

MEET A BUCKEYE

Dual majors provide balance for swimmer

By Ray Stein
The Columbus Dispatch

Elizabeth Auckley

Sport: Women's swimming
Age: 21
Year: Senior
Hometown: Bay Village, Ohio
Majors: Chemistry, History of Art

Question: We've had a run of foreign agents here in recent weeks, which is great. Are you really from Bay Village, a born-and-bred Cleveland-area girl?

Answer: That's mostly true. I was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where my parents moved during my dad's medical residency. But we moved to Bay Village in 1998 and have been there ever since. I definitely consider myself a Clevelander.

Q: Here's a test of your roots: Are you still upset about the Indians' playoff loss?

A: It's never easy to watch the Indians lose. My parents had season tickets this year, so they were especially upset. But we're all looking forward to next season.

Q: Those are two fairly discrete subjects you're studying, history of art and chemistry.

A: It's true. Heading into college, I knew I wanted a chemistry degree, and it made sense with my career goals. But after the first semester, I missed humanities so I added history of art. I've loved the intellectual balance the double major has given me.

Q: What intrigues you about art history?



Medical school is the next stop for senior Elizabeth Auckley, whose lifelong dream is to be a doctor.
[FRED SQUILLANTE/DISPATCH]

A: The way I see it, to understand art in its historical and cultural context you have to understand what a society values and how they express value. My concentration is in modern and contemporary art because I think it's an interesting way to analyze the implications of current events.

Q: And chemistry?

A: Chemistry is so fundamental and can explain so many complex systems. Ultimately, I want to be a doctor, and I know there will be a need to utilize my background in chemistry in the medical field.

Q: Here's another Cleveland question: Are the Cavs better now or when they had Kyrie Irving?

A: Kyrie brought skill to the team, but the Cavs will be all right without him once they rebuild their chemistry.

Q: Is yours a family of swimmers, or are they landlubbers?

A: My dad and his three siblings all swam through high school, and his sister went on to swim at Purdue. Now, one of my cousins swims for Purdue and another swam for four years at Toledo. It has been really cool to race family at dual meets and Big Tens.

Q: What do you remember about the first time you won a medal for swimming?

A: I remember winning some ribbons at summer rec meets, but mostly I

remember goofing around with teammates. I loved the social aspect of swimming, especially when I was younger!

Q: Backstroke and butterfly are your main strokes; do you prefer one to the other?

A: Butterfly is my favorite because I can be really aggressive with the stroke and get into the race.

Q: Is it common, when swimming the back, to drift into a competitor's lane?

A: Not into another lane, but sometimes "ping-ponging" between lane lines in your own lane. I usually do when I'm getting used to an outdoor pool or a pool without good ceiling markers to follow.

Q: What is the worst stroke in swimming?

A: Breaststroke! I can never get the timing down.

Q: Swimming is an individual sport that feeds a team result; does that equation work well for you, mentally?

A: I actually see it as the opposite. It can be so hard to train individually that I can't imagine practicing without keeping pace next to teammates and cheering each other on. I think meets are more individual — you have to get on the blocks and race by yourself, and that is where you can show off all the technical work you've put in. I love how much the team atmosphere is emphasized in college swimming; it makes the sport so enjoyable.

Q: Your last Cleveland sports question: Are the Browns best forgotten for a few years, act like they've moved or something?

A: I can't say I'm a die-hard Browns fan. I really only follow Buckeye football.

Q: On a scale of 1 to 10, how much have you enjoyed your college experience?

A: Can I go above 10? Ohio State has given me more than I could have imagined. Swimming here has been a dream come true and I am so grateful for all the friendships I've made.

Q: And, lastly, "Carmen Ohio:" Have you heard it enough, or does it still give you goosebumps?

A: Oh, goosebumps every time. It's crazy to be part of a tradition that is so strong. I always look forward to singing "Carmen" at the end of a meet!

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