

## Audio file

[Rose interview.m4a](#)

Intro:

Hello! And welcome to my government project where we will explore mental health through sports and different ways that it is affected. I interviewed 2 different people from track and their different experiences with the sport. I hope you enjoy!

Transcript

Sara: Hello, Rose, and thank you for joining me on this interview,

Rose: for sure

Sara: So we are going to be talking about track freshman year cause it was very different because of COVID. And so we're going to talk about your experiences. OK. So the first question is why did you join the track team freshman year?

Rose: Well, so I joined partly because my mom really wanted me to. And she's like, you should do a sport because you're not talking to people. Outside of your three friends and you need to go meet people and like, actually talk to other people and also be active because she's definitely one of those parents. She's like my child needs to be active all the time anyways, and I also wanted to do it because I was like. I want to meet people and make friends, but I also was like, I don't want to do it, unless there's going to be other people I know are doing it. And so I think it started, it was like just me and Jacob and like Esme and maybe you joined.

Sara: I had joined later. Because I needed to get a physical in.

Rose: Yeah, and I remember that. Anyways, but that's why I joined, partly because my mom and partly because I wanted to meet new people, and I was so bored this school is so boring here. I'm sorry. I was bored out of my mind.

Sara: Ok so Going off of that, what part did you enjoy most about freshman year track?

Rose: I think the community aspect of it, because. It was like you're this like little family, honestly, because it was. There's eight of us and it was you, me, Jacob, Judah, Armando Esme. It was like 6 freshmen and then a junior and a sophomore. And like Gracie and frick, what's his name? And another guy who was a junior and.

Sara: It started with an A.

Rose: Yeah ok,

Rose: He was cool. Anyways, we know who we all know who I'm talking about and, it was just like this close and little family and it was also like we had three coaches just for the eight of us. So like you never had to, like, fight for attention. And so you always got, like, exactly what it felt like you needed and the

training. Was like really hard sometimes, but I also felt like I improved and it was really fun hanging out with you guys because I definitely don't think I would have been as close with you and Jacob, if I hadn't done track practice with you guys. And it was really fun. Not only it was it was great for my mental health because running is really awesome and I learned that like I do like running to a certain extent and like I can get Better at it, But also again, the community aspect of it, because I had great friends and we had great conversations and great experiences Like at the end of. The year we all went to the. Coffee shop that was so good and it was so fun.

Sara: Yes. Oh my God.

Rose: That was so funny.

Rose: And I was like, I felt so. Like growing up and like, Oh my gosh. I have my own community that I'm making and like I have friends that are doing things And it's so cute.

Sara: Oh yeah, so going off of that, we obviously competed during freshman year track.

Rose: Very, very true.

Sara: It was very different than sophomore year or this year. So what were your feelings while you competed?

Rose: I competed like freshman year. I didn't honestly compete that much because there weren't many meets.

Sara: Right.

Rose: Mostly because of COVID. There are a couple of meets that I thought I couldn't do, but then I was like, oh, wait, I actually can But it was, Like too late to sign up for anything. Like I remember I think, The main race I did, I did the 800 and I liked it a lot like I was running. It was just like all you have to do is just like, think about your legs moving for like 800 meters and then you're done. And then you're gonna feel like you're Going to die, but it's OK because you finished it and that's super cool. I definitely, over like sophomore year I had to run the mile. That was like the thing that I had to run and that was not as fun. I mean, it was cool looking like being like, oh, this is what I've accomplished. Like I ran less than a 7 minute mile. Like, that's really cool. But I also, every time I got up to that Starting line I was like, I hate this so. Much, yeah, like it felt like There's like this sense of dread like How did I get here? Like what moment caused me to come here and, like before the gunshot to, like, go and yeah. So there's definitely. I had a very love hate relationship with The actual competitiveness of it.

Sara: Yeah, I can totally understand that I have The same thing. So with competing, obviously it's very stressful and it's very stressful leading up to competing. So how did track affect your mental health like positively and negatively?

Rose: I think honestly, especially freshman year, it overall was a net positive because I had more friends and I got to spend more time outside and with people who I knew cared about me and like running also just really good like the practice. I really liked The practices and we had a lot of those and a Lot of good memories from those. And honestly, in, since freshman year, I didn't do as much competing, I had a lot Of more fun at the meets because I was just running around getting Jacob his inhaler. Getting you your water, eating coconut chips like it was like it was like a field trip.

Sara: Oh my gosh, the coconut chips.

Rose: And so I had a lot of fun doing that. So honestly, freshman year, I think it was very positive. For me, sophomore was a little rough because we had change in management and there were definitely sometimes where I was like, I don't know if I can do this and it was also kind of discouraging because it took so long. Some places we practiced were really far away and it took forever to get there.

Sara: Oh my God.

Rose: And then it was, Really stressful, like being there forever long then getting back on the bus and I think that one was definitely less of a positive experience for me compared to freshman year, but that was mostly because I mean, there's a lot of factors with that, partly because we had a much bigger team and also the coaches were all, we didn't have the same coaches anymore and it was kind of unorganized sometimes how we had practice and,

Sara: Right.

Rose: Who was doing what? and where we were? But I did still have fun for sure. I'm glad I did it.

Sara: So going off of that, do you think you would have done track freshman year if COVID didn't happen?

Rose: I don't know, I think I would have been less likely to do it or less likely to want to do it, I guess partly because, Yeah, mostly because like they're, I would have already, maybe, probably, Had more friends and so That wouldn't have been much of a motivator.

Sara: Right.

Rose: Maybe I would have been more like do it cause some of my friends would want to do track and also I probably still would have been reasonably likely to do it because my Mom really wanted me to do it in the 1st place and so I don't think that would have changed if COVID hadn't happened, she's always, whether there's a pandemic or not she wants me to do extracurriculars so that's, I don't think that would have changed much, but I definitely do think my reasons for joining track would have been different had there been COVID or had if there hadn't been?

Sara: So, you did track both freshmen and sophomore year. So did you enjoy track more freshman year? Or sophomore year? And why?

Rose: So definitely I've talked about a little before freshman year was so much better. It was like I had this like family that I could joke around with and say stupid stuff with and like, just have all these experiences and I feel like we just grew really close. I definitely think I would not have been nearly as close with Gracie if I hadn't done track freshman year and yeah, so that just really made a very positive impression on me first freshman year and then sophomore year was less good, partly because management issues and organization, but also because there are a lot more people there who just didn't care.

Sara: Yeah, that's so annoying.

Rose: And like freshman year, like everyone cared, they cared enough to go to meets and sometimes, maybe, they grumbled a little bit, but they still did what they had to do at the end.

Sara: Right.

Rose: At the end Of the day they got it done. And that was great, And we all kind of like knew that we would all do it together. Sophomore year The team was not as much of a team. There was a lot of clicks and not, a lot of people didn't feel the drive or just the commitment that I feel like you need to have in a sports team. Because track, you could argue that, like technically, it's not like soccer where everyone's playing together and you all have to work together to Score the goal, but you still, it's still like a family, like you have to practice together.

Sara: Right.

Rose: Be ready to show up to meet together, especially if you're in a relay with other people like you can't let them down.

Sara: Right.

Rose: Yeah, people just Sophomore year, a lot of the team didn't Care as much and that kind of was off putting for me. So sophomore year was definitely better in that aspect no sorry, Freshman year was better in that aspect because sophomore year just wasn't, The community aspect wasn't as much there. I didn't feel, I guess, as safe on the team in terms of like talking and you know, just being my natural self, And I definitely feel. Like I need that from like A place where I go like 2 hours A day. Five days A week, Yeah.

Sara: So freshman year eight person team, Yeah, very small. We had some dynamics going on.

Rose: Yes, we did.

Sara: What were they during freshman year?

Rose: so Well, it was Gracie and Amarion. Oh, my gosh. Thank you, Amarion the junior.

Sara: There we go.

Rose: They're basically, like, weirdly enough, kind of like the mom and dad of the group. I don't want to say that, but they kind of were and there was a whole other Thing with that but Like, I don't know, Amarion really like. He he complained, he definitely complained, but like during track meets, he Really showed up, I felt like,

Rose: He really was a mentor during track. Yeah, he told us what to. Do like how to do it.

Rose: He led the warm ups. He started everything he's like, alright, we're going to do stretches and it was really nice because sometimes, especially since we were, most of us were freshmen, especially for our first track meet. We've never done This before we don't know we're doing it's kind Of nerve wracking. We're nervous and he really showed up and was like he was a leader in that moment and that was really good. So I feel like he really was the leader of the team, Gracie had done this before She knew what she was doing. She kind of balanced out on Amarion when he was feeling kind of grumpy. And she was also Especially, for the girls like us girls, I think she really was a mentor in that way because she, we had didn't know because she had done this before. So we were able to look up to her and yeah, use her as an example. Just also like in life honestly, Like she I was so, Like whenever I was around her, like, oh, my, this is so cool. Like it's an older girl and we're friends, Like this is great.

Sara: Oh my gosh.

Rose: And then the rest of us is like, you know, the 6 freshman. We kind of just, I mean the boys often they usually split us up like gender groups.

Sara: Right.

Rose: So the boys would practice together and the girls would practice together. But I think yeah, really the main dynamic was that like Amarion and Gracie were the parents and we were all the children. And like various capacities of off the railsness and it was just really, it was like really like one big happy family is what I felt like it was. And the coaches were, The mentors and like, Like the cool aunts and uncles, You just kind of brought it all Together, and yeah, Coach Q, Coach Nash, love you guys, they were amazing And they honestly, Also like, I feel like help me learn more about myself and they weren't just there as like to teach me How to run an 800 better, I learned life Lessons from them And yeah, I thought that was really cool.

Sara: So did you enjoy having such a small team, freshman Year?

Rose: Oh yeah. I generally feel more comfortable in smaller Group situations, I guess, like all of elementary middle school, my class was never bigger than like 18 and that was when we were combined with another class. So like my actual class has never been bigger than like 13 people and so I'm very used to a small group size, Because it helps me feel I really like getting to know everybody. And, like, know how? Because it helps me feel like maybe I'm not their best friend, but they're more than just a classmate. And I really value that. And so with track, I feel like I got to know everybody on like a personal individual level because we were such a small group and we often spent, We spent so much time together, you just, you learned Stuff about people. And That was just really, I don't think I would have been able to do That, had it been a bigger group. I don't think I would have felt as, Like safe is the wrong word, but like I guess secure and the fact that it's like, oh, these are the people that I know and I can talk and like, they're not going to ignore me or I won't be unheard and, Yeah defiantly That was really good. I really like that. I just like small groups.

Sara: So was it. We had a way larger team sophomore year because we were combined with CVPA. Was it a big jump going from such a small team freshman year to a huge team sophomore year?

Rose: I felt like it kind of was, it definitely, It was more of what I originally pictured when I started track. So I wasn't, like, super surprised, but it was a very different dynamic because there's more people that the coaches had to keep Track of, And there's more, It's more likely that you will maybe be forgotten or not seen, although that was, Mostly, I was with the long distance runners and we were a smaller group Of long distance runners.

Sara: Right.

Rose: So I did in, our long distance coach it was Like her and like 6 of us.

Sara: Right.

Rose: So I still felt like myself. I was on a relatively small group and so I felt good about that. But whenever I Was with the larger team. It was like, Oh my gosh, there's 25 of us and everyone's talking and like. It's not as cohesive I felt like.

Sara: Right. So thank you for joining me and providing your perspective on track. I enjoyed our conversation, so.

Rose: Thank you, thank you

Sara: Your welcome.

## Audio file

[Jacob interview.m4a](#)

### Transcript

Sara: Hello, Jacob and thank you for coming to my government interview. I appreciate you coming to talk about your experience on the track team with me. So we are going to start with our questions, if that's OK. OK. So why did you join track? In the first place.

Jacob: If I remember correctly, when I first started a freshman year and that's a long time ago, if I remember correctly it was, It was kind of a, On a whim thing, I remember Kristoph posting about, you know, track the track team is going to start up like practice will be starting soon and I was like that would be fun because I used to run and I was really little when I was like 9, I was a part of the track team and I was like this be interesting. So I thought, well, I'll just show up for practice and we'll see how it goes.

Sara: So what part did you enjoy the most about track?

Jacob: Running I just, I mean I love running. I mean, like I said, I had, I had been a part of a track team when I was a lot younger, but when the pandemic started, I got into running more and it became a habit, a good habit. Just being able to have an outlet to focus on running. It was really good and I really loved the people. I think it gave me a very good sense of community. Our freshman year was crazy with COVID and a lot of boys felt very disconnected from people and like making friends was hard. So to have a group of people that I saw, Every day and was, you know, every day outside, without a mask, and we could talk, we could have fun at the end of the day, it was really good.

Sara: So you obviously Competed during track. What were your feelings while you competed?

Jacob: Competing was and still is, because I still do cross country wasn't so. is very hard for me. I get very anxious about it because I want, I mean I want to, Make my coaches happy and make them feel like you know the work I'm putting in is helping and the things they're doing for me is helping, but I also hold myself to the standard of, you know, I want to achieve this and achieve that. So competing is is very stressful for me and I remember, Usually after like every meet freshman year, at least, I would just remember like going home, like taking an ice bath and just sitting there and being like Dang like, I didn't do well, I didn't do what I wanted to do and being really sad and like always Hoping the best for next time and the next time kind of being the same.

Sara: So going off of the mental health stuff, how did track affect your mental health?

Jacob: I think that in some ways it was good for my mental health. I think that it did help me really relieve stress freshman year. I mean, I feel like any any physical activity, but I feel like especially just running, it's just it helps you clear your mind. It's something to do and you don't have to think about it

and it helps you to just destress and and if you need to take your mind of things also if you need to, then think about things. But I would say that, The sport as a whole and competing and everything it was, Bad for mental health during during the during freshman when I started doing track, I also did the next year, but I really think the most about freshman year when I think of my experience, the track I was depressed during that time period and I think it gave me an unhealthy level of competition with myself, which made that a lot worse. Yeah, I was having, I was having a lot of mental health issues during that time period anyway, and I think that the level of competition and pushing myself didn't help that.

Sara: You did track two years. Do you think you would have done or started track freshman if COVID didn't happen?

Jacob: That's a good question. It's interesting because like I said, it's like it's very on and on and on the whim thing. And I feel like a lot of things I did freshman year, I think I viewed very differently then because When I was in person second semester, it wasn't the entire school, and so the idea I had of school, of our school community was different compared to how it is now, Now that we're back and how even was the next year just being back in person that everyone like you've used the school community differently when everybody's there, And I don't know, I think I would have, And I think that possibly even It could have been healthier for me if it wasn't COVID, because to a degree, part of the reason I may have been having it may have made mental health worse is that once again, like there wasn't, it wasn't a huge team and just in general our school community felt smaller because there wasn't a lot of people there All the time. So I think I may have done it and I Think it may It may have even been better for me then.

Sara: Track was very different sophomore year. We were in a new building. We had different coaches. It was combined with CVPA. Do you think you enjoyed track more freshman year or sophomore year and why?

Jacob: I enjoyed it more freshman year, even though it was Very hard on my mental health. I think that the the times that I had with friends and with the group were very meaningful And I still remember fun days and the fun workouts we did because I did genuinely enjoy it, And it's not that I didn't enjoy in sophomore year, but it was, It was different there Was different dramas that happened with CVPA students joining the team. Not that not that anything they did. It's not like it's not just them in general, it's just specific people. There were dramas that happened. Obviously we didn't, We no longer had to track like a real track that we had every day we had to Like when we had practice at school, it wasn't It didn't feel like real practice. It felt like we were just kind of running to run and it And then when we did go to Beaumont, it was just a very weird experience having to get on that bus and drive there for like 30 minutes, having less practice time, having to share that track with other schools And there was just a general feeling of a little bit more discoordination among the coaches that year, which contributed to being a little eh, and I was more involved with debate my sophomore than I was freshman year, cause freshman year I was, I was a novice which by the way for the listeners I did debate my freshman year. I was I was less involved because I was a novice in sophomore year. I was competing a lot more and I was much more committed to that and it was much harder to balance my commitment between track and debate in that spring of last year And I feel like that contributed to some stress.

Sara: So, we had a very small team freshman year it Was eight people and I Talked to rose about this, But we kind of talked about the dynamic of like Gracie and Amarion, with parents. And we were all the little freshman children. So, what was the dynamic for you during freshman year track?

Jacob: I definitely agree with that that like it was kind of like Gracie and Marion were like the track parents and because it was really that they were the only non-freshmen in the rest of us for all freshmen. And so it really did feel like that. It felt very, it just felt very tight knit. I just remember I have good memories of Amarion giving me tips about my sprinting form and how he trains and how he gets better and I love, I just have great memories of pushing myself with you guys like the workouts, like doing, doing the 200 repeats, workouts and and like the like the the 50 meter repeats.

Sara: Those were so bad.

Jacob: We would do some days at the end of practice and just the the fun competition it was.

Sara: I love those.

Jacob: And just how really just how close knit we were, I know I said a lot, but just really like we were really close and like at the end of the year, you know, we went to the coffee shop and we just had like, a like a debrief and just like a, it was a great year type of deal and it was just, I really enjoyed having those friends, And it was really good for me.

Sara: Did you enjoy having such a small team compared to the larger team sophomore year?

Jacob: Yes, I did for sure. Yeah, having actually was hard, especially there being CVPA students just because it felt like I just didn't know everybody and I wasn't as connected to everybody, And it felt like it was like me and my group within the sport kind of trying to survive and exist amongst the bigger group, which is a lot harder. Then when it just feels like, you know, you're all working together. Yeah, I would say that I liked having a smaller team.

Sara: So was it a big jump from going to such a small team of eight people to a large team of 25?

Jacob: Even though it was a big jump, I don't feel like it was a it was really hard to that. It's just not something I enjoyed. I think that, Although I did say there were hiccups with the coaches and the times where I feel like they could have coordinated things better, we could have, we could have done different workouts that could have prepared us better. I think they handled having a team that big Well, yeah, I would say it's not something I particularly enjoyed.

Sara: Right.

Sara: So we're both obviously not doing track this year. And I think that, Having that change from freshman year to sophomore year, for me at least kind of impacted my decision. What made you decide not to do Track this year?

Jacob: It was partially that for sure. It was also that when I made the decision to not do it, it was mainly because I'm even, I mean, I've talked about being more committed to debate, I'm even more committed to debate This year than I was last year, but part of that has also been weird though, because I ended up doing this program. A Medical program that prevented me from competing in a lot of debate tournaments actually towards the year I haven't been doing as much as I had planned to, but I also competed, I was part of it, competed in the half marathon training program and that went into the track Season as well. So I was busy with that. Yeah, it was generally because I knew that I would be busier This spring and I definitely am, even regardless of debate, I'm my Schedule like my classes are very hard and I have a lot to prepare for and think about as we close out the year and especially in this month, this



month is very a lot, a lot going on and you know the the season is still continuing on during this time period. I know that I wouldn't be a very good additional Member to the team at this time.

Sara: Thank you for answering my questions and joining me on this. Thanks Major Francis to listening, I guess and this was my interviews on track and how it affected everyone Thanks.

Conclusion:

Thank you all for listening and learning! I hope you enjoyed it, and it gave you some insight into the minds of some track athletes and what happens during the track season.