14-year history of competition at the world's most elite level of soccer is perhaps the most picturesque and complete embodiment of the same

grace, humility, resilience, strength, talent and leadership that catapulted the 1999 Women's National Team (WNT) to previously uncharted levels of mainstream hysteria, which shattered glass ceilings for women in sport nation-wide. The same woman that was too afraid to speak to her teammates when first earning a place on the 1997 WNT is now an empowered and celebrated U.S. co-captain who has spent more than a decade fighting for the rights of women in the sport of soccer.

At the age of 24, she stood on a 120-yard grass stage in front of 90,185 breathless Women's World Cup fans at a packed Rose Bowl Stadium to the most historical screenplay ever written in the sphere of women's athletics. Allowing that movement in history to help morph her from meek and mild young superstar into master motivator and living legend, Rampone today still makes her living as one of the nation's fastest, strongest and most tenacious players. But, it isn't just her athleticism, blazing speed and composure on the ball that make her so special. It isn't the fact that she's 36 years old and still playing the most elite-level soccer on the planet. It isn't her World Cups, neck full of Olympic medals and Sportswoman of the Year awards. It isn't about the records broken, heads she continues to turn or history she's rewritten. It's not her bounce back from ACL and gallbladder surgeries to remain one of the nation's greatest. Extraordinary as all this is, these things are not what make her so special. What is special is that Christie Rampone, in all her success, doesn't just exist and bask in personal excellence. She moves, in every moment, and comes alive in making sure everyone around her shines with the very genius she daily lives out.

Now among the greatest leaders to ever grace the sport, Rampone has been the rock behind the WNT at every stage of the last 14 years. She also helped found the first-ever women's professional league in 2000 (the WUSA), lived its demise three years later and now remains a part of its rebirth in the WPS—currently playing for WPS's southern Florida powerhouse team, magicJack. This year's Women's World Cup marks the central defender's seventh world championship and she does it all as the only mother on the 2011 squad.

Born on June 24, 1975, Rampone was a star basketball and soccer player at Monmouth University before converting from high-scoring forward to defender for the USA. She married Chris Rampone in 2001, and has two daughters, Rylie and Reece.



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