

M^{INDRESANO}STUDIOS

BLUE SKY SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT RESILIENCE VIDEO – NOELLE

In the summer of 2016, 19-year old Noelle Lambert lost her left leg in a moped accident on Martha's Vineyard. A lacrosse player at Umass Lowell, and an athlete her whole life, Noelle's future changed in an instant. While many people in similar situations end up struggling both physically and mentally for the rest of their lives, Noelle was strong-willed enough to push forward with her life's dreams despite her accident. She taught herself to walk, then run again, after getting a prosthetic leg and later being granted a running blade. She was eventually able to return to the lacrosse field and also started running track. She became a motivational speaker, and started the *Born To Run Foundation*, which raises funds for prosthetics fellow amputees. She became a star athlete at Umass Lowell, and qualified and competed in the 2021 Tokyo Paralympics this past year.

Kim Zayotti at Blue Sky Sports & Entertainment reached out to us in the spring of 2021 to have us produce a video about Noelle. The Indresano Team was excited to tell Noelle's incredible story of Resilience, which became the title of the final video. We were excited to promote a message of hope and equity for athletes of all backgrounds.

Many people had told Noelle's story in the past, so the Indresano Team wanted to approach it from a different angle. Noelle never let her accident define who she was, and as a result, we found that many media reports and other profile videos of her story focused on her life after the accident and how she overcame her injury. We thought we could produce an incredibly emotional video if we got her to talk about the accident itself.

The Indresano Team first met Noelle over a Zoom call, where she told us a good portion of her story. Kim had described her as a "firecracker," and she did not disappoint. No one would have guessed that this young lady had been through such a traumatic event. She told us about the accident and made jokes about it. She told us how much support she had from her friends, family and coaches for getting her through, and how sports were her motivator to start walking again. She told us there were struggles, but was so thankful to be alive, she promised herself she would always maintain a positive attitude. She said she does not feel like she is disabled anymore.

After that powerful first glimpse of Noelle's life, the Indresano Production team got to work. Because of Noelle's affiliation with Umass Lowell, we were able to get permission to shoot at several locations on campus, including the track, gym, and conference rooms. The Indresano Team reached out to Noelle's track coach, Sherry Hart, as well as Noelle's mother, and asked them if we could interview them.

The production team and director did a lot of research to find inspiration for the cinematography for this video. Some of our inspiration came from a previous video we'd shot

M^{INDRESANO}STUDIOS

whose look we wanted to replicate. Based on that research, the team put together a storyboard. We pulled our talented camera operators into pre-production meetings to go over the storyboard and shot list. The production team also took care of details such as making sure Noelle brought her uniforms with her the day of the shoot, as well as track equipment and her running blade.

The production team was forced to tighten schedule from a two-day shoot to a one-day shoot because of the weather at the last minute. The shoot was scheduled to take place at both the Umass Campus and at Noelle's house in New Hampshire. The crew arrived at the Studio at 5:30AM to load the cars before heading up to Lowell. Arriving at sunrise, the Indresano Team had the track to themselves. The Production Team had made sure the track was reserved for the shoot, but no one had told the facilities crew we were filming, who interrupted the shoot when they started using a ride-on lawn mower in the background of our shots. It wasn't easy to get him to stop.

Michael and the crew shot B-roll of Noelle running, stretching and switching from her prosthetic leg to her running blade. One of our camera operators deployed a drone to get some visually interesting bird's eye views of Noelle on the track, and also shots as the drone flew alongside, and in front of Noelle.

The 2nd location on campus was the gym, which was a challenging space to shoot in because it was dark and cramped. Fortunately, the style the team was going for was moody and inspirational. The crew spent a lot of time setting getting the right look for lighting. They used a mist machine to add interest to the lighting and achieve high contrast shots.

After capturing B-roll of Noelle lifting, using the weight machines and ropes, we moved into a conference room to start the interviews. Noelle's coach was the first person to be interviewed, and he was great for the job. We could tell right away he and Noelle had a bond, and the way he talked about her, it was obvious he didn't treat her differently than any other athlete he had coached. He pushed her, and didn't take any excuses.

The rest of the interviews were being shot in New Hampshire, so the crew packed up and made the drive up to Noelle's house.

One of the challenges the team encountered with Noelle's interview was trying to get her to show emotion as she told her story. She had told her story so many times for the media, it was hard for us to break through her tough exterior. The first time she told it to us, we were surprised how calm and matter-of-fact she was. We knew there was emotion in the story, and were excited to go through the footage after we interviewed her and her mother. Our camera operators got some excellent B-roll of Noelle at her house with her mother, her dog and her cat. The team also shot some small re-enactment scenes.

M² INDRESANO STUDIOS

After the shoot wrapped, Michael worked with our editor to put together 2 cuts – a short and a long. The short cut became a teaser, a really powerful, stylized vignette of Noelle’s life. The long version is a short documentary style film about Noelle’s accident and her life, which delved deep into the specifics of her accident and her recovery.

The videos were incredibly well-received. Before they were shown to the public, The Indresano Team delivered the videos to Kim and Noelle. Noelle watched the trailer and said it was very emotional and gave her chills. Kim said that was very hard to do because of Noelle’s tenacity. Once we were able to show both videos to the public, the Indresano team received numerous positive comments and well wishes for Noelle. Noelle shared the video on her Facebook page as a reminder to other young people who endured something similar so that they can do anything they put their mind to. As Noelle said, “You are the sole person who can indicate where your life goes.”