

Loyola's Murray vows at nationals

Some people are just born to run. For senior Declan Murray, running is something that became a major part of his life at an early age.

"I ran track ... with my grade school," Murray said, "the first race I ever ran was the 800."

The senior economics major played soccer until early high school, when he decided to put track at the center of his life.

Murray, a native of Strongsville, Ohio, was drawn to Loyola by his older brother, who also ran track for the Ramblers.

"I went to a Jesuit high school; Loyola was the first school I visited ... I really liked it here."

In the four years since signing with Loyola, Murray has cemented his place as one of the fastest to ever run for the maroon and gold.

He currently holds the school record in the 600-, 800- and 1000-meter races for indoor track. Murray is also part of the distance medley and 4×400 meter relay teams that set school records this year in indoor competition.

Last year, Murray made the NCAA national meet but didn't qualify for the final run. This served as motivation for him going into this season.

"I went into my summer training [last year] with a bit of a desire for more."

Murray set goals for his senior year, which included finishing in the top five in the nation for his events in both the indoor and outdoor season.

Second Year Head Coach Randy Hasenbank was pleased to see this kind of determination from one of the six captains of the team.

"He walks the walk, he talks the talk, he works to complete exhaustion," Hasenbank said.

The hard work paid off, and Murray achieved the first part of this goal by qualifying in the 800 meter for the National Indoor Championships in Fayetteville, Ark. Murray came into the final race with the second-best time in qualifying but was going up against stiff competition.

"I was up there with ... a bunch of first team all-Americans who had already been there."

Murray ran the second-best run in Loyola's history, missing his own record by .01 second which was good enough to place third in the nation at the 800-meter race. Murray was happy to see one of his goals met, and plans to use it as further motivation for the outdoor season.

"Being able to knock out the first half of those goals in indoor, is kind of keeping me on track for outdoor," Murray said.

Murray will spend the last few months of his collegiate career focusing on spending some of his few spare moments with his teammates. For Murray, it's one of the most special things about the team.

"We have team dinner every night, which is a really good way to kill time. We'll sit in Mertz with like 30 of us, and it makes being on the Loyola track and field team different from being on any other team."

Hasenbank said he will miss having Murray around next year.

"Declan is the kind of guy that only comes once in a while. There's only one Declan Murray," Hasenbank said.

Murray said he plans to keep competing after the final outdoor meet this year wherever he can.

“I definitely want to keep running after graduation,” Murray said, “In the future, it will definitely be different. I’ll have to try to work my way up the ranks.”