

NCHS Cross Country Twins: Making ‘Sums’

by Jeff McKinzie

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If you happen to meet Austin and Jared Peters and spend five minutes with the fraternal twins, you’ll find that the two extremely polite teens have so much more to be proud of in their lives than their success as cross country runners at NCHS.

Take, for instance – the fact that Austin is considering following in his family’s footsteps in becoming a secondary school teacher.

Or, that Jared hopes to study business management in college and use that degree towards becoming a motivational speaker.

Still seniors in high school, the two are just getting started in life – yet it’s obvious that they have accomplished a lot already, and should continue their trend of success going forward.

At the Nov. 8 IHSA 3A State Cross Country Championships, where they were individual qualifiers – Jared had the individual edge with a time of 15:30 – while Austin finished with a time of 15:44. Over their four-year long-distance careers for the Ironmen, however, Austin has been the faster sibling – with a best time of 15:11, according to The Pantagraph. Jared’s best time was 15:23.

The Peters’ successful life journey – which includes their cross country success – started when the two were in sixth grade, according to Austin, and tried out for their middle school baseball team – but didn’t make it.

“And so we decided to try out cross country and, uh – it worked out well,” says Austin. The rest of that story – well, you can figure it out.

Beyond running, the two have certain hopes and dreams that are worthy of sharing in a blog post for YNISports, as their hopes and dreams serve as stories of inspiration themselves.

Jared would probably state that his and Austin’s potential career paths are not about differences, but sums.

To clarify – Jared gave a motivational speech to the entire school earlier this year. The theme of his speech? Making a sum in the lives of others.

Jared explains: “So everyone says they want to make a difference. Well, I say make a sum – so it’s about being positive instead of making a difference, which is negative and subtracting. So it was all about different things about ways to be positive and then add to the lives of people around you, add to your life, your mind, and different things. So it was

a pretty, it was a short way of kind of getting some helpful ideas out and motivating people.”

Upon the mention of Jared’s speech, Austin quipped, “Your goal should be every speech to work in a zebra,” to which Jared laughed and replied, “That would be pretty impressive.”

Austin was referring to the apparent fact that Jared somehow was able to metaphorically reference zebras into his speech. As Austin noted, it does seem like Jared is already on his way to becoming a motivational speaker.

The two don’t have any specific prospective schools that they’d like to attend – but it’s likely they’ll be apart, given their answers.

“I mean, we’ve both crossed out a few – but we still have several factors to look into at each school,” says Austin.

“Yeah I don’t – for me, I don’t really mind where the school’s at. I can -- I’ve been looking at schools in North Carolina, but Austin wants to stay within four hours or five hours. Closer proximity,” says Jared.

Another thing that Austin might think about is where he would like to teach. Though he’s undecided about what he wants to do, he mentioned the possibility of coming back to Normal Community as a teacher there.

“And maybe possibly coach – along with that would be kind of cool,” he said. However, Austin quickly pointed out that he hasn’t thought too deeply at the prospect of teaching at NCHS and that he is trying to keep options open.

If he decides to go the route of a teacher, he’ll be no stranger to teaching – as his grandfather was an educator for 34 years, and his dad Scott is a principal at Sugar Creek Elementary in Normal.

The twins certainly have plenty of opportunities ahead of themselves – and seeing that they have a sister currently in eighth grade – brothers Austin and Jared have set the bar for success pretty high. They may not realize it yet, but they’ve already “made sums”.