

Vaden runs for Olympics

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called Livingstone and came down here and went from there.

"Nobody really pushed me to the goals of going to college and competing on the college level, so I had to do it on my own and do my own goals, which is what I'm doing right now."

As a sprinter, Vaden's success has been eclipsed only by his team-first attitude. Although he doesn't run in front of thousands or with an elite program, Vaden's work ethic and humble approach makes him special.

"He's a real treat to coach," Livingstone head track coach Clifton Huff said. "He beats you to practice He real-

ly would like to compete on the next level and he realizes he doesn't have a whole lot of excuses or anything of that nature. He takes the good with the bad and just keeps on working."

Huff believes this year's Olympic trials should give Vaden valuable exposure to world-class competition, but sees a brighter future as he matures physically and improves his technique.

"I think his year is going to be 2008," Huff said. "He's 23 years old and most good sprinters start running good at 26, 27, 28. Michael Johnson was 31, 32 when he was breaking world records. For some reason, these guys' bodies totally mature when

they reach 26. I think between the time he turns 26 to 30, he'll be one of the main sprinters."

But it's all relative. A six-time Division II all-America and two-time CIAA champ in the 100 and 200, Vaden's a known commodity to opponents. The rest of the world will have to find out in due time, perhaps at the U.S. trials, or the Penn Relays in Philadelphia later this month.

"I guess it's more fun being the hunter," he said. "Not a whole lot of people know about Livingstone, so right now I'm hunting. It's a goal I'm working toward, trying to get some respect for the school."

Devils get more than due

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isn't like Princeton, which competes in the Ivy League, where EVERY team plays by the same rules - no athletic scholarships. Yet Princeton usually makes the NCAA tournament and represents itself well, all with players that alumni, fans and commentators don't regard as campus deities. And, yes, there are deities at Duke, starting with Krzyzewski himself.

Let me be clear: Duke players are NOT dummies. My point is, schools like Stanford and Wake Forest are prestigious, too. And those schools remain annually competitive, with far fewer deities on campus.

And then there's Duke players' reputation for being cherubs.

They're not.

Former player Greg Newton was suspended after the Student Court found him guilty of cheating, while another ex-Devil, Casey Sanders, was accused of assaulting his girlfriend. Several current players faced serious allegations, too. J.J. Redick (marijuana) and Shelden Williams (rape) were both cleared. As a freshman, current star Chris Duhon was cited for underage drinking.

Plus, there's the cockiness the Devils show. Redick is notorious for his taunting. Then

again, he's not as bad as former star Christian Laettner, who once stomped a player in the chest on national television - and stayed in the game! And there are times Krzyzewski needs his mouth washed out with soap.

No, none of this means Duke is a bunch of bad guys. You cannot deny the program is one of the best in the country. You cannot deny Krzyzewski is a coaching genius who gets the best from his players. You cannot deny Chris Carrawell and Shane Battier and other ex-Dukies are some of the best people you'll ever meet.

It just irks many people without a rooting interest in Duke when the things that make the Devils like most other programs - off-the-court issues and on-the-court arrogance - are overlooked to turn the team into All That's Right with College Basketball.

Hopefully, Krzyzewski knows his team has benefited, not been hurt, from being so successful.

Hopefully, he knows the reason so many people don't want Duke to win is because the program has competed with a head start for so many years.

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Bonds rises on HR list

By Mark Babineck
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON - Barry Bonds has never been closer to his godfather Willie Mays on baseball's career home run list than he is now. Bonds hit his 659th home run Monday night - one behind Mays for third all time - in helping the San Francisco Giants begin the season with a 5-4 comeback victory over the Houston Astros.

Bonds said he feels no pressure as he bears down on his beloved godfather.

"I don't understand the word 'pressure,'" Bonds said. "How can you have pressure when you're doing something you love?"

If Bonds can perform

through the pressure of losing his father Bobby last year and dealing with an off-season filled with questions about steroids, catching Mays should be a piece of cake.

Bonds went 3-for-3 with a homer and two doubles against one of the NL's top pitchers in Roy Oswalt. His sixth opening day homer came in the eighth inning with two on and the Giants down 4-1.

Oswalt, chosen over ex-Yankees Roger Clemens and Andy Pettitte to start the Astros' first game, stayed in after assuring manager Jimmy Williams he was fine.

One low-and-away fastball later, Bonds was trotting and Oswalt was leaving.

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