

## And They're Off!!

Nick Gerstung

This past Saturday the 15th, the Cavaliers Men's and Women's Cross Country team competed in the Hyder-McMahill Collegiate Invite at Black Mountain Campus against nine other schools across the eastern seaboard, with the men finishing 3rd overall. Placing for the men in the 8k was freshmen prodigy, **Ryan Gehman**, who finished 8th out of 82 runners with a time of 28:19.

Just inside the top 15, **Andy Roof**, returning cross country runner who had hit a snag in his summer running with a pulled hamstring setting him behind, is getting better over time. For the Cavalier girls that ran the 5k, senior runner, **Lauren Kelly** ran a 22:18 while sophomore **Brooke Alexander** ran a 26:02.

We asked cross country runners Andy Roof and Ryan Gehman why do they run such long distances when other people wouldn't even give it a thought. Ryan replied, "There's a feeling of freedom I get when I run unlike anything else. I love that when I run it's a team sport but I also compete against myself to beat my own personal best. It's great competition." While Andy replied with, "Running is like art... making a masterpiece out on the course or track is why I love running. There is no greater feeling than the feeling of great accomplishment."

Cross Country Head Coach, **Justin Herbert** gives us his input on how the meet played out, "As a team, the men ran exceptionally well. It's a great way to start the year and we're looking forward to the next meet! With the women we don't have a full team yet but Lauren and Brooke ran hard at this meet to represent the girls."

We asked Brooke Alexander her thoughts on the season ahead she replied; "I'm so excited for this season for both men and women. For the men, I look forward to seeing just how far all that hard work they have put in will get them. On the women's end, I'm more than ready to see everyone healthy; Kelly with shin splints, myself with anemia, and Sheets with an injured foot, so I'll be thrilled when we all get healthy. Of course, I'm hopeful that at least one of us, Lauren Kelly, will be competing at Nationals this year. She definitely has what it takes to get there."

The cross country team would like thank the men's basketball team for volunteering and serving the XC teams at the meet this past Saturday. Montreat's Cross Country Cavaliers will have their next race this Saturday, Sept 22 at Columbia International University. They would love to see your support!

