

Senior Spotlights Continued

The senior athletes highlighted here are inspirational, and to watch them play or run is truly an amazing experience. Each has that little something extra special that makes them stand out, whether it is the ability to bend the ball like Beckham, the powerful striking serve that aces and wins the match, or the breakneck sprint in the last 200 yards. But most importantly, they are team players whose presence, attitude, and overall love for the sport inspire and lead the team to victory. This fall season of sports has been extraordinary. The women's tennis team and the women's volleyball team have advanced to the state playoffs; the men's soccer team has only lost one conference game; and the cross country team has had an unbelievable season.



Ashlee Perkinson
WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

Role model: "When it comes to running, I have never really looked to the legends, just the person running in front of me. Also, I have always looked to my mother for advice and guidance."
Pregame ritual: "Besides the normal warm-up that consists of lots of stretching and a light 1-2 mile jog, I always take a minute to myself to set myself a goal and to say a prayer. I also try to make sure everyone else is focused, excited about the meet, and ready to run."

Favorite aspect of the sport: "The self-discipline cross country forces you to have. It creates an ironic challenge- one that forces you to take an independent initiative to motivate yourself while becoming part of a team that runs together as one."

Superstitions: "At the beginning of the season, the girls came up with an inspirational quote. Before each meet, the whole team comes together in a circle for a pep talk that is followed by a big 'Si se puede!'" It means 'Yes I can!' in Spanish."

Best song to run to: "Getcha Head in the Game" from High School Musical

Favorite experience: "The team bonding! We are not only members of the XC team, we are friends. Team dinners and conversations during runs are always fun. The best part is screaming the lyrics to Disney songs while running through the streets of Durham!"

Favorite quote: "Then where does the power come from, to see the race to its end? From within."

- Chariots of Fire



Liana Roux
WOMEN'S VARSITY TENNIS

Role model: "My mom. She is spectacular. She is the captain of her tennis team and she has always supported me."

Pregame ritual: "Before a game, I take time to lace my ankle braces up carefully and to center myself before heading out to the courts for warm-ups."

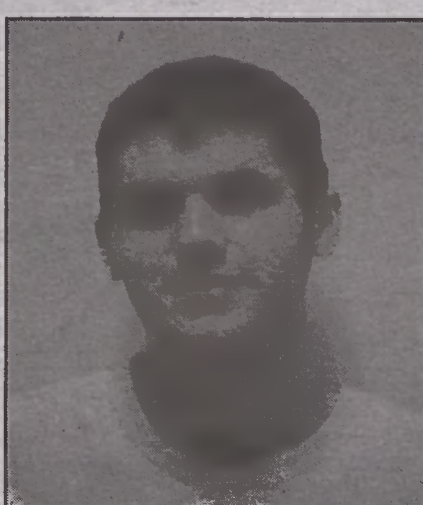
Favorite aspect of the sport: "When I get so wrapped up in the game, nothing matters except the ball, the court, and myself. I enter into that 'tennis zone' of energy and concentration. That's when the beastliness comes out."

Superstitions: "Before I serve a big point, I bounce the ball three times with my hand, once with my racket, and then three times again with my hand. Also, it is bad luck to hit a double-fault on the last point of a game"

Best song to play to: "July, July!" by the Decemberists. "The tune is smooth and upbeat, but the lyrics recount the grisly past of an unpleasant back road one strange month in the summertime."

Favorite experience: "Our second time facing Cardinal Gibbons. We were down two matches to four, which meant that we had to win all three doubles matches in order to beat them. We won the first two doubles matches with some struggle, so it all came down to the final doubles team. The game wore on and people began to crowd around their court. We finally won! I wish we had had a camera that evening, because the looks on the Gibbons girls' faces were priceless."

Favorite quote: "In tennis, love means nothing."



Cameron Cook
MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

Role model: "Philip Curley. He is a hard working runner who has the will to win no matter the race and is always up to the challenge. Also, my dad has done so much for so many, including me, that I hope I can even be a sliver of a person as he is."

Pre-game ritual: "I try to have a little alone time and get myself focused and ready for the meet. I do some strides, get all the guys together for a quick pep talk, and finally walk to the finish line, jump a few times, and look forward to what I will face once the guns go off."

Favorite aspect of the sport: "The idea of the team winning. Also, the fact that anything that happens is on me. I control my outcome."

Superstitions: "If you do not eat right or prepare well before a meet you will not perform well."

Best song to run to: "Before a meet, I listen to any hardcore rock music that has a fast rhythm or good beat."

Favorite Experience: "The Durham city-county meet. I came back from a long distance to beat one kid by less than a tenth of a second for sixth place. Even though I didn't win, it was great to work as hard as I did and get rewarded for my effort at the end."

Favorite quote: "Harambee!" It is a Kenyan phrase that means everyone get together and push. It shows that everyone on the team has to do well together to do well and that everyone is important."



Jessica Anderson
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Role model: "Leo Fitzsimmons. He was my old PE teacher. He lived life to the fullest. Also Stephanie Diaz, my middle school volleyball coach. She showed me what volleyball really is."

Pregame ritual: "Listen to music and getting my hair french-braided by Chelsea Wilson."

Favorite aspect of the sport: "Volleyball is one of the only real team sports. There is no way that one person can carry the team. It's a team effort. What everyone does really matters. You can't win a point without a good pass. You can't get a good hit without a good set. Playing challenged me to be a better team player."

Superstitions: "I had a pair of Asics socks that I wore to every single game from freshmen to junior year. But my mom lost them."

Best song to play to: "The Seed" by The Roots

Favorite Experience: "We were working our butts off against Cedar Ridge, when Amanda ran into a water cooler. She sacrificed her body and showed some hard-core dedication. Plus we got a nice ten minute break." or "We completely dominated DSA. That was a totally amazing game, it was a great way to start off and going into the championships."

Favorite Quote: "A vision of a champion is someone drenched in sweat to the point of exhaustion when no one else is watching." and "Impossible is a big word thrown around by small men."