

A Place in the Sun

"If you want a place in the sun, you will have to expect some blisters."

I am a varsity high jumper for my high school track team and I am proud. However, accomplishing this turned out to be much harder than I had anticipated. Not only was it difficult because of the physical demands of the sport, but also from the stress and pressure put on by those around me.

It is not just a rumor that seniors can be intimidating. Even the sophomores and juniors acted superior, glad to be over the freshman hurdle at last. What can make them really upset is when some silly "fresh" cuts into their time under the spotlight.

Positions for the varsity and junior varsity track teams are supposed to be chosen based entirely off of skill. The seniors, however, failed to see why they should work for three long years just to have an amateur freshman take their spot.

There are three varsity openings for each event, and I took one for high jump, forcing a senior down to the junior varsity level. Needless to say I was not by any means her favorite person. Consistently during our competitions I'd hear her whispering and subdued jeering from the sidelines. I knew what they were trying to do. She and her friends wanted me to mess up so someone more deserving would take my place.

Determined not to give in, I continued to try my best and in turn, continued to win. Eventually I earned a sort of wary respect from them, but I won't forget the way they acted.

What bothers me most is my curiosity. Would I have acted the same way? Would I have tried to ruin someone's chance at a place in the sun because of my own jealousy? I'd like to say I wouldn't, but I do not know for sure. If this situation is ever reversed, I will try my best not to

let my envy drive me to be so disheartening.

From this experience I have learned that the quote "If you want a place in the sun, you will have to expect some blisters," really is true. I had my chance to shine and it wasn't easy. I hope that I can teach others about what it feels like to get blisters, so everyone's place in the sun can be enjoyable.