

# THE DECATURIAN

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## The Brussels terrorist attacks: A time to come together

By Alexsenia Ralat

Just a few months ago, the world reacted to the terror of the Paris attacks, gathering together for support and comfort. However, it seems that it's time for round two.

On Tuesday, March 22, three bombs went off in Brussels, Belgium. Two explosions went off at the Brussels airport and the other detonated at a busy subway station. The explosions killed at least 31 people, three of which were suicide bombers, and wounded 230 people. The notorious terrorist group, ISIS, claimed to have been behind the attack. The statement that ISIS gave blames Belgium for participating in the fight against them and said that "several" fighters detonated

explosive belts at the airport and subway station.

At 7:58 a.m. at the Brussels Airport in Zaventem, two bombs went off; one near the check-in desks in British Airways and Iberia and one between a Starbucks coffee shop and Brussels Airlines check-in desks. The explosion caused excessive damage, shattering windows and destroying chairs. 10 people died in the explosion and 100 were wounded. According to Belgian media outlets, the attack began just after a burst of gunfire and yelling in Arabic. The bodies of 14 victims were recovered at the airport.

There has been one man charged with the attacks. The individual, "Faycal C.," was arrested on March 24. Authorities have not identified the

role that "Faycal" had in the bombings. He faces charges of "participation in terrorist activities" and "attempted terrorist murder," said Belgian officials. No weapons or explosives were found when police raided the person's home and police refused to give more details about the suspect.

Over an hour later another explosion went off in the middle carriage of a three-carriage train at Maalbeek metro station. The bomb detonated just as the train began to pull out of the station. The driver immediately stopped the train and passengers were evacuated. It was reported that 20 people died in the explosion at the metro station and 130 were wounded.

Arrests have been made in other European

countries as well. An Algerian national was taken into custody outside of the Italian city of Salerno on suspicion of being a part of a network that produces fake residency documents that are linked to the Brussels attacks. The man is wanted in Belgium for his involvement in clandestine immigration linked to the Paris attacks, said police via Twitter.

After the attacks, people around the world showed their support for Belgium. President Obama took a break from his visit to Cuba to express his condolences. Presidential hopefuls, Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump all gave their opinions on the tragedy.

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## Protecting them from themselves



Part 5 of 6

Photo by: Emily Nielsen: Assistant Swim Coach Blake Braden and Senior Shelby Kobs

By: Emily Nielsen

Athletes joke about skipping practice. If they have to run 10 miles, they're going to complain that they only want to run five of them because 10 miles is too long. Sleeping always sounds more fun at 6 a.m. than jumping into an arctic cold pool. Athletes never truly mean any of it though.

"The first time that you aren't choosing to do something, that it's chosen for you, is the single hardest moment as an injured athlete," Jeff Smith, head coach of the Men and Women's Swim Team states.

There are some injuries though, that can't be overcome, and the athlete is given one choice, to give up something that defines them. Andrew Griffin is a senior nursing major who swam for over 10 years is one example. His body decided that his collegiate career as an athlete was to be cut short; his shoulder could not take any more physical abuse.

When an athlete pulls a muscle or tears a ligament, their control on any situation is immediately taken away from them. They can no longer move the way they want to, practice the way they want to or play any game they want to play. Their choices become limited, and they become caged. While they can rely on others,

such as their coaches and the training staff here at Millikin, it's not the first conclusion they jump to. More often than not, they think of those professionals and mentors as inhibitors rather than helpers.

When coaching, Smith draws from his personal experience of swimming with shoulder problems as a collegiate swimmer here at Millikin. Paul Yemm, who was his coach at the time, couldn't do anything more than reassure Smith that as long as he showed up to practice and got through as much as he could before his body gave up on him there was nothing else that Smith could do, other than get out and make his way to the trainers.

Of course, there were certain days, especially towards the end of the season, where it would really start to mentally drain Smith, and he uses that knowledge in his coaching today.

"I've kind of tried to take that as a coach and in every conversation try to center it around, 'Are you doing as much as you can today?' 'Did you give as much effort as you can?' combined and with a big picture stand point, 'Did we intentionally prevent you from you giving as much as you can so that you are able to give more throughout the rest of the season?'" Smith said.

Sometimes though, he has to play devil's advocate and tell his athletes enough is enough, because stubbornness, along with perseverance, are the core traits of any player.

During a meet, Griffin was swimming the 200 Butterfly, one of the most difficult races in the sport, when his shoulder joint dislocated and tore through his muscle. He finished the race, as any dedicated athlete would, but he knew that once he left the water, he couldn't jump back in. So instead of surgery, which would have put him behind in his future goal to become a nurse, he left the team at the end of his junior year.

One of the most problematic aspects for an athlete to do is accept that their body can no longer keep up with what their mind thinks they are capable of. They can easily say that they are injured, but actions always speak louder than words, and their actions try to demand more than their body can handle.

"Little signs I look for is right when they finish to the wall, what their facial expression is compared to what it should be; should they be in pain because of what they are doing or might they actually be in pain?" Smith explained, his ultimate goal always being the welfare of his athletes, making sure that they can make it

through the season, the week, the practice, or just maybe the warm up.

"The moment when I realized I had to stop swimming came during a meet. During my race, I was in so much pain, and I was crying because it hurt so badly, and I realized it wasn't worth it anymore." Griffin stated. "I was so angry and depressed because of how bad I was doing because it hurt so much. I realized that it would be more beneficial to my health to retire."

As stated last week, a coach deals with the athlete's anger because it's the only emotion they can express before the depressive state kicks in. The player may lash out at anyone who gets in the way when they are told to take a seat on the bench. They are angry because their body's capability has been lowered. They are angry because they are helpless. They are angry because they are lost and upset.

Going into those situations Smith has to have the trust of the athlete; they have to be able to trust not only him but also the training staff. The goal is not to stop them from competing, or achieving their goals, as they are trying to do what is best for that particular athlete at that time.

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