

# Indoor and outdoor track and field

By Ashlie Ingold

STAFF WRITER

The IIT Indoor Track Team has just finished up their season; TechNews had the chance to hear some thoughts from a few of the members on the team this season. Results from each meet are posted on the Illinois Tech Athletics website ([www.illinoistechathletics.com](http://www.illinoistechathletics.com)).

**What are your thoughts on the team's indoor season and predictions on the outdoor season?**

Emily Kraemer: I think that this year's indoor season has been a big success so far. I know some of the girls have hit some PRs already and I think that we will be strong competition come outdoor season.

Jaqui Roche: Well, I've never run for a team before, so it's all pretty new to me. So far, I've just been enjoying the ride. I will say that I'll never forget my first race. Let's just say it involved a bit of blood and some wicked road rash.

Natalie Mitrovic: As far as a whole team, it is difficult for me to accurately talk about the entire team's indoor season, specifically how the runners competed. As a thrower myself, I am more aware of how other throwers are doing. This indoor season, there have been many additions to throwers: Roche, Arrash, Becca Waterloo. It is always nice to see the throwing family grow, so to speak. All three are new to throwing and I have high hopes for them in the outdoor season. Not many throwers competed this past indoor season, but there were still gains. Arrash gained experience in the ring. Kraemer set a personal record with 8.00m in shot put and I set my own personal record of 10.88m.

I am very excited for the outdoor season to begin. More throwers will compete, such as Annie Hutches. Even if students haven't competed in the indoor season, everyone has been working hard and it will show in the outdoor

season.

**What do you feel is the most difficult part of each season?**

Kraemer: I think the transition from cross country workouts to track workouts is probably the most difficult part. I know personally I have even more practices that I have to make because not only am I running but I'll be throwing and jumping as well. It's all about time management.

Roche: I've had some scheduling issues due to early morning classes, work, and my evening practices for field. Luckily, coach loves me and understands my issue, so I practice a lot on my own. It can be hard to find time with everything going on and I've made some time management and motivation mistakes, but I'm learning from them.

Mitrovic: I feel the most difficult part of the indoor season is just getting back into the routine of things, setting time aside for practice and balancing all my other obligations. Pre-season and indoor season is physically more demanding on me because the main focus is to just get back in shape and gain strength.

As far as outdoor season, the most difficult thing for me is the addition of throwing events. During the indoor season, I only throw shot put, but in the outdoor season I additionally throw discus and javelin. Overall, I feel like I have less time to perfect all three throwing techniques. Outdoor season is definitely more of a mental game with me, especially at the end of the season when there are only a few meets left. I put that much more pressure on myself.

**What do you enjoy about track and why do you compete?**

Kraemer: For me, running is like a release from my day-to-day grind. I enjoy it so much because it reminds me that I am the one putting in the miles and the work that it takes to be a competitor. Running is something that no one can take away from me, and being on the team lets me put my work to the test. The girls

are also great. The dedication and work ethic that they have helps get me out of bed in the morning; I don't want to let them down because I know they won't let me down.

Roche: Sweat. Blood. Endorphins. They all appeal to me. I like watching my times get better - feeling stronger, especially after a week of feeling like a sack of potatoes bumping along a country road. The name of the game is improvement. There's also nothing like a hot shower after a freezing cold Chicago lake run to stay motivated - to keep running.

Mitrovic: I was a thrower and sprinter in high school and was saddened when I realized that IIT did not have a track team. It was something I really enjoyed in high school. Being on the track club is an awesome experience; I enjoy receiving an excellent education and still being able to compete at meets. I love the feeling of being strong and in shape, which track definitely forces you to become.

I always thought that track is not for the weak-hearted. Whatever event someone may do, it requires a lot of practice, discipline, patience, mental stability, and most of all, heart. While competing can be nerve-wrecking, making a personal record at a meet is one of the best feelings. It solidifies all the hard work that you have put in.

**What are your personal goals this year? Goals for the team?**

Kraemer: This year I would like to hit the times I was getting at the end of my high school career. I've been out for a while due to injury and ROTC conflicts, but I am ready to get back to where I was. Next year it is my goal to be really competitive in the heptathlon.

Roche: To stay motivated - to keep running. Life can hit so hard sometimes, and running will be the last thing on my mind. It's finding that reason to go out instead of listening to the excuses about why I shouldn't. As for the team, I'd say they all have the drive to succeed and get better... so, I'd really say just to keep each other

motivated and to push each other to get better. Hopefully, next semester I will get a lot more face time with them.

Mitrovic: For the outdoor season, I would like to throw 12 meters in shot put, which I think is very possible with my progression from last year's outdoor season (9.88m) to this year's indoor season (10.88m). I would also like to throw 35 meters for both discus and javelin. As far as the team goes, I hope my fellow throwers succeed this season with their own personal goals as well as the rest of the team (runners).

**How to balance academics and athletics?**

Kraemer: Academics and athletics are an issue. We are here for school first and Coach makes that clear. Studying - just do it, that's really all it takes. As long as you actually sit down and decide to do your work it's easy. Studying is a lot like running; the first step is getting out the door. Once you do that you are set.

Roche: Oh gosh, it's IIT. How do any of us do it? Luck, adrenaline, pretending sleep isn't necessary, help from friends, and my personal favorite - naps!

Mitrovic: It can be a challenge sometimes to balance academics and athletics. I work out 4 days a week, approximately an hour and a half a day. There are days where I am too tired or just don't want to go to practice, but I realize to live a healthy lifestyle, I would have to set time aside anyways to work out. The benefit of throwing is that it gives me goals, motivation, and a drive to keep coming because I want to succeed and do my best at the next meet. I see my practices as something I have to do and manage my day accordingly to get all my other obligations done. Ultimately though, I am a student first and academics are a priority. Coach Neal is also very understanding of students' situation and allows us to take a short leave if our studies are suffering.

The outdoor track season is set to begin April 2, with the first meet held at the University of Chicago.

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