



Lessons learned in sports sustain Sisters grad

By Katy Yoder | Correspondent

Maggie Bidasolo always operates at maximum capacity. Knowing how to manage her interests, energy level, and academics was imperative at an early age. A Sisters High School graduate who was partially homeschooled, she credits her father and being an athlete with teaching her how to master time management.

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Bidasolo family took an unorthodox approach to her education.

“When I went to high school it was a hybrid situation. I wanted to be a high-end athlete and be involved in giving back to the community, while still being the best student possible,” she said.

She didn’t follow the norm for how she approached her college career and took a gap year after high school. Even after hearing from a lot of people that taking a gap year was not a good idea, she and her parents decided to continue their untraditional approach to education. Because of the gap year, Bidasolo wasn’t eligible for a lot of the scholarships. That was difficult when planning for college, but it was a price she was willing to pay.

“My dad thought after working so hard in high school and being involved in such time-consuming competitive sports, I needed a

break,” she said.

Bidasolo’s parents also thought working in the real world before going to college would be beneficial. Because of the gap year, Bidasolo wasn’t with her graduating class when she headed to her family’s alma mater, the University of Oregon.

Bidasolo says her passion and desire for perfection began with gymnastics. She started taking gymnastics when she was 2 years old.

“I was a competitive gymnast until I was 13,” she said. “I took lessons in Bend and Redmond. I joke that I grew up in the back seat of my mother’s minivan doing homework by the dome light as she drove me to practice.”

Bidasolo was the state champion gymnast on the beam in 2009. She spent 4-1/2 hours, five nights a week practicing, then traveled on weekends to competitions throughout the

West Coast.

“It was a big part of my life and taught me how to time manage, be coachable and disciplined. A lot of my perfectionist tendencies came from gymnastics because I was always striving for perfect scores,” she said.

Then the moment all gymnasts fear happened. In the middle of a competition, she hurt her back badly and had to retire at 13 from gymnastics. Needing an athletic outlet, she shifted her focus to competitive dance. Bidasolo danced competitively through high school from age 13 to 18.

“I did everything from ballet, tap, jazz, and lyrical,” she said.

One of Bidasolo’s goals was to be a cheerleader so she could be involved with the Oregon football scene. She missed the team by two spots.

“That was hard,” she said, “but

also the biggest blessing. When I thought about all of the time I’d be investing I began to ask myself what I would do with dance after college. For me, it didn’t translate into the kind of career I wanted to pursue. My dream to be on the sidelines at football games got smushed.”

It was time to find another way to achieve her goal. Bidasolo overcame the setback by seeking out internships that got her on the field and part of the action. She found her role as an intern much more fun, and she could put into practice the sports business skills she was learning at U of O. It also provided a way for her to rebuild her network of friends.

Being from a town like Sisters, she had to adjust and recognize that the relationships she’d established in her hometown wouldn’t be waiting for her at U of O. Coupled with an overwhelming sense of isolation from taking a gap year, Bidasolo had



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