

Athletes react to return to sports

As governmental restrictions allow for outdoor sports to resume, student-athletes share advice and essentials based on their experiences with their sports.

Eden Leavey | Staff Writer

In a press conference Feb. 23, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said outdoor sports would be able to resume in England starting March 29. Many student-athletes were excited by this announcement.

Ryan Cushman ('24) – soccer

Cushman said he has been playing soccer since he was 3 years old. During the most recent lockdown, Cushman said he kept in shape by going on runs and playing soccer with his friends.

What is your favorite thing about soccer?

It's a good team sport. You can have a really fun time with your teammates. If you have a good team and a good bond with them, any game becomes fun.

What would you say are your three things that you couldn't live without as a soccer player?

If I'm going to a game, I have cleats, slides, all my uniforms and a jacket with me.

I always try to bring some sort of snack bar because no matter what it is, at some point I'll always get really hungry and end up regretting it if I didn't bring something.

Plastic bags are crucial if it's raining or muddy to keep the dry parts of your bag from getting nasty.

What is one thing in your sports bag that you don't think very many people would know about?

I always recommend bringing all of your other kits and uniforms because there's a lot of times when you show up, there's a mix up, and you have to switch uniforms.

How are you feeling now that vaccines are being dispersed and soccer is resuming?

Very excited, I'm excited for it. I want to get back. I've been missing a lot of my team in lockdown. Hopefully it will get me fit again. The first week back will be rough, but it will be great to get back.

to start up again in April, and Kohler said she is "really excited to do that" as over six months have elapsed since she last played. Kohler said with the chances for sports to resume and the fact that the weather is getting nicer, she cannot wait to be back, especially as she misses being with her teammates.

What was frustrating about not having that bonding experience with your team in lockdown?

I've made a few really good friends through lacrosse, and so being apart from them has been difficult. I didn't realize how much I enjoy spending time with them and playing with them until we weren't able to do it anymore.

What would you say are your three things that you couldn't live without as a lacrosse player?

Pre-wrap, which is stretchy and I use it as a headband. I always keep it in my bag in case I need something to keep my hair out of my face or to wrap around my stick for grip. I bought some in ASL colors for soccer last year because we used mine for games.

I also keep some sort of protein bar or some fruit in there in case I get hungry.

Lastly is probably my water bottle – my big trusty Hydro Flask. And I'll always bring an extra one as well because staying hydrated is such a big part of being able to play and just staying healthy too. It really can help me to not be as tired when I'm playing.

What's been the hardest or the most frustrating part in terms of exercise?

For me, staying motivated to actually do stuff has been difficult because it's so much easier to just say, 'I'll stay inside, and I don't have to exercise'. The whole lockdown just felt foggy. I didn't want to get up and do anything, and I was just so tired all the time. But once I actually started getting into it again, it became a lot easier and I felt so much better after I worked out. So I just kept doing that, but starting out, it was pretty difficult.

he only started doing it consistently when he was 11 or 12. He said his favorite thing about rock climbing is that being on the wall means "your mind just goes blank, and you're really only focused on your next move and what you're doing."

What would you say are your three things that you couldn't live without as a climber?

Climbing shoes. I think that these probably have the most impact on your climbing and I would not want to climb without them.

Having a good harness is nice. The ones that you can rent from places tend to be really uncomfortable and they don't have any padding. When doing lead climbing where you're going to be falling every time, you get a skinny edge digging into you, so having a good harness definitely is something to invest in if you're getting more serious about it.

You get hot very quickly and you get very sweaty, so the next one is shoe foot spray. Climbing shoes are made to be super tight around your feet. Your feet get incredibly sweaty and so climbing shoes can get very disgusting very quickly. Having something just to spray into them and spray on your feet afterwards is really good for making sure that when you open your bag, it doesn't smell like a barn.

What is one thing in your sports bag that you don't think very many people would know about?

For people who are looking to become more confident and improve their upper body strength but also their grip strength, I would say that investing in a good fingerboard would be a really great way of doing that. Hand strength in climbing is probably the most important thing, and as you get better and better, the holds become increasingly difficult.

How are you feeling now that vaccines are being dispersed and the chance for rock climbing to resume is increasing?

I'm definitely really looking forward to it and seeing some of the friends that I have around the gym will be really nice.

Madeleine Ashton ('21) – track and field

Ashton said she started participating in track and field six years ago. While Ashton said she usually enjoys running 5Ks, she spent most of the lockdown recovering from an injury that temporarily prevented her from running.

What's been the hardest or the most frustrating part in terms of exercise?

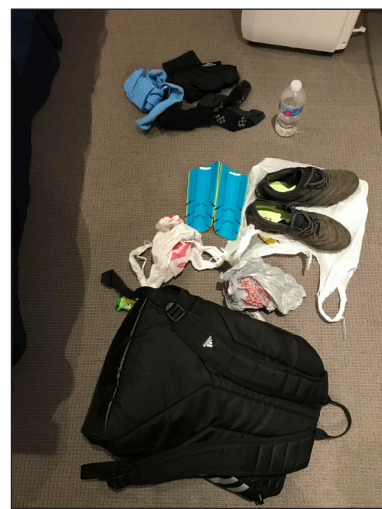


PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN CUSHMAN



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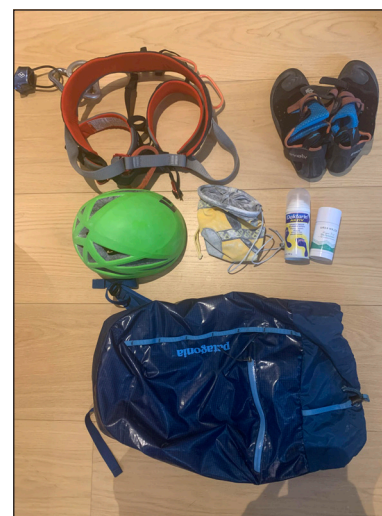


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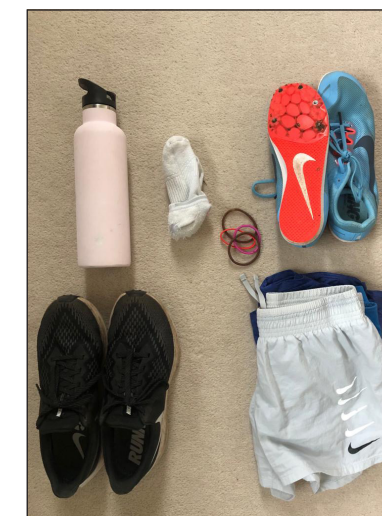


PHOTO COURTESY OF MADELEINE ASHTON

Ryan Cushman ('24), Ryan Kohler ('23), Owen Humphries ('22) and Madeleine Ashton ('21) show their sports bags, including some of their essentials. All four student-athletes were excited by the prospect of being able to return to their sports.

I've been doing lots of core exercises at home, trying to do some cardio exercises. Sometimes it can get boring, doing it by yourself, the same thing over and over again. Whereas if you were with a sports team, you'd be with different people and you'd be doing different things.

What would you say are your three things that you couldn't live without as a runner?

My water bottle. I literally take it everywhere. It never leaves my side. Hydration is really important with running, and you never want to be at practice and be that person who's asking to borrow water from someone.

A good pair of shoes is essential. You never know when you might need to go on a run. I've worn a specific type of shoe for a while and I've found that it suits me really well. Find a shoe that helps you.

Definitely a hair tie, or multiple hair ties, because you never know when it's going to break.

What is one thing in your sports bag that you don't think very many people would know about?

What's your favorite thing about track and field?

I always bring an extra pair of socks. Sometimes you just need another pair, like if your socks get wet or something.

What's your favorite thing about track and field?

I have to say two things: one is the team. I love that bond you create when you train really hard with your other teammates. Then the other thing is that I love how you can push yourself. It's such an addictive process of working hard and seeing that improvement so clearly.

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Madeleine Ashton ('21)

Ryan Kohler ('23) – lacrosse

Kohler said she started playing lacrosse in kindergarten. Her lacrosse team has already arranged for practices

Owen Humphries ('22) – rock climbing

Humphries said he has been rock climbing for most of his life, although