

Ah, yes, performing. That's something he's always loved — he was known for his ability to engage a crowd even as a competitor. He said he loves the single shows, but wouldn't mind joining a tour, under the right circumstances.

"What I love about my life right now is that I have so many options," Bradley said, smiling at the thought. "A tour would be a lot of fun, I'd love to do it, but right now, the tours I'm talking with want a really long commitment, and I'm not ready for that type of commitment. I have so many shows and things to do that I can't really do that long commitment right now. But I'd love to tour if the right thing comes along."

The injuries that affected his skating the past few years — including that broken foot that plagued him at 2010 Worlds and left him unsure of competing in 2011 — are more or less in the past. Bradley said his left foot "is a little bigger" than it was before and still causes a few problems, especially since he spends long stretches of time in skate boots. But he's ready to break in a new pair of boots, which, he said, would be designed to accommodate the "new" size of his left foot, which would hopefully help. He admitted that he needs to "get my health under control" so he can skate as much as he'd like to.

But overall, he said, he's doing pretty well, health-wise, and feels ready to continue on his performance-filled path for a long time to come.

Olympic-track competition, he said, isn't a part of his plans — at least, right now.

"You know, when I got to Worlds, I really wasn't that nervous," he said. "And when you're not nervous any more, I think that means you're probably about done with competition — it just isn't what you're interested in any more."

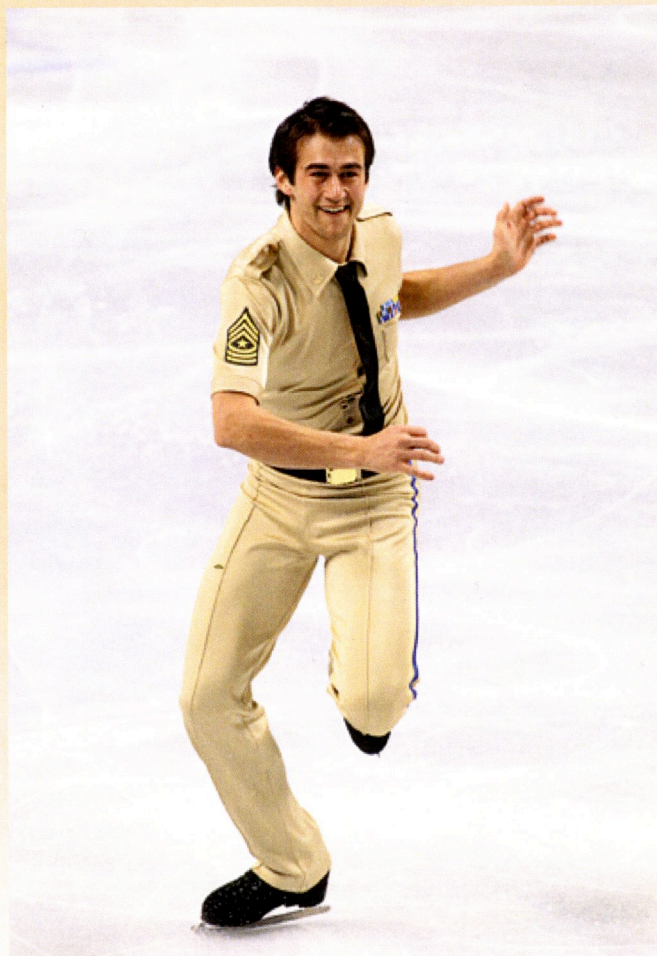
"I still get nervous every time I get on the ice to perform, I'm still excited, so I think that's where I should be. I'm not planning to do anything to lose my eligibility, and who knows, maybe down the road sometime I'll want that again. The Olympics are three years away, and that's a long time."

"But, I've very content with my life right now. I don't need that (competition). Maybe I'll want it later, but I don't right now, and I may never need that again."

Instead, he wants to perform for a long time, using the same gauge in his performing career as he did in his competitive career.

"I hope I can perform as long as I can be relevant," he said with a grin. "That's how I felt when I competed — I wanted to compete, but only if I could be relevant. I didn't go to (2011) Nationals just to be there, I went because I thought I could still be relevant, I could still compete."

"And that's what I want to do as a performer — I love getting in front of a crowd and performing, but I want to be relevant."



With that in mind, Bradley said his skating will continue to include some of the most difficult technical elements — like the quad that helped him win that U.S. title — in his repertoire.

"The pounding of that quad really isn't good for the body that much, but it's what I do, and I want to do the best things I can when I perform — I want to be relevant," he said. "In the seminars I do, I talk to the kids about the things about skating that keep them interested and motivated, and one of the things is to remember how it feels to hit a new jump for the first time. There's really nothing like that feeling, it's one of the real highs in skating."

"But, you know, I haven't hit a new jump in a long time, I haven't had that feeling. But the quad is the closest I get to that feeling — every time I do one, every time I hit one, it's almost like that feeling of hitting a new jump for the very first time. It's a great feeling. So I want to keep doing it. I may change my mind about that in a few years — my body may change my mind about that — and that's OK, too, but for right now, I plan to keep trying the tough things."

"Right now, I'm riding on a wave and enjoying the ride. I want to see where life takes me and perform — and skate really well — for as long as my body lasts."