Western Michigan Runner to Compete in U.S. Olympic Trial

Jana Graudins
Copy Editor

With the 2008 Beijing Olympics coming ever closer, athletes across the globe are training for the most-watched athletic event in history, with 4.5 million spectators, 4 billion TV viewers worldwide, and over 21,000 media persons watching. A competitive spot at the Olympics is often viewed as the highest honor an athlete and their country can receive, and those who win are considered the ultimate champions of their event.

However, such triumphs do not come easily. Olympic athletes train for months and years before reaching the level of competition required for the Olympics. Some have competed in their sport since they were in preschool. For Western Michigan University track runner Becky Horn, training began in fourth grade, when she ran in events such as the 55 and 30 yard dash. Now, she has worked up to the 400 and 800 meter runs, her main events.

In high school at Battle Creek Central, she was a member of the track team and also played basketball on the side. In track she was able run against many well trained runners, and she was excited that she felt able to go against them without being in top shape.

"It was good to know that I could compete with them without any formal training," said Horn.

With a personal record of 2:04 in the 800, Horn has qualified for the B-list in the 2008 Olympic trials. This means that after the automatic field of 30 people is filled up, those with the next highest times will be added into the race. It all depends on what heats and rounds you are put in.

"There are four rounds...you have to make a certain place in each heat to get to the next round. They'll take top 3 or 4, it just depends." said Horn. "If things work out the right way, the chances are very likely [I'll make it]."

At the moment, Horn is preparing for the trials by starting with a lot of endurance runs, and gradually working up to speed work. Although Horn is hopeful about doing well at the trials, it is very difficult to make it to the Olympics as a collegiate runner.

"Our running schedule is different," said Horn, "so [by the time of the trials] we'll be more tired out."

Horn was a two-time state champion of the 400m run in high school and has set the school record for the same race at Western.

Becky Horn leading the first lap of the 800 meter run, racing against top national runners.

She is excited for the trials. Horn said, "It's nervewracking [competing against gold medal winners]...It's a little rough, [but] you have to go into them [the races] with the attitude that it doesn't matter, you can run with them."

Kelpin Wins Golf Scholarship

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professionally.

"I like everything about the sport. It's hard and requires a lot of time but seeing good results makes it worthwhile. It also builds character because of the honest aspect of it and keeping good compsure while playing," exclaimed Kelpin.

Kelpin is inspired by Jack Nicklaus, a professional golfer nicknamed the "Golden Bear. Nicklaus has been an idol and motivation for Kelpin to make his own name one that will be talked about with admiration.

As a small child Kelpin and his siblings were constantly surrounded by relatives that played golf.

"Everyone in my family plays golf, my uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents and immediate family, I always had a fond memory of my uncle competing in golf. Everyone in my family has inspired me and has helped me to accomplish a good golf career," Kelpin fluently described his families vital role in his life.

Golf is much harder then many people think. It requires a positive attitude. Your attitude dictates your performance and will either create you or hurt you depending on how you harness that internal power.

Kelpin strongly stresses the importance of being mentally ready for a game."The most important element in golf is your state of mind. To realize that you are great, but to not be too egotistical, when it comes down to it, it is just an agility race of the mind. Who wants it the most? Once you have that balance under your belt you're golden," said Kelpin of the psychological approach to golf.

One of the aspects of the game that keeps on capturing Kelpin is the desire to improve, to always do better and of course to showcase his proficiency in the sport during competitions.

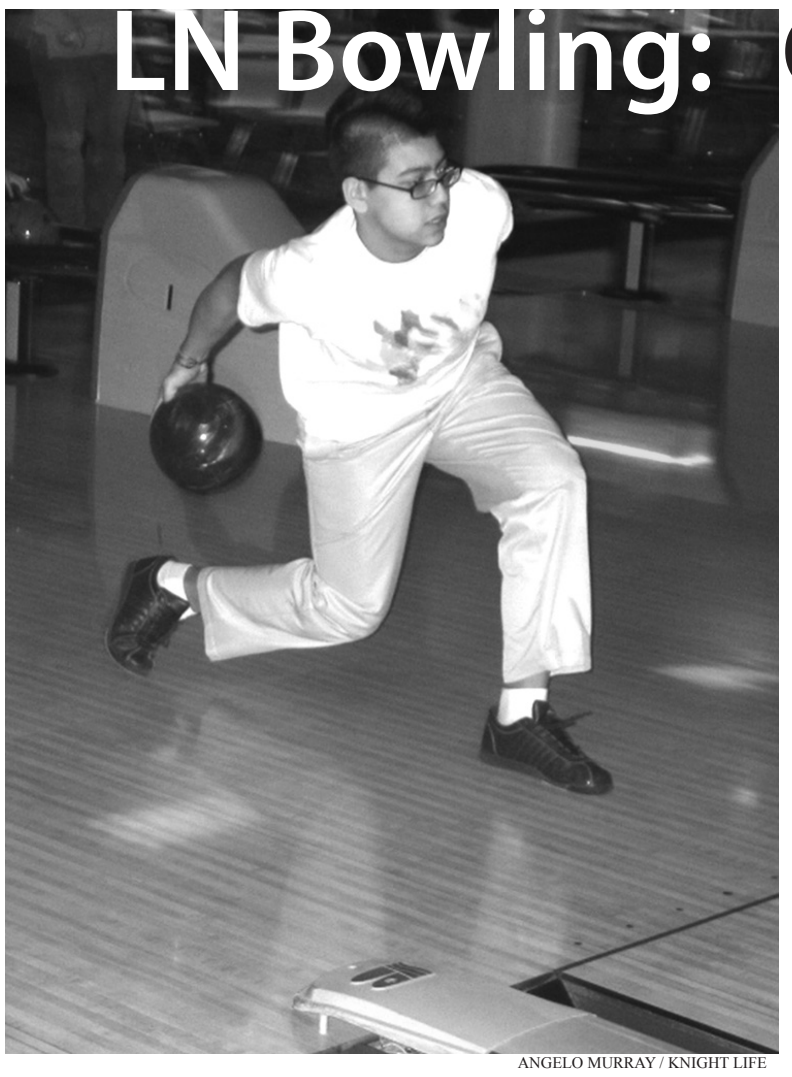
A fond memory of golf for Kelpin was when the 2004-05 golf team won the division in his freshman year. To keep on top of his game Kelpin works-out on the off-season and continues to take lessons from Charles Vandenderg, his private golf instructor, in Grand Rapids.

"Probably my favorite part of golf is when you are really struggling with something and you work really hard and see yourself grow and then actually try it on the course. You see a completely different player," said Kelpin.

Golf definitely builds up your character, helping develop discipline, which becomes such a big part of your life. It helps you to gain patience and appreciate hard work and good results.

"To those out there that want to succeed, never get discouraged, stay focused, work hard and remember the only person that is keeping you from reaching your ultimate height is your own self-denial," said Kelpin.

LN Bowling: Game or a Sport?



ANGELO MURRAY / KNIGHT LIFE

Sophomore Klay Niltassuan tries to bowl a perfect game; 300 points, at bowling practice, held twice weekly at Continental Lanes.

Christina Pillsbury
Opinion Editor

According to the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN), bowling is ranked 57th on a list of the 60 hardest sports. Bowling just barely beat out shooting, billiards and fishing for this coveted position, scoring just below curling. Some may question whether this even qualifies bowling as a sport, or if it's just a hobby or a game.

The members of the Loy Norrix bowling team would beg to differ. The team members practice twice a week at Continental Lanes and compete in eleven league matches before moving onto regional and state championships. The team took home the state title in 2006, and senior J.R. Reece is expected to compete for the individual state championship this season.

Reece contends that bowling is just as hard to master as any other sport, and he has experience. Reese also participates in basketball outside of school, and varsity baseball at LN.

Most LN coaches agree with Reece and believe that bowling is a sport, when it is approached as one. LN Basketball Coach Randy Rowe thinks that whether or not it is a sport depends on what scale the participant plays.

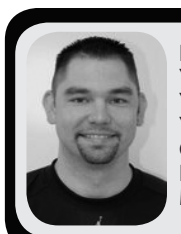
"[Bowling is] a sport enough, it's sanctioned by schools, it's played at Big 10 level, it's just a game until you compete at that [high] level," said Rowe.

On the other hand, LN wrestling and golf coach Tom Barnum thinks differently.

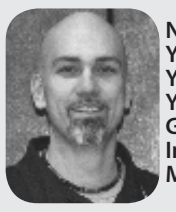
"Any sport where participants can drink beer while playing is not a sport," said Barnum.

The definition of sport may be fluid and undefined for now, but ESPN does consider bowling a sport, and the LN team continues to be successful. The women's team now stands at 1-1 and defeated Vicksburg in their first league game of the season on Saturday, December 1st. Both of the teams have a match on Saturday, January 5th at Continental Lanes.

Does the Loy Norrix Men's Varsity Basketball Team Measure Up?



Name: Matt Covault
Years in Basketball: 21
Years as a Coach: 12
Years as LN Varsity Coach: 3
Goal for this Year: Improve on W/L record
Improvements: Team chemistry / Team concept
Motto: "Together Everyone Achieves More."



Name: Rob Link
Years in Basketball: 24
Years as a Coach: 2
Years as LN Varsity Coach: 2
Goal for this Year: Win 15 games
Improvements: Teamwork / Unity
Motto: "Together We Win."

Anilash Panikulangara
Sports Editor

The Loy Norrix Varsity Basketball team has had legitimate seasons over the years. However, in the past few years the team has had some trouble because of height. The tallest player on the team this year is sophomore Max Klepper who is 6'4", Other teams around the area have players who range in height from 6'0" to 6'9". This makes it very difficult for the team to win because everyone knows that height plays a huge role in basketball.

Varsity coaches, Matt Covault and Rob Link know that height is an issue but that there are other ways of winning the ball game.

Coach Covault said, "In dealing with height issues, we are going to to be pressing, trapping, and turning the game into a transition format."

Also Coach Link said, "[In dealing with height isses] we will count on speed, speed and more speed."

Though height is an issue, coach Covault and coach Link have put together a squad that shows that they are just as good as any other team. Let's take a minute to meet the players of the Loy Norrix Varsity Basketball team.

MATT COVAULT / GUEST PHOTOGRAPHER