

Running Reflection: Kaitlyn Ardrey

Personal Bests:

1 mile: 5:23

3000m: 10:31

5000m: 18:43



I never pictured myself to be a runner. I had grown up playing other sports and no one in my family had ever been a runner so it had never even crossed my mind. It wasn't until I was recruited by Coach Mark Tompkins for my high school's track team while conditioning for the field hockey team that I even considered trying out the sport. Within those first few months of training, I was fortunate to win the 3200m race at the indoor state meet as a freshman. From there on, I fell in love and knew I had wanted to fully commit myself to the sport. Over the next three years of high school, I had made lifelong friends on the team, created some of my favorite memories, and continued to grow as a runner.

A mere six years later, I toed the line as a sophomore at Tufts Indoor National Qualifying Meet representing Christopher Newport University and became the 3rd fastest 3k runner in our school's history.

Though this was a PR for me and I had always dreamed of competing at national level meets like the one I raced at, the joy and support that I felt from my teammates when I crossed the line meant so much more. In fact, over my years of running, it hasn't always been PRs or success that has made running so memorable, it has been the friends that I have made along the way that have supported me in my highs and lows as a runner. These friends that started out just as teammates at the beginning of freshman year turned into my biggest supporters. There is nothing quite as special as experiencing all of those 6am workouts, lifts, and double runs with your best friends and seeing the growth and results throughout the season. I'll never forget the moment at our conference cross country championships as each girl on my team called out and encouraged each other during the race as we passed each other on the hilliest course any of us had ever run. Though our hard work over the summer and season paid off, it was our strength as a team and as friends that won us the conference title. I will always be incredibly grateful to be a part of a sport that has given me lifelong friends, memories, strength, and growth.

- Kaitlyn Ardrey

