



Abby Shaver, junior

Mary Kate Shaver, freshman

Q: How much influence did you have in Mary Kate joining the cross country program?

Abby: "I feel as though I had a bit of influence in my sister joining cross country. She did XC at St. Pets (St. Petronille) before coming to West but I think she was a little concerned about how much more serious the program at West was. I reassured her that she would be able to handle it and it was a super fun sport to do at West."

Q: How much influence did Abby have in joining the cross country program?

Mary Kate: "My sister did influence me to join cross country because she always seemed excited to be on the team. After every practice she would come home really happy to be running at West. I really wanted to be part of a team that was so family-like. She always told me that running had become her favorite sport due to all the things she had learned from upperclassmen like dedication and hard work."

Q: Did you have previous cross country experience?

Mary Kate: "I used to run on the St. Pets cross country team. I ran on that team since fourth grade up until eighth grade. I do think I would have joined the team even without Abby on it because I already knew that I enjoyed the sport."

Q: Are there even older sisters who competed for the Glenbard West program?

Abby: "I haven't had any older sister compete for West in this sport but I was friends with some of the older girls before I was a freshman and they told me similar things to assure me that it was something I could and should do."

Q: How are you and your sister similar or different in the way you approach cross country and your races?

Abby: "We are a bit different in the way that we approach races. She tends to get pretty nervous and questions her abilities before competing but I tend to not let myself get as nervous and just trust

that I have trained for what I am about to do and will do well in it. I have helped her try not to get as stressed for competing though.”

Mary Kate: “Both my sister and I are very competitive people when it comes to the sport of cross country and we both try to be as prepared for races as possible. We both practice very hard so that we can do our best at meets.”

Q: You two have not competed in the same actual race this cross country season. Do you anticipate competing together in any type of race?

Mary Kate: “My sister and I both plan to race in the Freedom Four during the summer and possibly the Color Run in Chicago. I think that it will be very fun to race with my sister due to our love of the sport.”

Abby: “My sister and I will most likely run the Freedom Four together this summer. I think that it will be really fun to run with her in the same race. We never get to during the season because she is a freshman and I am a junior and our levels never overlap, but it should be a fun experience.”

Q: What have you learned about the Glenbard West cross country program and sport that you think you may not have without your sister as a teammate?

Mary Kate: “I think I have learned that Glenbard West cross country is truly a family from Abby. I say this because without her I don't know if I would have been very outgoing. She took the time to introduce me to all my teammates and now I know how close our team really is.”

Q: What have you learned about the Glenbard West cross country program that you wish you knew as a freshman?

Abby: “There is not much that I wish I knew before joining the team, other than I feel like XC gets a bad reputation sometimes for being very hard and injury-prone. After being on the team for three years, I don't believe that this is completely true. While the sport is hard, and a lot of work must be put into it in order to gain success, the achievements for both you personally and your team are way more than enough of a reward for your hard work. As far as the sport being very injury-prone, I believe that as long as you take care of your body and do what you know you are supposed to, then injuries are much less common.”

Q: Has having a freshman sibling on the team altered your dynamic within the program?

Abby: “I think that having a freshman sister has helped me to become more of a leader on the team. Now I am an upperclassman and should be setting examples for the underclassmen and I think that knowing my sister is watching the examples I set makes it more important to me to set good ones for her and the other girls on our team.”

Q: Has having an older sibling on the team helped your assimilation to the program?

Mary Kate: “Having Abby there in the program has helped me transition because she already had a background with the team. She was able to help me get prepared for meets and explain our workouts in more detail at practice, and it made the whole season less stressful than I had anticipated.”