



#IdahoStrong Volume 4: A Track Coach Recounts Her Greatest Inspiration- Her Star 400 Meter Runner, and Her Daughter

Those of us who have been around high school athletics long enough know that students who participate in athletics and activities are motivated, high achieving, and exemplary citizens who we can only hope will take what they've learned in their high school careers and allow it to shape who they become as adults. We are fortunate to get to work with students when what they learn, in turn teaches us valuable lessons even as adults. We are even more fortunate when we get to work with students like Autumn Kidd, a recent graduate of Kuna High School. Perhaps no one, however, is more fortunate, when a coach gets to work with a student like this when the student calls her "Mom".

Katy Kidd answered the #IdahoStrong call to action on Instagram a few weeks ago, feeling the urge to share with us all what she had witnessed from her daughter in the previous weeks. Of course, many coaches across the state were fortunate enough to witness some of our finest athletes persevere and stay motivated this spring even after the coronavirus pandemic cancelled spring sports, but Coach Kidd had a front row seat to witness the discipline, hard work, and optimism her daughter portrayed every day this spring.

Throughout her four years at Kuna, Autumn competed in cross-country, volleyball, basketball, track, soccer, and swimming at one point or another for the Kavemen. While she is an outstanding example of why one should not sport specialize, a majority of Autumn's reasoning behind competing in as many diverse sports as possible was to stay in shape and condition for the track season. Outside of simply sports, Autumn served as her class president, ASB secretary twice over, is in Honor Society, and maintains a high GPA. Through it all, Track is where Autumn truly shines, just ask the Utah State Aggies track team who will be welcoming her onto its roster in the 2020-2021 school year.

Her college signing comes as no surprise when you look at her resume: 5A State Champion in the 400-meter run as both a freshman and sophomore. Her junior year, she was hungry for a different kind of competition when Kuna dropped from the 5A to the 4A classification. However, tragedy struck when she came down with double pneumonia that progressed into asthma in March of her junior season. While she was still able to compete in her smaller scale events at districts that year, she was unable to compete where she truly shone: the 400-meter run "I guess we'll try next year," Autumn was quoted in an [Idaho Press](#) article in 2019.

Only, there wasn't a next year. When the COVID-19 crisis took its toll on high school sports, Autumn stayed driven. She ran on her own, kept up with her nutrition, and set her sights on the goals she had set for herself when she signed with Utah State. She worked tirelessly and stayed determined, even when news broke that there would be no spring sports season for high school sports across in Idaho. She was devastated, but she didn't stop. Autumn is no stranger to setbacks, and she wasn't about to let that change what she had waiting for her on the track next year.

Autumn has perhaps learned more from these outside circumstances than from any failures herself. She has become more compassionate and kinder to others who may be facing any kind of obstacle in competition, whether it be for health reasons or otherwise. What made her parents the proudest of her while watching her run throughout high school wasn't her state medals and it wasn't her signing with Utah State. When she couldn't run her junior year, she did not stay angry or bitter. Instead, she cheered for the other girls who had been her competitors all season; she showed true sportsmanship and happiness for those who help push her to be better. This sportsmanship and motivation taught her mother and coach a very valuable lesson: "Our health is a gift we may not always have & we have to develop patience in our trials. These lessons are extremely valuable to us in our lives."

While Coach Kidd may be a slight bit biased- who, as a mother of someone like Autumn wouldn't be- she has maintained that what she sees in Autumn is something of high caliber in her 10 years of coaching at Kuna. Kidd has been fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work with a lot of great athletes, those who have natural abilities and talents, and those who have a work ethic and determination to let them succeed. And then, there are those with both. "[Autumn] is one of those. I cannot take any credit for that." As those who work with high school students, whether we be coaching them, teaching them, mentoring them, or parenting them, we know that they can often serve as a source of inspiration. It's why we do what we do. For Coach Katy Kidd, watching her daughter fight double pneumonia, train through a pandemic, and sign with a Division I NCAA program is just a small portion of the inspiration her daughter brings her every day.



Autumn with her mom (right), who is an assistant sprint and jump coach at Kuna, and her 400-meter coach, Kim Hans (left).