



Noelle Lambert thanks Oak Bluffs Fire Department and EMT's for saving her life after her moped accident in summer of 2016.  
*Mark Alan Lovewell*

## **A Model of Resilience, Moped Accident Victim Returns to Thank First Responders**

**Steve Myrick** Monday, November 27, 2017 - 4:08pm

It was a hot July day in the summer of 2016 when Noelle Lambert and her friend Kelly Moran rented a moped and drove off for a two-wheeled tour of Martha's Vineyard. It was just after noon when Ms. Lambert lost control of the moped on Barnes Road and collided with a dump truck.

She lost her left leg in the accident (<https://vineyardgazette.com/news/2016/07/30/moped-accident-barnes-road-leaves-two-serious-injuries>).

Now recovered and getting around remarkably well on a prosthetic leg, Ms. Lambert returned to the Island on Sunday to give thanks to the first responders who stabilized her at the scene, got her into a Medflight helicopter, and to Boston Medical Center for surgery.

She met the first responders at the Oak Bluffs fire and EMS station, where the medics marveled at her radiant energy and positive outlook.

“I was never upset at myself,” said Ms. Lambert. “The day I woke up in the hospital I said, okay, this is what’s going to be my life now. I don’t even think about it any more. I just put on my leg and walk out the door.”



She said she remembers almost everything about the accident, and the response of the ambulance crews, except their individual faces.  
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Oak Bluffs fire chief John Rose was among the first to a scene. He said it was one of the most difficult situations he had ever responded to. “I remember knowing that we needed to act fast to make a difference.”

Conscious the whole time, Ms. Lambert said she remembered trying to get someone to call her mother, and when they finally connected she took the phone and reassured her parents that she was

okay.

She remembered asking if her limb could be reattached, that she was a lacrosse player and she needed her leg. The medics were busy, and the answers were vague.

“Okay, I’ll take that as a no,” she said with a laugh on Sunday, recalling the accident. “When I got in the helicopter, that’s when the pain started kicking in. I was in shock, obviously.”

She spent four days in the hospital and another week in a rehabilitation center before returning to her home in Manchester, N.H.

Ms. Lambert has taken on rehabilitation and recovery in the same hard charging way she plays Division I lacrosse for the University of Massachusetts-Lowell.

“Hasn’t slowed her down at all,” said Jeffrey Lambert, her father. “She’s been parasailing, jet skiing,”

The first question she asked when being fitted for a prosthetic leg was whether she could run with it. It turned out she couldn’t, but she got a second prosthetic leg suitable for running, and she is back in training, eagerly looking forward to the next lacrosse season at UMass-Lowell. Her coaches and teammates don’t take it easy on her any more, refusing to accept any excuses during 6 a.m. practice sessions or dreaded weight lifting exercises.



A Division I lacrosse player, Noelle is looking to play again next season. — *Mark Alan Lovewell*

“I cut better with my prosthetic than I did with my real leg,” said Ms. Lambert. “I’m finding what I can actually do on the field. I don’t have any issues with stick skills. I remember doing drills, and running and catching was so hard. I’m focusing on 20 different things with my leg, now I have to focus on catching. I’ve almost gotten that down, almost there.”

She said she has received astounding support on the path to recovery, including assistance from several people who were injured in the Boston Marathon bombing.

“It really helped me not stay in my head about it, not having to sit by myself and feel sorry for myself,” said Ms. Lambert. “I had support everywhere. I think it was my mind set from the beginning. I was just determined to not let this define who I was.”

She also got help from the bombing victims in setting up her own charitable foundation. She hopes to help young kids who have gone through what she has.

There was another character trait that helped her hold it together during difficult times.

“I have a sick sense of humor, putting it lightly,” said Ms. Lambert. “That’s the only way you get by. I’d rather have that than be depressed.”

For example, for Halloween she dressed up as an IHOP restaurant.

“I took a picture with my prosthetic on, you can see my leg,” she said. “Everyone would see me and they wouldn’t know whether to laugh or not. I’m like, it’s okay.”

Some of the medics were incredulous that the young woman could survive an unthinkable trauma and emerge with such an optimistic approach to life.

“We’re glad you came, because usually you go through something like this, it’s this intense short period of time, and then the patient’s gone,” said Jim Davin, the EMT who accompanied her on the Medflight to Boston.

“This is why we train so hard,” added Chief Rose. “We make the sacrifices that we make every day for this type of outcome, for somebody who is so amazing, like she is, just so positive.”

As Noelle mingled with the EMTs individually and in small groups, she said over and over how thankful she was. She handed out custom T-shirts that said, “Thank you for saving my life.”

“This past Thanksgiving I was with my family, we all thought we should come down and say thank you because I wouldn’t be here without any of you guys,” Ms. Lambert said. “There’s not enough times I can say thank you.”



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