

# Timothy Christian's Abygale Ahn shines in two fall sports and more



Timothy Christian's Abygale Ahn reaches for the ball during the Class A girls tennis state tournament on Oct. 21, 2016. Ahn is once again playing tennis and volleyball this fall. (Rob Dicker/Pioneer Press)

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**M**ulti-sport athlete is a pretty common designation. Timothy Christian junior Abygale Ahn is one of them. There's just a small twist: She plays two sports in the same season.

Ahn excels at both tennis and volleyball, each of which is a fall sport. With some scheduling maneuvers, she and her coaches make it work.

"I think I'm really super blessed to have this opportunity because obviously it's rare," Ahn said.

Ahn, a Western Springs resident, is a starting libero on the volleyball team. She's also a tennis captain, rotating between first singles and first doubles.

She finished in the top eight in singles at the Class A tennis state tournament last season, finishing the year with a 26-4 record. She said she hopes for a top-four finish in doubles this year.

"Her strength is that she's good at just about every facet of the game in tennis," Trojans coach Keith Mills said.

Ahn took up tennis when she was 5 years old and played in national USTA weekend tournaments before she picked up volleyball in middle school.

"So once I got into high school, I was kind of at a crossroads about which one I wanted to play since I really enjoyed both," Ahn said.

Going into her freshman year of high school, Ahn said she was burned out with tennis and leaning toward quitting to play volleyball. But playing with her high school tennis team was a boost, and she learned to love the sport again, she said.

The biggest challenge for Ahn and her coaches was scheduling. It helped that tennis is right after school while volleyball is in the evening. Her coaches, along with her parents, have been very supportive and made this rare feat possible, Ahn said.

Mills in particular helps to coordinate her schedule. For instance, if there's a big volleyball match later that night, he'll have her play first doubles that afternoon, which is not as physically tiring as singles, Mills said.

Ahn's days consist of school, then typically practices or matches with tennis practice from 3-5 p.m. and volleyball from 5-7 p.m.

Mills said she misses some practices but can attend most tournaments and matches. She missed just one regular-season volleyball match last year, plus a weekend tournament when she was playing sectional tennis, volleyball coach Scott Piersma said.

"I was actually quite amazed how well it worked," Piersma said.

Ahn's such a strong tennis player that fatigue isn't a factor, according to Piersma.

"It's always a joke that when she comes in, we ask her and we razz her a little bit if she actually lost a game," Piersma said.

After volleyball, Ahn heads home to eat dinner and finish up any homework she didn't complete in study hall at school. She said it is a little tougher to finish up work in study hall this year because she's taking more difficult classes.

With honors and AP classes, plus two sports at the same time, it makes for a pretty jam-packed schedule. But there's more.

Ahn, at the top of her class academically and looking to go into pre-med in college, is involved with student council, is an officer in Spanish Honor Society, has been on five mission trips to Honduras and helps with children's worship and is a middle school youth leader at her church, Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church.

"My faith is something that has really kept me focused and given me peace with whatever I'm dealing with," Ahn said.

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