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Basketball standouts' jerseys retired

Furman University

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Campus rallies in support of Haitian relief efforts

Probably no one at Furman was more directly affected by the earthquake in Haiti than Fabien Vorbe, a sophomore from Port-au-Prince.

Vorbe, a member of the men's soccer team, returned from Haiti for spring semester just two days before the quake struck January 12. Although his immediate family survived, their home was destroyed.

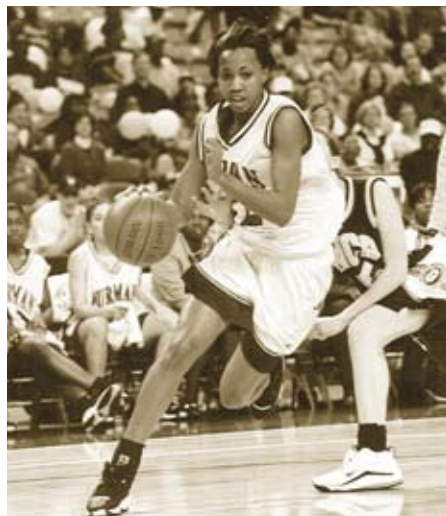
In response, the Furman community rallied behind Vorbe and the relief efforts. The men's soccer team sponsored a soccer marathon January 22 in Stone Soccer Stadium, with teams representing the faculty, staff and student groups taking part in the 12-hour event. All proceeds went to Haitian relief. Elsewhere the Heller Service Corps and other student organizations set up booths in the University Center to provide support for the American Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, the UNICEF Haiti Relief Fund and other humanitarian agencies.

The headquarters of The Fédération Haïtienne de Football, the governing body for the Haitian national team, collapsed during the quake. Jean-Yves Labaze, coach of Haiti's 2007 Under-17 World Cup Team, was killed, as were 30 members of the country's soccer federation.

Vorbe, who played for Labaze, says, "Your team is like a family unit. You have tight relationships with everybody in the federation, and to just see the whole federation collapse, people in there that you knew died, and people that you knew on the team, even if they didn't die, they have relatives that died. It's tough."

Vorbe says he is hopeful that soccer can somehow help his country's healing. "In Haiti soccer is what everybody breathes, and every time Haiti goes through a bad phase, they always rely on soccer as something to put them back up there, so people can see them."

— WILL JORDAN '10



Basketball standouts' jerseys retired

Two former Furman basketball players who shared a common name and uncommon talent on the hardwood have had their jerseys retired by the university.

Jackie Smith '00 (now Jackie Smith Carson) and Jerry Smith '63 received the signal honor earlier this season.

Carson's No. 22 was retired November 19 during the Lady Paladins' game against Indiana State. A three-time All-Southern Conference selection and two-time league Player of the Year, she is the second-leading scorer in school history with 1,920 points in 114 games, an average of 16.8 points per game. She played on two conference championship teams, including the 2000 squad that posted a 20-11 record, won the league's post-season tournament and made Furman's second appearance in the NCAA tournament.

A native of Woodbridge, Va., she was team captain her junior and senior years and was the team's Most Valuable Player three times. In 1999 she was Furman's Edna Hartness Female Athlete of the Year, and in 2005 she was elected to the university's Athletic Hall of Fame. She is now an assistant coach at James Madison University.

Jerry Smith had his No. 50 jersey retired during the January 16 game against Georgia Southern.

Hailing from Corbin, Ky. — the same town that produced another Paladin legend, Frank Selvy '54 — Smith was known for his deadly shooting. He averaged more than 20 points per game each of his three seasons and was named all-conference each year. In 1961-62 he led the league in scoring (and finished seventh nationally) with an average of 26.9 points per game. That performance earned him a place on the Helms Foundation All-America second team.

Furman's all-time leader in free throw percentage with 82.2 percent, Smith stands fifth in school history with 1,885 points. He was a second-round selection by the Detroit Pistons in the 1963 National Basketball Association draft. He went on to be a businessman in Greenville and was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame in 1988.

Carson and Smith join Selvy (No. 28), Rushia Brown '94 (34), Natalie Cleckley '92 (53), Darrell Floyd '56 (33), Nield Gordon '53 (27), Clyde Mayes '74 (34) and Jonathan Moore '80 (25) as the only Furman basketball players to have their jerseys retired.