

Track team starts strong in first meet of spring season

by Meaghan Carey, March 17, 2010

The women's track and field team kicked off its spring season at the Coastal Carolina Invitational in Conway, S.C., this past weekend, where the team broke three school records.

This is just the first of five meets the team will play before the Southern Conference Championship begins April 23.

"I think we actually did better than we expected to," head coach Mark Elliston said. "There were a couple of races here that were out of our control, like the time a hurdle got hit into one of our teammates lane and ended her run."

Standout performances at the meet included the efforts of senior basketball player Urysla Cotton and junior Justine Robertson in the shot put competition.

"After four years at Elon, Urysla (Cotton) came out for the team, had only practiced for three days and was able to set a new school record in the shot put by almost three feet," Elliston said.

Notable performances were also recorded by junior Veronica Day, senior Jennine Strange and sophomores Amy Salek and Courtney Whalen in the long jump, 800-meter run, 400-meter run and 1,500-meter run, respectively.

"There were numerous personal bests," Elliston said. "(Sophomore) Amy Salek really came on in her race, as well as (sophomore) Amy Rice in the 100 hurdles. She did a great job. (Sophomore) Courtney Whalen also did really well."

Elliston said the team gained a lot of confidence at the meet this weekend.

The training the women have put in paid off, he said.

"(The season) is over for us around April, so we don't have a lot of time left," Elliston said. "We're back on the track and they are really excited for that."

Track and field meets consist of various events such as javelin, shot put, hurdles, long jump and high jump, as well as an assortment of running events varying in distance.

Although each is an individual event, meets are overall a collaborative effort, as scores are tallied up at the end of the day, to determine the rankings in performance.

"It's really the best of both worlds," Elliston said. "High jumpers, they don't run or sprint. Runners sprint but don't jump."

He said the athletes know that each score matters and look to their teammates to do their best in every event.