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Fast track

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Fast track

Crosby primed for stellar senior year

As a computer science-mathematics major at Furman, cross country and track athlete Kevin Crosby does not spend much time studying history. Instead, he rewrites it with his distance running achievements.

At last fall's NCAA Southeastern Regional Cross Country Championship, Crosby narrowly missed becoming the Paladins' first male qualifier for the national championship meet. The Matthews, N.C., native ran the 10-kilometer (6.2-mile) course in 30:37, averaging under 4:54 per mile. His time was good enough for 17th place and a spot on the all-region team. It was also the best result by a Paladin during Coach Gene Mullin's 20 years at Furman.

Crosby's all-region performance was only one of many highlights from last fall. He ran away with individual titles at the Pre-Southern Conference Championship, Citadel Invitational and Winthrop Fall Classic, then finished second at the conference meet, crossing the finish line only steps behind Gediminas Banevicius of Tennessee-Chattanooga.

Running 85 to 100 miles per week, with a long run of 18 miles on Sunday mornings, Crosby maintained his form into the spring track season. After setting a personal best for 10,000 meters at the Raleigh Relays and winning the 5,000-meter run at the Furman Invitational, he turned his attention to winning a title at the Southern Conference meet, held Easter weekend in Boone, N.C.

The meet's 10,000-meter run began in a dense fog and freezing rain, but the elements didn't deter Crosby. He immediately jumped to the lead of the 25-lap race, and by combining this run-from-the-front strategy with a blistering sprint to the finish he decisively captured his first conference title. The next day, he finished fourth in the 5,000.

To put a cap on his outstanding season, Crosby traveled to the Steve Scott Invitational at the University of California-Irvine in early May. Named for the top American miler of the 1980s, the meet is an annual destination for top track athletes. And for the first time, a Furman runner brought a championship back east, as Crosby cruised through the early laps of the 5,000 meters, then accelerated during a last lap that obliterated the field.

Mullin believes his star runner's mental talents are just as important as his physical gifts. "Kevin is an extremely smart runner," says Mullin. "When racing long distances,

you must have full focus. That's just another area where Kevin excels."

For Crosby, the discipline of training and racing translates well to academics. Entering his senior year, he carries a 3.81 grade-point average. This combination of academic and athletic excellence earned him a spot on the Verizon All-Academic District III Team.

After graduation, he would like to dedicate a year to running before attending medical school. He plans to become an anesthesiologist or sports orthopedist.

Crosby has similarly lofty goals as he prepares for his final year of running at Furman. He hopes to qualify for the NCAA Cross Country Championship this fall in Cedar Falls, Iowa, while on the track he plans to take dead aim at the school distance records set by David Branch in 1978.

Don't be surprised if, before he graduates, Kevin Crosby rewrites a few more chapters in the Paladin history book.

— Brian Holladay '03

The author, who captained the track team at Furman, is a magna cum laude graduate in history from Knoxville, Tenn. He is pursuing a law degree at Duke University.



PATRICK COLLARD

Kevin Crosby's father and four brothers also attended Furman.

Shorn for a worthy cause

On May 16, a trio of Furman softball players honored a commitment they had made to one another two years earlier: They got haircuts.

While a haircut may hardly sound like news, Karissa King '03, Sarah Scott '04 and Jessica Griffin '03 (left to right in photo) were not merely going for a new look. With the help of an organization called Locks of Love, they were making a difference in the lives of children with long-term medical hair loss.

Locks of Love accepts donations of 10 inches or more of hair, and uses the tresses to make hairpieces for children in need. At her mother's suggestion, King decided to donate her hair and recruited Scott and Griffin, both of whom had family members who had lost their hair during cancer treatments.

To mark the occasion, all three of the young women's mothers came to Greenville and watched their daughters' trans-



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formation. "We are just so excited that they want us to be a part of this," says Orlah King. "So many kids don't want their parents around, but they wanted us to share this with them." The moms took their children out for dinner to celebrate.

And in the end, says Scott, "We are just glad we were able to do something good for someone else. That's the best part of this whole experience."