

Hurdler Bella Dugger Commits To Continue Track Career At SIUE - Is A Tom Lane State Farm Female Athlete Of The Month For The Eagles

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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BETHALTO – Senior hurdler Bella Dugger thought it would be a good idea to follow in her older sister's footsteps.

“Ever since I knew Mal ran in college, I was like oh, hey I have to do that too, that would be pretty cool.”

Bella’s older sister Mallory, a 2009 CM graduate, went to Saint Louis University where she ran track for a couple of years participating in a variety of events.

Now, Bella will become the second sister to run track collegiately as she committed to Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville Monday afternoon in front of her family and coaches. Bella is recognized as a Tom Lane State Farm Insurance in Bethalto Female Athlete of the Month for the Eagles.

“I’m really excited to see where it takes me and how the help from college coaches can really improve my ability to do what I do now,” Bella said about being able to continue her athletic and academic career.

For her, it was also important to try and stay close to home which is what made SIUE a good choice.

“I have a little sister who means a lot to me, so being able to kind of still live at home or live in the area to be able to hang out with all the family is something big for me.”

Bella’s go-to event is the 100-meter hurdles where she posted her career-best time of 15.88 seconds in the IHSA Class 2A Sectionals last spring. That time qualified her for the state, but things did not go her way.

While running the state race she tripped over a hurdle and fell awkwardly onto her knee causing her a lot of pain.

Doctors thought it could have been meniscus related, but it was her plica, a fold in the thin tissue that lines your knee joint. It still required surgery and sidelined her for about nine months. Because of the injury, she did not get to run much during her junior year.

She says she is back and healthy now and looking forward to the spring season.

She will look to set a new PR in the 100-meter hurdles and improve in her other events such as the 300-meter hurdles as well as the 100 and 200-meter dash.

At SIUE she plans to study biochemistry and minor in psychology.

