

My "Game On" Attitude

One of my favorite quotes comes from a Nike commercial that says "When the race is on, all bets are off". To me, that means that it doesn't matter who's the favorite going into a competition. During my four years on the cross country and track teams at Glenbard West, we've always been considered an afterthought. We were always the underdog. People didn't take us seriously. But we have changed some opinions with our performances in the last couple of years. Even though other schools have definitely had the advantages, we've risen from the bottom to be one of the top teams in the state, winning conference and placing 6th in state, based purely on our hard work and determination.

It doesn't matter that they're bigger, stronger, or faster. There are so many times that I have gone into a race knowing that there's another girl faster than I am. According to all of the statistics, they should beat me. My "game on" attitude is knowing that the odds are stacked against me, but choosing to be a fighter anyway. It's not backing down from anyone. I go into every competition with no fear because I know that what matters is what is in my heart. In the end, it all comes down to passion. There was a reason for all of the sweat and hard work that I put into each and every practice.

The most important part of my game on attitude is knowing that it goes beyond the race. I bring the same intensity and determination into the classroom as well. The same attitude translates into every part of my life. In order to feel confident and fearless in the race, I need to live a lifestyle that's going to allow me to win. It's eating right, giving my all in practice, always getting enough sleep, and staying away from things that I know will affect my performance. I missed parties, skipped donuts, and shunned soda pop. I ate power bars, carb-loaded with pasta, and went to bed before my little brother. I couldn't even count the number of times that I've been up before dawn in order to finish a run. I did all of those crazy little things so that I can step up to the starting line and look at every girl there and feel confident. I can say to them, "You may be stronger, but I'm going to beat you". It's the little things that allow you to accomplish the big things.

The truly amazing performances occur when hard work meets opportunity. I am absolutely confident in my training, so I treat every race as an opportunity to succeed. With my game on attitude, I toe the line for every single race with no fears or regrets.