

Oversized Sweater

- Riley Sugarman

Now that we have received eighteen inches of snow here in Marblehead, it has finally sunk in that winter has officially begun. Even though winter technically starts on December 21st, it is hard to transition from fall without a snowstorm; at least that's how I see it. Time to cue the snow days, ski trips, and snowball fights. I'm already prepared with my oversized sweaters, are you?

Many things happen to come along with winter, including Christmas, New Year's, vacations, and sometimes Hanukkah (if, as usual, the eight crazy nights start later than this year). Other things are also delivered with the winter package: the Starbucks holiday drinks (pumpkin spice, caramel brulée, gingerbread, and more); cozy clothing is available everywhere; there is an excuse to sit by the fire with a mug of hot cocoa and be anti-social; and indoor track begins. Sometimes I wish the teeth-chattering cold would stay around longer, but unfortunately, all good things must come to an end.

With the many upsides to winter, there certainly are a few pitfalls(to some, at least). This is the season of the gym for runners, and even though the gym is pretty close to my house, the real issue isn't convenience. I, like many outdoor runners, get extremely bored on the treadmill. This poses a problem for me and my running buddies because the only other option is dashing through the snow, literally. When we attempted to run down the causeway, we were not aware that because of the lack of traction we would be falling on top of each other for a mile. Another precaution is similar to the last: beware of ice. The ice-covered snow is treacherous, especially in front of the high school. I almost face-planted a few times, and I have witnessed, and heard about, many complete wipeouts.

Other things about winter, more how other people deal with it, I just do not get. A few years ago in Boston I was bundled in boots, gloves, jeans, a long-sleeve, and down jacket, and was still cold. Somehow half of the girls I saw on the street were wearing miniskirts, heels, a tiny jacket, and didn't look the least bit cold. It really boggles the mind. A down jacket couldn't stop my lips from turning a scary shade of blue, but still, some people can thrive wearing their summer clothes. Sometimes I leave the house without five layers, but only if I'm going to be inside. Another thing that makes no sense, to me at least, is fingerless gloves. I happen to own a pair but now that it's really cold, I see no point in them. I suppose many fashion trends don't have the most practical applications.

It's not just the oversized sweaters and presents that make winter so special: it's the holiday cheer. Christmas music, gift giving, parties, and a month when people come together. To prepare for the season of cold and snow you have to beware of ice, plan your runs ahead of time, update your closet, and buy lots of hot chocolate and marshmallows. With that, let the true winter begin!