SHARLEE SOLIS

Sharlee Solis began wrestling as a 10-year-old at the Concord Youth Center and by the time she was an eighth grader at Canyon Middle School she was the United States girls wrestling champion in the 105-pound weight class. That same year, 2001, she was named most valuable wrestler at the Tri Valley meet where 450 middle school athletes competed.

As a junior at Castro Valley High, Solis finished first in the North Coast Section meet, first in the state meet and was seventh at the national level in the 126-pound class. She repeated as NCS and state girls champion in her senior year, compiling a 28-0 record with 27 pins.

Meanwhile, she was also competing for the CVHS boys team. In fact, she recorded a pin against her San Leandro opponent in a Trojan victory that clinched the Hayward Area Athletic League boys’ title.

During the off-season as a teenager, Sharlee wrestled in freestyle events with different rules than the collegiate rules used by high school boys. Three times in her age group she was state champion and three times was ranked as an All-American in freestyle. In 2002, she went 3-0 against the German Girls National freestyle team and in 2004 she was invited to the first girls training camp at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.

Sharlee’s success drew the attention of the coaches at Missouri Valley College, which had won the 2004 and 2005 national championships in women’s wrestling, and she accepted a scholarship offer there. As a freshman she won the national collegiate championship in the 121-pound class and was ranked No 1 by USA Wrestling.

But 10 years of wrestling had taken its toll and Solis was forced to give up the sport as a college sophomore due to many injuries.

Solis works as site manager at a charter school in Livermore and plans to pursue an environmental studies program at Cal State East Bay.