

# Rule

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At this point, the only other person who competed with David quit. He was 3 miles out and could no longer fight the waves. However, David still persevered.

"It got really bad, but I could see the beach. I knew I couldn't quit," he said.

The entire swim was quite warm, Rule said; however, when he got out of the waters and into the stormy elements he said he entered a state of hypothermia.

His mom, Karen Rule, said she had forgotten towels in the midst of nervously preparing Rule to swim that morning.

"That just shows how nervous I was," she said.

After receiving an award, David was rushed into the warmth of a heated truck.

He later sat wrapped in blankets, drinking hot chocolate in the nearby lake lodge. He said it was hard to think because he was still so cold, but he does remember feeling surprised by how relatively smooth the swim was for him.

"Beforehand, I didn't really train that much," he said.

Most evenings in the summer, David said he would try to swim 1 or 2 miles along the shoreline of Fremont to prepare.

But this is how David approaches all adventures — with a sense of spontaneity.

"I don't really know what I'm doing, I just go do stuff," David said. "I feel like I really don't plan things out very well, but everything works out."

Within two weeks in the summer, David impulsively ran and won a marathon, summited a 13,809-foot mountain, swam Fremont Lake and won a triathlon.

This is a just a small taste of David's solo and accompanied adventures.

His mother Karen said although she is admittedly nervous about David's



University of Wyoming student David Rule holds a sign in August signifying the altitude of the climb to the summit of Gannett Peak, located in the Wind River Range. Rule and his friend used crampons and ice axes, which they had never used before, to cross glaciers. Courtesy photo

expeditions, she always encourages him.

"I don't want to hold him back," she said. "I want him to be able to pursue his dreams."

He is somewhat of a perfectionist, Karen said, adding he always pursues life with determination.

"He just gives it all he has," she said.

David credits this mentality to simply being the best he can be — there is no other way of life for him.

"There's just a lot out there in the world, and I want to do as much as I can in it," he said. "There's always more to do and discover."

This adventurous side of David seeps into other aspects of his

life. He said it helps him stay motivated during school, where he studies pre-med physiology, but it also helps him go against the grain of some social norms.

David can often be seen riding his 8-foot tall unicycle around campus or sometimes juggling.

He also has a strong passion for the trombone. He started playing in the fifth grade and now plays in the UW Western Thunder Marching Band.

"I just like making loud noises," he said. "I feel like music has so many benefits for the brain and lifestyle; I just really like making music."

In a typical day, David wakes up for 6 a.m. UW Triathlon Club practice, then attends classes and finishes the day with another

practice at 7 p.m. In between, he squeezes in band practice at noon, and he normally runs a few miles to relax his mind.

"In school, I feel like sometimes I can focus better after I've done a really long run," he said. "I feel I'd go insane if I wasn't constantly running. I'm almost addicted to running."

David tentatively hopes to go to med-school, so he needs to focus as best he can.

He said his love for adventure and the outdoors convinced him to pursue the sciences.

"All throughout my life, I've really liked life sciences," he said. "That has to do with my love for the wilderness."

David said his parents are

the "least outdoorsy people," and that it was his friends who fostered his interest in the outdoors.

One of those friends is Aunders Hallsten, a UW mechanical engineering senior. The two have known each other since high school and developed a friendship during a 30-mile trail run to Fremont Peak in the Wind River Range.

"He inspired me," David said. "Aunders is such a good distance runner, I wanted to be like him."

Aunders said it is now David who outperforms him athletically. He added David is not only physically talented, but mentally, as well.

"In general, it just takes a lot of mental capacity," Aunders said. "The idea that you can tell yourself that pain feels good is something that other people might consider crazy."

David said he does not necessarily have a "love for pain," but that he loves to push himself.

Aunders said one thing he really admires of David is his independence.

"I admire that David doesn't care about what other people think about him," he said. "He's content being his own person."

Whether it is playing the trombone, competing in a triathlon, studying three weeks out for a test or summiting a new mountain, David said he does these things because they fulfill him. Taking the path least traveled is what makes him happy.

Karen said, "In David's mind, that's how he lives life fully. He said he lives for those adventures."

Although everyone thought he was "stupid for going alone" on his 9-mile swim across a freezing glacier lake, David said it was his proudest moment. Swimming in the depths of those stormy waters, he found his serenity.





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