

literal goals

Senior graduates early, heads to A&M on soccer scholarship

annie zhang | editor-in-chief

For fifteen years, senior Callyn Walton has been waiting for this December.

It will be her last month of high school and her last month of non-collegiate soccer before she plays for Texas A&M University next January.

"It's scary, but it's always been my dream, since I was three. I've been going to A&M games since I was that little, and it's always been my dream," Walton said. "It was always a big reach though, because every little girl wants to go to A&M to play soccer."

Walton began playing soccer at the young age of three, though her love for it developed some time later.

"When I first started playing little pee-wee soccer, I would cry the whole time. But then after the games, Mom and Dad would ask if I had fun, and I'd be like, 'Yeah! I had so much fun,'" Walton said. "My dad tried to pull me out, but my mom said, 'She said she's having fun, even though she's crying.' She kept me in it, and shut up my dad, even though he was like, 'I hate to see her cry.'"

By eighth grade, Walton was dedicating hours a week to drive to Houston in order to play for the Challenge soccer club.

"We had to make a decision because I had to move to a different club in a bigger area with better teams and better coaching," Walton said. "That's when I decided to stop playing all the other sports and focus on soccer."

Although her middle school coaches were "upset" that Walton had to quit her other sports, such as volleyball, it became evident to others that soccer indeed was her sport.

"Soccer is her life. I can't even describe her love of soccer," Walton's best friend and senior Kelsey Sevcik said. "She's wanted to play it since she was out the womb. Every single goal she's ever set, she's met so far, and I think it's really awesome that she's so passionate about something and so driven to be the best she possibly can."

But, with games and showcases located everywhere from Dallas to Seattle, the journey wasn't easy.

"I'd had to miss out on certain things, like events at high school and things that my friends went to but that I had to miss because of all the games and all the practices," Walton said.

Still, her dedication paid off when in January of 2014, A&M gave her an offer to play for its soccer team.

"Sophomore year was the year that I was offered by Auburn," Walton said. "I fell in love with Auburn, so then it came down to either Auburn [or] A&M, and [when A&M] offered me, I committed then to them."

Despite her ambition and drive on the field, Walton remains "one of the sweetest and nicest girls," Sevcik said.

"She's so competitive on the soccer field, and she's really a different person than when she's with me, when she's with people," Sevcik said. "She never wants to hurt anyone. On the soccer field, she'll knock you down, but she's the opposite in person."

Walton's biggest sources of inspiration, in addition to her coaches, are Ashlee Pistorius, who Walton will replace this year as #24, and the other girls on the A&M team.

"I already know all of the girls [in my recruiting class]—we're super close and talk all the time—and with me being able to live here and have season tickets, I've gotten to know all the freshman that are there right now," Walton said. "I've met everyone, but I'm excited to be friends with them."

Walton will major in Allied Health, with aspirations of eventually becoming a doctor or surgeon.

"[A&M] is very good at being student-oriented. They make me have a study hall every week; I have to meet with my advisor every week; they have a person, who, if I miss class, will tell my coaches, unless I'm deadly sick or something crazy happens," Walton said. "You have to do well in your studies before you play soccer."

Yet A&M's offer is merely the first step to Walton's final goal:

"With A&M being so competitive in their soccer program, no one is guaranteed any playing time. I'm going to work my butt off to play, because as a freshman, you have to earn your time," Walton said. "I work really hard, and every goal I've said I'm going to do, I've done it. And my goal is to play, so I'm going to play."

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senior Kelsey Sevcik

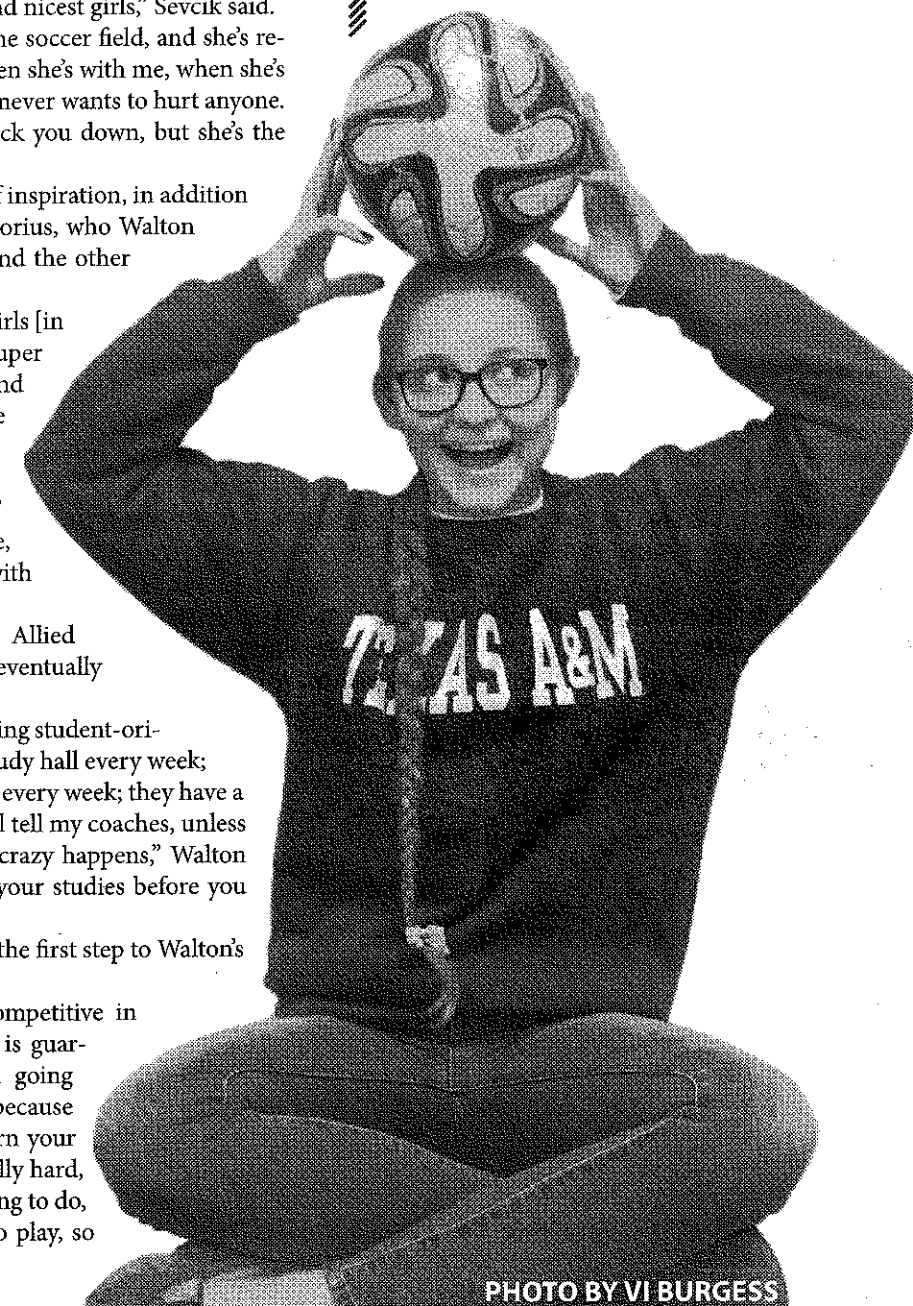


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