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Athlete of the Week

BY DARCY WIECKS

When people are asked about inspiring role models, typical responses include parents, professional athletes, and celebrities. However, diver Bates Gregory, BR '03 cites her toughest competition as her guiding example. Her teammate, Shannon Dunlap, BR '01, has set an example for Gregory in her diving and has become one of her closest friends at Yale.

Gregory began her athletic career in early childhood as a gymnast but switched to diving after a knee injury. Needless to say, she immediately excelled. Gregory dove for both her school and a club team throughout high school, set a Massachusetts state diving record as a sophomore, and was an All-American during her sophomore, junior, and senior years.



REBECCA ROSENTHAL/YH

Although she was deciding between Yale and Duke, Gregory ended up as a Bulldog because she thought she would be happier here if she got injured. Since arriving at Yale, Gregory has continued to dominate on the diving board, and now holds both the one-meter and three-meter records. With practice eight times a week, diving consumes most of her time; however, Gregory also sails with her roommate, plays tennis recreationally, and is a FOOT leader. She enjoys reading, particularly Ernest Hemingway, and after reading *A Movable Feast*, she was inspired to continue her study of French by traveling abroad this summer. Gregory plans to spend three months in France with a friend from Yale, experiencing foreign culture and improving her speaking skills.

Gregory's success in diving can be attributed not only to her talent, but also to her work ethic. She credits Dunlap for pushing her in practice and helping her to improve. "Shannon has changed how I view diving," Gregory said. "She has inspired me to put in extra time before and after practice." Dunlap's leadership and guidance is accentuated by diving coach Jim Pynch, whom Gregory describes as "phenomenal."

Gregory and Dunlap first met when Gregory stayed with Dunlap on her recruiting trip. Their dynamic is interesting, because they not only push

each other to improve, but also regularly compete against one another. Against Army, Gregory and Dunlap were both diving extremely well, and Gregory eventually came away with a victory in both the three-meter, by 2.38 points, and the one-meter, by 8.7 points.

Despite this tough competition, Gregory noted that "Shannon and I have an amazing relationship. We are genuinely happy about each other winning." Dunlap also added, "I think having Bates as a teammate has been one of the best things that has happened to me at Yale."

Gregory still has two years of diving in her successful career at Yale. "I am confident that she will only get better—she's consistent, always performing her best" Dunlap said. For the upcoming season, Bates is looking forward to earning a victory at the Harvard-Yale-Princeton meet, particularly against Harvard. *Photo by Rebecca Rosenthal.*

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