



# **Senior Track Runner Riley Vickrey Is State Representative Monica Bristow Female Athlete Of The Month For Marquette Catholic High School**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
March 31 2020 9:23 AM





ALTON --- Although senior distance runner Riley Vickrey has been able to compete in only one track meet thus far, the Illinois College indoor meet in Jacksonville, it was a very good one for her, indeed. Vickrey ran the 1,600-meters in 5:23, missing her personal record by a second, and was also a member of the 4x400-meter relay team that finished second. Those performances helped Marquette Catholic to a third place finish in the meet, which attracted 30 teams.

For her performance at Illinois College, Vickrey was named the Riverbender.com Female Athlete of the Month for the Explorers for March, 2020.

The outdoor season has yet to begin, due to the current COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic that has disrupted life in United States and all over the world, but Vickrey is still training, and runs every day in preparation for the possible opening of the season.

"Beyond the actual races, I think it's my dedication to my training that has helped me improve," Vickrey said. "I train no matter what. This year has been unlike all the other ones, due to the Coronavirus eliminating my indoor season, as well as jeopardizing my outdoor season. All I can do now is stay strong training by myself, and pray that I am able to see how much my hard work has paid off at state."

Vickrey thanked her parents, her family and her teammates for their support during the season, and especially her parents for always being at her meets and cheering her on.

"I would like to thank my parents the most," Vickrey said. "Without them, I wouldn't have been able to become the runner I am today. My mom has never missed a single meet my whole high school career, and my dad has made every single one he could come to. Their presence at my meets give me a calming reassurance, and allows me to focus on my race. I can always hear my dad cheering for me, even when I'm super far away, and this really pushes me in the hard parts of the race. Before my meets, my mom does her homework on how I will place, based on other competitors, and prepares me on how I'll need to run.

"I'm also so grateful to my teammates for being so supportive," Vickrey also said. "They are always cheering me on, especially near the end of the race when I need it most. We've grown so close together, and I'm going to miss them next year."

Vickrey, who runs for head coach Tim Turnbeaugh, was once a soccer player for one of St. Louis' biggest club teams, and she feels that playing soccer helped her prepare for running on the Explorers' track team.

"I started running my freshman year in high school," Vickrey said. "Before that, I had been a soccer player on one of the top teams in Missouri, so that definitely helped me as far as conditioning. After doing a Marquette 5K in the summer going into my freshman year, I met a cross country runner named Natalie, who has since become one of my closest friends. She told me I had the potential to become a really good runner, and introduced me to the coach. I decided to do cross country to stay in shape for soccer. but I loved running so much that I decided to quit soccer and focus solely on running, and I've never looked back. It's my life, and so much of my happiness. People constantly ask me if I ever get tired of running, and my answer is simply 'no.' I have a burning passion for running I can't explain. Everything about track and cross country entices me, and I love to see what my body is capable of."

Being involved in sports has helped Vickrey develop a very solid work ethic, and also helped in her self-confidence in reaching goals.

"I believe my involvement in sports has made me into a very hard worker," Vickrey said. "Being a student-athlete requires many sacrifices and a lot of dedication. I believe the mental requirements of running have made me stronger in everything I do. I never look at something and think I can't do it."

In addition to being on both the cross country and track teams at Marquette, Vickrey is the Chief of Staff in the school's Student Council, and is also vice-president of the school's Students Against Destructive Decision's chapter. She's also a member of the National Honor Society, carries a 4.0-plus grade point average, taking many honors and AP classes, works out at the gym on a regular basis, is an avid reader, and enjoys watching anything to do with running. Vickrey is also an avid drawer, and enjoys art.

Vickrey recently signed a letter of intent to attend Missouri Southern State in Joplin, where she'll run on the cross country team, and plans to major in nursing. She's looking forward to running in college.

"I am so grateful to be able to continue my passion for running in college," Vickrey said. "It's always been my dream to run in the NCAA, and I am elated to have finally

achieved it. From the moment I walked on campus, I knew it was the school for me. The school has a very successful team, and the coach is extremely nice and knowledgeable."

And being an accomplished and decorated runner has helped Vickrey in her overall life also.

"Running has created a world of joy for me," Vickrey said. "It has introduced me to some amazing people, and allowed me to do things I never thought I could do. It's helped shape me into the person I am today."

***Riverbender.com's Athlete of the Month program is made possible by the generosity of our sponsors and the cooperation of our area high schools. This is a great accomplishment, and one to be very proud of. Please join us in congratulating this young athlete. We at Riverbender.com wish you continued success in your future!***