

taken my meals in one of the river Houses—I am able to look up from my work and smile as e-mails trickle in from other members of *my* House. Someone has spied a mouse in the dining hall, someone wonders if the shuttle still runs to Mather on the weekends, and someone else wants to know where in Harvard Square you can purchase body paint. Scarcely a connection would I have to

Pforzheimer House on days like that if it were not for the e-mails from my housemates, many of whom I have never met but whose postings to the list have enabled me to divine their passions and imagine their personalities.

So there, in the drivel of the “PFO-OPEN,” the fodder of the “Adams Schmooze,” or the slipshod dialogue of the “Currier-Wire” one can find the

legacy of the House system, 12 distinct dwellings that bring together their residents for at least three years—and sometimes forever. ▽

Berta Greenwald Ledecy Undergraduate Fellow Casey N. Cep '07 wishes she could send telegrams instead of e-mails, sometimes capitalizing everything and adding a pallid background to simulate the effect.

SPORTS

Fleet Policy

Cross-country's Lindsey Scherf outruns her competition—by miles

HER MOTHER says that Lindsey Scherf '08 was running as soon as she could walk; she might almost have sprinted out of the womb. Given her current speed and endurance, this girl must have been a terror to keep up with as a two-year-old. “In soccer, they'd put me at left defense, and pretty soon I'd be at right forward,” she says. “Running all over the place.” As a fifth-grader, Scherf ran her first timed mile in 5:55, setting the record for her grade school in Scarsdale, New York. (Her father's personal best mile is 5:53, two seconds faster than Scherf's initial effort, but, she says, “If I had been in that race, I wouldn't have let him beat me.”) She was such a fleet girl that even when her dad put her in the outermost lane on a running track and took the innermost one himself, she'd lap him five times over four miles. Nowadays, Scherf runs twice a day, and 15 or 16 miles is quotidian. But it doesn't warp her schedule: Scherf can knock off a 10-mile run in an hour.

Her body may have been built to run, but it is most certainly trained to. She has an adagio resting pulse of 32, comparable to that of Lance Armstrong, with whom she shares a birthday, September 18. Endurance athletes typically have slow pulses, due to their intense aerobic

training, but Scherf is at the lowest of the low end. That's perhaps because her mileage is at the highest of the high end. Scherf, who runs cross-country and indoor and outdoor track for Harvard, competes against women at the Heptagonal meet who train by running 55 to 60 miles per week. At the NCAA championship meets, she'll face elite collegiate runners who put in 70 to 80 weekly miles. But every week Scherf logs an astonishing 110 miles. She takes off only one day a month, and does some of her tougher workouts with Harvard's male runners; at the moment, none of the Crimson's women distance runners can push her.

The roadwork has paid off. Scherf is already a four-time all-American and four-time First Team all-Ivy League athlete. As a freshman, she came in thirty-eighth at the NCAA cross-country championships, becoming the seventh Harvard woman to earn all-American status in cross-country. That year she finished sixth at the Heptagonal cross-country championships, running the best time by a Harvard athlete in 15 years, and also won the 5,000 meters at the ECACs in

16:12.14, qualifying for the NCAA indoor meet. At the Outdoor Heptagonals, she broke the U.S. junior (under 20) record in the 10,000-meter run at 32:51. Last year Scherf took the 10,000-meter race at the Outdoor Heptagonals and finished 10th in the event at the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

This 20-year-old, 5-foot, 9 1/2 inch woman simply loves to run, and she does-

Scherf, already a four-time all-American and a national record holder, shows her running form.



How to Handle Hills

Tracks are fairly level, but cross-country running demands mastery of hills, which offer a natural form of “interval training”—alternating intense work with recovery periods. Running downhill is one of Lindsey Scherf’s strong points: she has passed plenty of runners on descents. “You have got to lean into it and stay quick on your feet, not breaking up your stride,” she explains. “Just let your feet go—quick, quick, quick! Running downhill is controlled falling. *Controlled* is the key word.” Many runners tend to overstride on downhills, and begin striking the ground with their heels—“That’s putting on the brakes a bit,” Scherf says—instead of the midfoot, which is more efficient.

Climbing hills, Scherf likes to increase her stride frequency and

decrease its length. She’ll drive her knees and pump her arms and, as always, strive to be quick. She wants to get up on her toes and minimize time spent with her foot contacting the ground—running is a kind of one-footed bounding. Scherf, who trains with plyometrics (drills that involve springing and bounding to build quickness), claims that elite runners generally have a turnover rate (stride frequency) of 180 to 200 strides per minute. “But a marathoner has a shorter stride than an 800-meter runner,” she explains: marathoners push off the ground less forcefully, because they must run at an effort level that they can maintain for 26 miles.

The best way to gain time on a cross-country course, she says, is to “accelerate as you are cresting the hill and use that momentum to carry you into the downhill piece. A lot of people tend to ease up at the crest of a hill; after running hard uphill, you want to rest.” The athlete who actually speeds up at the hilltop will often leave her competitors in the dust.

n’t do it on a treadmill, either: that’s only a tool, she says, which differs from normal running because the belt pulls your foot back. Treadmills are for things like “hill repeats in nasty weather. I just enjoy getting

out in a natural setting, even if it’s cold, and *getting* somewhere on my run.” Indeed, her training jaunts carry her so far that she has seen a great deal of Greater Boston, including outlying suburbs, on foot.

Competitively, “You have got to be physically and mentally strong in cross-country,” Scherf says. “It’s different from track. There are hills, problems with footing, soft grass, the elements. Track can become about running against the clock, and you have constant feedback as to how you are doing with the split times displayed. In cross-country, races are run hard from the gun to the finish line. It’s not just kicking [sprinting past] someone at the end. In cross-country, you can break them on the hills. The best-prepared runners actually wish for bad conditions, because they are ready for soft, muddy ground, or cold weather, or rough terrain.” Such conditions can show up in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx, the cross-country Mecca where Harvard’s men and women will run in the Heptagonals, the NCAA Regionals, and the ECAC and IC4A Championships between October 27 and November 18.

New head track and field coach Jason Saretsky (see box) observes that Scherf possesses “that unique combination of work ethic, discipline, and a capacity to push the envelope.” She also competes fiercely, having once learned a lesson after easing up slightly when leading a 1,500-meter race and losing by 0.03 seconds.

Despite her extremes of training, Scherf comes off as a balanced personality. A vegetarian from ages 6 to 16 (she now eats meat sparingly), Scherf thrived at the Scarsdale Alternative School, a holistic, progressive unit of 75 students within Scarsdale High School. “I loved it to

Skipper with a Stopwatch

Jason Saretsky, Harvard’s new head coach of cross country and track and field (he succeeds Frank Haggerty ’68, who retired in June), competed as a middle-distance runner, specializing in the 800-meter run, which many identify as the most painful event in track. It’s the event where “the sprinter meets the distance runner,” and the sustained intensity of effort induces a ferocious lactic-acid burn late in the race. But Saretsky knows both the trials and the joys of athletics; he laments the fact that “the only time you hear about track and field is when there is a drug accusation, and that’s a shame. There is a purity to our sport, a beauty to our sport, that is special.”

Saretsky began running in seventh grade, and at Columbia (he graduated in 1999), he ran on a 4 x 800 relay team that won the Heptagonal championship. He earned a master’s degree in exercise physiology from Teacher’s College, Columbia University, and worked as a graduate assistant coach of the Lions’ track squad. In 2001 he moved to Iona College in New Rochelle, New York, where, as an assistant coach and later, associate head coach, he helped guide Iona teams to top-10 finishes at the NCAA cross-country championships four years running—no mean feat for an institution with only 3,000 students. Twice, Iona finished fourth in the NAAs, allowing those teams to bring home the first NCAA trophies in the college’s athletic history.

Saretsky jumped at the opportunity to return to his roots in the Ivy League. “I’ve felt for a long time that Harvard is a sleeping giant,” he notes. “There’s incredible potential here: you have all the resources and facilities one could ask for. And there’s a great tradition: I think Harvard has produced more individual national champions in track and field than all the other Ivy colleges combined.”



Jason Saretsky

DAVID SILVERMAN/HARVARD SPORTS INFORMATION

death," she says. "It had a profound effect on me. Not only did you learn academics, but it taught us to be altruistic and to look out for one another. We really took ownership there; I learned how to be more responsible, more self-motivated." A psychology concentrator in Quincy House,

she loves "to hang out with non-runners. It's great to get away from it."

And great to get back to it. Although she has never run a marathon, which is not an intercollegiate event, Scherf dreams of doing so at the Beijing Olympics in 2008. What-

ever comes, though, count on her to travel far (and fast) afoot. "I see myself as being a runner," she says, "as long as my legs will carry me." ~CRAIG LAMBERT

Challenges on the Field—and Off

BESET by an ugly string of off-season incidents, the football team sought to make amends on the playing field. After pounding Holy Cross, 31-14, in a sun-soaked home opener, the team downed Brown, 38-21, and came from behind to edge Lehigh, 35-33. The rout of Brown, the defending Ivy League champion, established Harvard as the likely front-runner in this year's title chase, and with 445 rushing yards in his first three games, star running back Clifton Dawson '07 seemed poised to break the league's career rushing record of 4,715, set 35 years ago by Cornell halfback Ed Marinaro.

It's a certainty that in 133 seasons of football, no Harvard team has ever reaped so much bad press before its first

fall scrimmage. On August 2— Ivy League Media Day—head coach Tim Murphy announced that all-Ivy linebacker Matt Thomas '07 had been stripped of his captaincy and dismissed from the team. Thomas had been charged with breaking and entering, assault and battery, and malicious destruction of property after an altercation with a former girlfriend at Currier House in June. (Under a pretrial probationary sentence, he will receive anger-management therapy and alcohol community treatment, and perform community service.) Murphy also disclosed on Media Day that Liam O'Hagan '08, the starting quarterback in nine of last year's 10 games, had incurred a five-game suspension for an unspecified violation of team rules.

Those disciplinary moves were preceded by one-game suspensions imposed on two reserve players for scuffling with a shuttle-bus driver after a team barbecue in April. Then, in early September, the *Crimson* revealed that Keegan Toci '07, a reserve receiver, had been dismissed from the team. The *Boston Globe* reported that Toci had presented an irreverent sketch at the team's annual "skit night," while an Associated Press wire story said coach Murphy had described Toci's

Untried quarterback Jeff Witt (8) came off the bench to engineer four scoring drives as Harvard dispatched Holy Cross, 31-14, in the season's opener.



LISA POOLE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

In the first game played on Harvard Stadium's new artificial turf, record-breaking halfback Clifton Dawson scored three touchdowns and had 170 yards rushing against Holy Cross. The synthetic surface, said Dawson, "felt great."

solo turn, which reportedly cited 20 reasons why Harvard's Division 1-AA football program would never rise to Division 1-A, as "a mean-spirited attack on the training staff, coaching staff, players, strength coaches, and Harvard University in general." The *Globe* noted that some members of the squad regarded Toci's sketch as less offensive than certain "racy, off-color acts" presented that evening, and stated that Murphy had permanently canceled skit night. Murphy later told this magazine that further disciplinary action was in the works, but that the College dean's office



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