

GWIB ATHLETES HEADED TO COLUMBIA AND STANFORD

The NCAA's National Signing Day for football and 5 other sports garnered a lot of media attention recently. Rowing and swimming signing dates come in April and Ivy League schools do not participate in the National Letter of Intent process at all, so GWIB seniors **Amelia Brunner** and **Ben Holston** were not part of the hoopla. Not that they don't deserve it. They are just on a slightly different path.

Amelia has committed to Columbia University as a future member of the women's rowing team. Her 5'11" height is a definite asset in a sport where the average height of the USA national team (the world's tallest) is just over 6 feet. Amelia tried her hand at rowing for the first time in the summer of 2009 when she heard about "Learn to Row" classes offered through the new youth program at Mile High Rowing Club. She was hooked and joined the club that fall. Her coaches spotted her as a natural, and she quickly began moving up the competitive ranks. Her four took first place at regionals in Oklahoma City last spring and Amelia was invited to a development camp for the Junior National team last summer.

Ben has a swimming scholarship to Stanford University as a future member of their powerhouse men's swim team, ranked #2 nationally. He spent the first two years of high school at Kent before transferring to GW as a junior, but he has competed on the GW swim team since he was a freshman. Ben was named MVP for the Patriots Swim Team his sophomore and junior years. He has set numerous Colorado state records, is a high school state champion, was named to the All Colorado Team, and was named a High School All-American Swimmer the past three years. Ben has also been competing on the DU Hilltoppers team since 2005. He

has several USA Swimming National Top-Ten times and he won the 1000-yard freestyle event at the Western Regional Championships in Seattle last spring.

There are some interesting parallels between Ben and Amelia. Both attended Ricks Center for Gifted Children at the University of Denver before high school; both are excellent students in the IB program at GW; both are National Merit Commended Students. And both are following in their parents' athletic footsteps. Ben's parents were both college athletes. Amelia's parents both rowed in college and have returned to the sport as competitive Masters rowers. Amelia and her mom have even rowed together in mother-daughter races!

Amelia and Ben are also following in the footsteps of many high-achieving scholar-athletes who found a good high school fit in the IB program at GW.