Diamond in the rough

David Koss ‘74

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How the Furman athletic logo came to be

In the spring of 1973, $25 would put a lot of gas in Dennis Zeiger’s 1969 Plymouth (gas was only 70 cents a gallon). For Zeiger, then a junior art major at Furman, this mini-windfall would also support several trips to the Rainbow Drive-in for late night snacks.

The source of Zeiger’s $25? His paycheck for designing a new logo for the Furman football team.

Coach Art Baker had taken the helm of the Paladins a few months previously, following a long stint by Bob King. Baker and his staff, which included future Paladin mentors Dick Sheridan and Jimmy Satterfield, were anxious to come up with a new look for the football team.

Zeiger, a native of Hendersonville, N.C., who was working his way through Furman, was eager to earn some extra pay to supplement his partial track scholarship and part-time job in the Furman print shop. So he jumped at the chance to develop a new design that would represent the football team.

He remembers the request coming from assistant coach Steve Robertson, who asked for “a logo we can put on our football helmets. Something simple, like the Dallas Cowboys’ star logo.”

In most cases, logo development requires a number of layouts, followed by multiple iterations of the preferred version. But not this time.

Zeiger recalls, “The Diamond F was the only layout I came up with. I liked it and so did Coach Baker.”

The now-familiar “Diamond F” made its first appearance on the football field in the fall of 1973 and debuted in its first off-field use during Zeiger’s senior art exhibit the following spring.

The rest is history. Indeed, for some people the Diamond F has become a more familiar symbol of the university than the Bell Tower!

Zeiger went on to a career in advertising and marketing in the Greenville area. But it’s fair to say that his signature work, and no doubt his most enduring, is the $25 Diamond F logo.

— David Koss ’74

The author, a track teammate of Zeiger’s during their student days, is account director with Jackson-Dawson Marketing Solutions in Greenville.

Mastny acquired by Indians; Davidiuk, Hodinka sign

June graduates A.J. Davidiuk and Ryan Hodinka recently earned a chance to play professional baseball.

If they’re fortunate, they’ll make it to the show — and follow in the footsteps of pitcher Tom Mastny ’03.

On July 24, the Cleveland Indians announced that they had purchased Mastny’s contract from the AAA Buffalo Bisons, where Mastny had compiled a 2-1 record and 2.61 earned-run average in 24 relief appearances. Mastny, an All-American at Furman and the 2003 Southern Conference Pitcher of the Year, was an 11th-round draft choice that year by the Toronto Blue Jays.

Daviuki, a shortstop and third baseman, was chosen by the San Diego Padres in the 29th round of the June 7 major league draft. He was the consensus 2006 Southern Conference Player of the Year after batting .362 with 11 home runs and 48 RBI. He holds the school career record for doubles and ranks second in hits, fourth in runs scored and RBI, and ninth in home runs. He graduated cum laude with a degree in neuroscience.

Hodinka, a left-handed pitcher, signed a free agent contract with the St. Louis Cardinals soon after the draft. He had a 9-2 record and 4.53 ERA in 2006 and finished his Furman career with a 22-10 mark, good for third all-time in school history. He earned his degree in political science.

Two other Furman alumni currently playing professional baseball are pitcher Danny Rueckel ’02 of the Washington Nationals’ AAA team in New Orleans, and third baseman Matthew Betsill ’05 of the Minnesota Twins’ Rookie League team in Elizabethtown, Tenn.