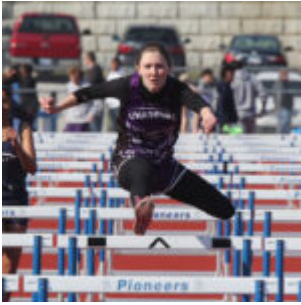


2020 Senior Spotlight: Sydni Keagle



Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.

Sydni Keagle loved soccer – in fact – it was her favorite sport all the way up through middle school.

However, when she reached the seventh-grade, she wanted to give track a try. She looked at the hurdles, and although it would be challenging, she thought she might be able to have some success in it.

Not everyone had the same views Keagle had.

“I mentioned to someone that I was interested in trying them and was told that it probably wouldn’t end well,” Keagle said. “I was a pretty clumsy and uncoordinated person at that time so it kind of made sense.”

Six years later, everything seemed to turn out just fine for Keagle and her hurdling adventure.

Last season, the Louisburg senior became the school record holder in the 100-meter hurdles and qualified for state for the first time. It was a year to remember for Keagle and she was looking to make more memories for her senior season.

Keagle was one of many key pieces to the Louisburg girls track

and field team this year and some preseason rankings had the Lady Cats ranked in the top five in the state with several returning state qualifiers.

"I remember still being in volleyball season and asking Carlee Gassman if she was as ready for our last season as I was," Keagle said. "Ever since the end of state, I had been physically and mentally preparing to put in the work to not only qualify for state again, but also place and earn an individual state medal.

"There was a good chance that we could send multiple girls to state and we had the goal of placing this year. This season would have been one of the best that our team has had in a long time and we were all so excited to compete."

Like all the other schools across the state, the spread COVID-19 took away those goals and potential memories with the cancellation of spring sports. The news hit everyone hard and Keagle was no different.

"I actually found out in a text from Delaney (Wright) to Rain (Pugh), Carlee and I," Keagle said. "She sent a message saying how much fun she had with all of us and that she would miss us and wished we could have had one more season. Immediately after I read the words, I started crying to the point where I couldn't stop. A little while later I realized that no track meant no school, and no school meant no prom and then it was just one thing after another that just had a snowball effect on my emotions.

"I talked to the girls for a while and it made me feel a little better but it was hard to really grasp that the whole year was over. I'm now at the point that I've accepted what's happening and have started to just focus on school and spending time with family."



Photo by Kristin Davis

Louisburg senior Sydni Keagle was hoping for her first state medal in the 100 hurdles this season.

Keagle had quite the junior season as she not only broke the school record in the 100 hurdles, she was also a part of the team's 4×100-meter relay that finished fourth in the state. She also came within one spot of taking a state medal in the hurdles after she came in ninth.

That one spot had been a motivator for Keagle going into the 2020 season as she was hoping to get on the state medal stand in her favorite event. Still, she has plenty of memories during her time with Louisburg track and is excited for what is to come – including a spot on the Southwest Baptist University track team.

"My favorite part of track is the people," Keagle said. "I don't remember most of the workouts we did in practice, but I

remember running with Delaney Wright, Rain Pugh and Carlee Gassman and how even when we were all out of breath and wheezing we could still manage to make each other laugh. The people are what make track fun and worth participating in. Even if I'm warming up for an individual event, 99 percent of the time there is another teammate either warming up with me or talking to me to calm my nerves.

"Track has definitely become a big part of my life, and while I don't practice year-round it is the thing that I have set the most goals for. It has also become a big part of my family's life, especially during season. They come to every meet they can and have supported me through all of my ups and downs. Without them, I seriously doubt that I would have come as far as I have in just a few years."

Other than track, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Sydni on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

LSZ: What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

SK: I've mostly been missing the opportunity to spend time with friends and actually see people. There are ways to still talk to them and communicate through technology, but it's not the same as being able to hang out in person.

LSZ: What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why

SK: My most memorable moment was when I not only qualified for state but also broke the school record for the 100 hurdles in the same race. The reason it was such a big deal was because my original goal was to qualify for state junior year and then break the school record by the end of my senior year and I was able to do both at the same time. It was unexpected and exciting.

LSZ: What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

SK: I really enjoy reading because it's a chance for me to slow down and just relax for a while. I don't have to worry about anything other than the story I'm reading and I can take a break from everything else I have going on.

LSZ: What are your plans for after graduation?

SK: I plan to go to Southwest Baptist University and study Elementary Education so that I can teach kindergarten or first grade. I also plan to run track.

LSZ: What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

SK: The accomplishments that I am most proud of are maintaining my grades throughout high school and being a member of National Honor Society. I'm usually pretty busy during the week so being able to have good grades, while still participating in athletics, going to church and volunteering, babysitting, and spending time with family, is something I'm really proud of.

LSZ: What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

SK: I was a dancer for six years when I was younger. I did ballet, jazz, and tap, but tap was my favorite.

Sydni's Favorites

Pro athlete: Stephen Curry

Pro team: Kansas City Chiefs

College team: KU Basketball

Movie: Aladdin

TV Show: Gilmore Girls

Song: If Today Was Your Last Day by Nickelback

Band/Musician: Jonas Brothers

Pregame meal/snack: Gatorade and a Subway sandwich

Class/subject: History

Teacher and why: Mrs. Quinn. She has been my advisory teacher for the past four years and I also had her for AP Lang, but she always makes a point to ask how I'm doing and to check in with me when she can tell that I maybe haven't had the best day. She also keeps me on task and makes sure I have all my work done.

Previous Senior Spotlights

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field

Erin Lemke – Soccer

Luke Wickersham – Golf

Skylar Bowman – Soccer

Gabby Dugger – Softball