

Galbraith juggles tennis, soccer, books

Written by Jim Ecker

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You'll have to forgive Riley Galbraith if he gets home some nights and plops right into bed.

Tuesday could have been one of those days for the talented junior at Cedar Rapids Kennedy High School, but his tennis and soccer matches were rained out.

Galbraith's school day starts at 7 a.m. with a zero-hour class in pre-calculus, followed by a full load that includes Advanced Placement classes in language/composition, U.S. history and chemistry.

He was supposed to have a varsity tennis match Tuesday at 4 p.m. against the Xavier Saints at Xavier, followed by a varsity soccer game Tuesday night against Waterloo West at Kennedy, but inclement weather claimed both events.

Galbraith plays No.1 singles for the tennis team, is a starting midfielder for the third-ranked soccer team and carries a GPA that's either right above or right below 4.0.

He's a busy boy.

"Sometimes I fall asleep with a book in my hand," he said.

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He'll crack the books fairly late at night, depending on the workload, and tries to get his homework and assignments done during the day whenever possible.

Galbraith likes being busy, and he likes tennis and soccer too much to pick a favorite.

"That's kind of the choice I've made," he said. "I've decided I'd rather sacrifice some sleep than quit one or the other."

Galbraith has compiled an 11-1 record at No.1 singles for the Kennedy tennis team. His only loss was to Iowa City West sophomore Kyle Appel, his summer doubles partner, in the Dave Meyer Warrior Invitational on April 9.

He played five matches in that tournament, going 4-1, then quickly joined the Kennedy soccer team for its match against North Scott that night at Kennedy. That was a lot of running in one day.

"I started cramping up in both legs," he said. "That's the first time I've ever cramped up on one of those days. I'm kind of hoping that doesn't happen anymore. You have to be real careful about it."

Galbraith began playing tennis and soccer at an early age. His father, Tom Galbraith, is a tennis instructor who teaches at Coe College and the Cedar Rapids Country Club, and Riley says his father is a big help in his two-sport career.

"That's actually one of the biggest advantages I have," he said. "I can't necessarily get to every tennis practice every day. You kind of have to be at soccer (practice); I can't really make that up.

"I can make up tennis practice with my dad," he said. "It's really easy to have a professional instructor to go out and just work on things with you. It's probably one of the biggest reasons I'm

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able to do this whole thing."

Galbraith's older brother, Reid, played both sports at Kennedy, but left tennis his senior year after being named a captain of the soccer team, feeling he needed to devote full time to soccer. He is currently playing soccer at Coe.

Riley is thinking about playing both sports in college -- soccer in the fall, tennis in the spring -- but said it depends on where he goes to school.

"It definitely has crossed my mind," he said. "I'd love to do it if it works out."

He thinks he's more of a college prospect in tennis than soccer, but isn't ready to choose.

"I like them both. It's really close," he said. "Some days I'll have more fun with one than the other. It kind of depends on my mood."