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Tyra Okuda
Seattle University

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A Time Out Session with Cross Country Breakout Star Azalea Groleau

Tyra Okuda, Copy Chief/Online Editor

As Seattle University Cross Country concluded their season at the NCAA West Regionals Nov. 10, Sophomore runner Azalea Groleau ended on a high note. Groleau set the school record for the women's 6000 meter with a time of 20:47.9, one that she previously broke at the Oct. 14 George Oja Invitational. Prior to regionals, she was named Second Team All-WAC at the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) Championships, where she was the first Seattle U runner to cross the finish line.



Riley Zalbert

TO: You were named Second Team All-WAC, your first all-conference award. What does this mean to you?

AG: I feel like getting named Second Team All-WAC was a goal from the beginning of the season. I definitely had that in mind, especially going into the [WAC Championship] race and I was excited when those were the results.

TO: When did you start running long distance?

AG: I started running in middle school, so I've been doing it for a long time.

TO: Did you ever run sprints?

AG: No, I've always been a long distance runner. But, I've started to run longer distances since I've come to college. In high school, I would say I primarily did the mile, now I'm starting to move more toward the 6k.

TO: Can you talk about your collegiate journey to get to where you are today?

AG: I actually came into college pretty injured, so my goal coming into the season was honestly just to have fun and stay healthy. And I think in doing that, the results came along with that, and it was really exciting to be consistent for the first time in a while.

TO: What motivates you?

AG: I think a big part of it is that I'm surrounded by a really great group of girls and we all push each other on and off the track to be better. I also have great coaches who definitely help motivate me. But I really just love running and I think that is what motivates me.

TO: What is your training regimen?

AG: We train six days a week. Some days are easier than others. On weekends we'll do a long run, which is usually 14 miles. We take school vans off campus and we run at super pretty places, like Duvall, Wash. There are lots of trails outside Seattle that we make it to, especially when we are doing the longer days.

TO: You've been continuously running good times and setting personal and school records. Where do you hope to go from here and how do you plan on doing so?

AG: I think my goal is just to keep staying consistent. I think the most important thing for me is just building on the base that I have. So if I can keep doing that, I'm excited to see what more I can achieve and hopefully get some school records during track season.

TO: Cross country isn't exactly a sport that's in the limelight. What does cross country mean to you and why do you think more people should support it?

AG: I think a lot of people don't realize how much work we put in behind the scenes. And I just think when I watch runners on TV, I know what they put in to be there and be on the start line. I just think that's super inspiring to look up to.

TO: What's a piece of advice you would give to your freshman self, particularly the one who entered college injured?

AG: Just be patient and keep working hard because results aren't going to come right away. But if you keep putting the work in, that will pay off and you'll see the long-term benefits.

TO: What was your favorite part of this past cross country season?

AG: I just feel like the energy on our team was so good this year and this was one of the fastest teams Seattle U has ever had for women's cross country. Just being with my best friends and having that energy all the time was really fun.

As track and field season nears, Groleau hopes her consistency will continue as she seeks to extend her success into the winter and strive for greatness.