



CALEDONIA -- Harley Lowry wanted to keep playing tennis.

Three years after picking up a racket for the first time, the Caledonia High School senior reflected on her progress in the sport and decided she enjoyed it too much for it to end.

In an effort to extend her tennis career, Lowry inquired about possible opportunities at Mississippi University for Women. After talking to the coach, visiting the campus and meeting some of the players, Lowry realized she wasn't going to have to quit a sport she has grown to love.

On Friday, Lowry celebrated that next step during a signing ceremony to announce she will play tennis at The W.

“I want to keep climbing,” Lowry said. “I want to get as good as I can get.”

Lowry said she started playing tennis because she wanted to try a sport and she felt it was too late to start anything else. It also helped that a lot of Lowry’s friends played tennis, so she felt confident she would have fun.

“I just loved it,” Lowry said. “It wasn’t about my friends anymore. It just took my mind off everything. It was a really great experience.”

Lowry admitted she didn’t think she would take to the sport like she did. In fact, she thought she would “joke around, play a little bit” and finish high school. Now, though, she said she can’t see herself without tennis. Lowry said tennis clicked with her in part because it gave her something good to focus on.

“I think I just felt kind of stuck where I was and I just needed something new and it got me out there and got me some fresh air,” Lowry said.

Lowry, who skipped a year of high school, tried out for the CHS team her freshman year. She primarily played doubles at Caledonia High. Lowry said she plans to study psychology at The W. Her goal is to earn a practical counselor’s license so she can help teenagers in a clinic. She said she would like to help teenagers with eating disorders.

As for tennis at The W, Lowry anticipates having to play singles and doubles. She feels confident she will be able to make the transition thanks in part to how far she has progressed in only three years. Lowry recalls not hitting a single ball in the first time she picked up a racket.

While some may have been discouraged by those initial results, Lowry took improving as a player as a challenge.

“I think not being good at something when I started really motivated me,” Lowry said. “I have always been good at school. It has never been hard for me, so when I tried tennis and I wasn’t very good, it made me want to work.”

The motivation to improve may have made Lowry a pest of sorts because she remembers repeatedly begging her parents to take her to a court before she earned her driver’s license. These days, though, Lowry finds peace on a court, even if she is by herself. She said she is excited to see how much she can grow with more time to focus on the sport.

“I have been a Diamond Girl (for the CHS baseball team) every season I have played tennis, and that is during the same season, so I have had to balance a lot,” Lowry said. “I think if I can handle all that and improve in tennis. If I am only playing tennis in college and going to school, I will have a lot of room to improve.”