



Rowe Earns A-Sun Academic Scholarship



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6/8/2009 9:16:45 AM

MACON, Ga. – Renowned for its rigorous academic standards, Mercer continued its firm grip on Atlantic Sun Conference postseason awards as the league office announced on Monday that former women's cross country standout Chereese Rowe has claimed the A-Sun Conference female postseason graduate scholarship.

"It is a pleasure to work with a student athlete like Chereese," said Dr. Jeff Hugdahl, Mercer's Faculty Athletic Representative. "She works hard on her academics and athletics, and continues the strong tradition of Mercer University students being actively involved in service to their community."

The scholarship, in just its third year of existence, was claimed by a Bears' baseball player each of the previous two years on the male side. Rowe, a native of Dublin, Ga., continues to add to her impressive list of accolades both on and off the field.

Rowe began her Mercer career on the hardwood as a basketball player and finished on the turf last November at the Georgia Industrial Children's Home in the Atlantic Sun Cross Country Championships. Rowe, who earned the cross country team MVP award, did not compete in last season's first event at South Carolina because of an injury but bounced back to pace the squad in every event during the rest of the 2008 campaign.

She posted a personal-best time of 19:16.07 en route to an 11th-place finish at the 5k Auburn Invitational in early October on a very fast course. Rowe nearly eclipsed that mark two weeks later at the Jacksonville State Foothills Invitational, garnering a 14th-place finish.

Rowe helped carry the torch for the cross country squad, as the team earned Mercer's Presidential Scholastic Award at the awards banquet in early May. The honor goes to the team with the highest grade-point average, with women's cross country posting an impressive 3.685 GPA during the fall semester, eclipsing last year's award-winning 3.584 mark.

"The selection committee could not have made a better choice," Mercer head women's cross country coach Ryan Bailey added. "Chereese is an outstanding individual and very deserving."

In addition to her success both on the basketball court and the turf, Rowe has sought to help others in her personal time, volunteering to help Hurricane Katrina victims in Mississippi, working with Special Olympics at a local high school and serving as a mentor to local children, along with many healthcare-related programs.

Rowe plans to attend Mercer-Atlanta this fall [to study to become a physician's assistant].