

Shifting Course

Girls Novice 8 received their medals after placing first at Hoover Fall Classic. Bradshaw was sitting eight seat in the boat. "Being in the boat during the race is indescribable, being in a boat with other people who share the same unique passion is not something that many people can understand," said Kathrine Pollard.



Runner Finds New Passion in Rowing

Running on the path leading to the parking lot, Zoë Bradshaw was leading the pack of rowers throughout their warm-up. Unknown by teammates, Bradshaw used to train for long distance runs, before the switch to rowing due to being diagnosed with Psychogenic Nonepileptic Seizures, causing her to stop competing during her second season of cross country.

According to the American Family Physician Psychogenic Nonepileptic Seizures, are episodes of movement, behaviors, or sensations that are similar to epileptic episodes that do not have neurological beginnings, instead they can be brought on by psychological distress.

"I had feared my past meet seizures would occur once more," said Bradshaw. "But I still appeared at (track) meets to support my teammates my last season of 8th grade."

For high school cross country runners, meets are composed of running 3.1 miles.

But due to fear of having seizures and passing out, competing in track became stressful for Bradshaw, to the point where it even affected her schooling and her relationships with teammates.

"The days that I would have meets would be full of stress to the point where I could not understand what my teachers were saying," said Bradshaw.

When entering high school Bradshaw considered rejoining cross country, but something new came into her life.

"I'd remembered my brother, (now) a senior in high school, as a freshman had tried a learn-to-row summer camp. When he began his first season that spring, it had been cut short due to COVID-19," said Bradshaw. "I decided to give it a try knowing that I would most likely see the same upsetting and painful experiences if I had taken up cross country again."

After trying Learn-to-Row, with Olentangy Rowing

Club, Bradshaw joined them that fall season on the novice girl team. During fall season Bradshaw and the novice girls, team placed twice, at Head of the Ohio, and Hoover Invitational. The team had some of the fastest times throughout the club. Most recently Bradshaw was in four-boat that placed third at the Cincinnati Invitational.

"Rowing provides more of a team-bonding experience than cross country since you must be together and in unison in order to achieve successful results," said Bradshaw.

On days that the weather is not nice or the wind keeps Olentangy Rowing Club off the water, the team travels to the Alum Creek dam and run the path over the dam.

"Now when I run, I don't feel the sense in my brain that tells me I am a failure if I don't continue running," said Bradshaw.

Like with anything, rowing has presented some challenges for Bradshaw especially



Hannah Donnelly, and Bradshaw dressed up for twin day. Everyone was wearing fun outfits causing a lot of laughs. "Being Zoë's big sister was really fun last season. She's super fun but also sweet and caring, and getting to know her better was really great. I still get to talk to her everyday and I love being her friend/big sis," said Donnelly.

as the seasons transition from fall to spring.

"I have found this season, spring, that being able to work is almost out of the picture for me this season because of how much I have committed to the sport," said Bradshaw. "I had conflicts in the fall with scheduling, but it was somehow easy to work around."

Rowing has also provided positive change to Bradshaw's daily routine and life.

"Rowing has provided an outlet outside of school and home where I can exercise, bond with my teammates, and understand the fundamental goals I can achieve when I don't have to worry about much individual competition," said Bradshaw.

Rowing and cross country are very different in certain as-

pects but similar in others. With both sports having the course be 3.1 miles, but unlike cross country regattas then change to 1.2 miles sprints once the spring season starts.

"I feel that at regattas, there is mostly plenty of time in between arriving at the race and actually racing," said Bradshaw. "When at XC (cross country) meets, it feels like we almost step on the course as soon as we get there, so it seems very rushed."

Bradshaw has rowed for eight months, and has made a lot of memories along the way from practice to regattas.

"When we were rowing at Hoover during the fall season and once we had crossed the finish line our coxswain, Malin McGranor, she stared at me and we both just started balling," said Bradshaw. "We knew that was the best race and moment we had ever rowed. Once we had gotten back on land, the feeling of accomplishment was rushing over me as so many people came running over to our boat and congratulating us."

Rowing has impacted Bradshaw in many ways. Her father, Adam Bradshaw, even posts documentaries of regattas documenting her journey, starting from with Head of the Ohio in Pittsburgh to her most recent regatta at the Cincinnati Invitational.

"I have created some of the best friendships I have had in a while and it makes the sport ten times more enjoyable," said Bradshaw.



Photo provided by Zoë Bradshaw. Bradshaw before running at a cross country meet. Bradshaw competed at a meet at Olentangy Shanahan Middle School. "I still appeared at meets to support my teammates during my last season, even if I was not competing," said Bradshaw.



Photo Provided by Zoë Bradshaw. Bradshaw coxed Malin McGranor during Midwestern Erg Sprints 2023 at Ohio State University. McGranor placed second thanks to Bradshaw's encouragement during the race. "It was definitely different because it's usually the other way around. I liked having her (Bradshaw) as the one beside me. I think the relationship between a coxswain and their stroke is really special. I loved having her beside me," said McGranor.