

*Media Guide 2006*

# ***VANDERBILT CROSS COUNTRY***



**Austin Williamson**

**Austin Weaver**

**Erika Schneble**

**Brittany Sizer**



# Head Coach Steven Keith



**Steven Keith**  
Head Coach

The fall of 2006 will begin a new era in Vanderbilt cross country, with first year coach Steven Keith at the helm of both the women and men's programs, renewing a previous tradition of combining the two teams under one leader. Armed with a stellar background in collegiate athletics, which includes 20 years of experience as a Division I coach, Keith is ready for the challenge of guiding both Commodore squads to a national level of excellence.

As a Vanderbilt alum and cross country letterwinner from 1977-81, Keith understands that success as a Commodore rides on maintaining the delicate balance of excellence on the track and in the classroom. Before arriving at Vanderbilt, Keith served five years as head women's cross country coach at the University of Alabama where he mentored five Academic All-American teams, four of which earned distinction honors (3.25 or better GPA). "Many cross country runners like to

challenge themselves on both levels: the athletic and academic work. So a runner that enjoys those challenges and arrives with a strong academic background will go far in our program," Keith said. Personal experience as a Southeastern Conference athlete as well as coaching experience in the conference has given Keith a deep understanding of what kind of athletes can thrive in Vanderbilt's rigorous academic environment as well as the in elite competition the SEC offers. Since 1981, the SEC has produced

Keith said.

Prior to his work within the SEC, Keith led Texas-El Paso's men and women's cross country teams and track programs. As a UTEP Miner's coach, Keith mentored two national champions and 22 All-Americans, as well as finalists at the Olympics, World Championships, Pan American Games, European Championships, and World University Games.

One of Keith's first collegiate coaching positions was at Georgia Tech, where he mentored current Ramblin Wreck coach

Alan Drosky. Drosky was an All-American 1500 runner under Keith's coaching before signing on to lead the Tech distance program in 1991. Keith's All-Americans at UTEP, combined with his other coaching experiences at Emory and Georgia Tech, adds up to 28 All-American athletes that trained under the St. Louis native. Coupled with these athletic achievements are



The Commodores prepare for the NCAA Regionals in Knoxville, Tenn.

69 male and 47 female All-Americans as well as 33 top-20 male finishers and 33 top-25 female finishers at the NCAA Championships.

"I'm very familiar with the level of competition and caliber it takes to be at the top of the conference. If you can be an SEC title contender than you can be at a top 10 national level and that is our goal,"

eight All-Academic teams and eight All-Academic individuals.

Keith currently resides in downtown Nashville, where he regularly enjoys the world-famous live music scene the area has to offer; "Americana, Blues, Bluegrass, and Jazz," Keith said. "This city is fantastic for quality live music!" ♦

## Student Athletics Administration



**Gordon Gee**

University  
Chancellor



**David Williams II**

Vice  
Chancellor



**Kevin Colon**

Director of  
Sport  
Operations

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# Commodore Season Review

The 2005 cross country season began as one of the most promising in the program's history.

In the SEC coaches preseason poll, the Commodore women's squad was picked fourth in the conference—their highest rank in school history—but ended the season with a seventh place finish at the SEC Championship due to injury and illness. The men also enjoyed one of their most successful seasons to date, but were only able to finish 11th overall at the final conference contest.

At the start of 2006, the cross country teams gained Division I and SEC veteran coach Steven Keith, but lost several key top five runners. Despite the losses, Keith set conference goals for the teams at fifth for the women and top 10 for the men, a team of dedicated non-scholarship athletes competing against difficult odds in the SEC.

The start of the season showed promise, with both teams taking the meet title at the Commodore Classic in Nashville. Junior Austin Williamson led the men while fifth-year senior Erika Schneble led the women to victory, though the race would be Schneble's last competition of the mid-season due to a foot fracture. The women also lost All-NCAA Region and All-SEC competitor Ashleigh Wetzels due to illness. Both would return for the NCAA Regionals, but had to sit out the SEC Championships. The team's losses would prove too much for the Commodores, who were just able to

match—but not rise above—their 2005 seventh place finish.

"We didn't meet our fifth place goal, but we also lost two of our top runners. We were still able to match last year's finish, which shows me that we definitely did not take a step back. We really held our own despite the losses, and now it's just a matter of finding the right up and coming athletes to help us get there," Keith said.

With two long time team leaders out for most of the season, fifth year senior Brittany Sizer stepped up to lead the Commodores in her final year. Sizer had a breakthrough run at the Louisville Invitational, where she finished fifth over-

18:05 mark and took a second place finish overall, helping seal the Vanderbilt runner-up team finish.

The men fell just 12 points shy of ninth place at the SEC meet and finished thirteenth in the region, but with all but one of the team's top seven runners returning, the 2007 outlook will be promising for the Commodores.

The men's team was led throughout the season by junior Austin Williamson, who earned SEC Athlete of the Week honors for his first place performance at the Commodore Classic. Williamson took the meet title last with a mark of 26:32, nearly 30 seconds before the next finisher in the 8k.

Notre Dame transfer Austin Weaver joined Williamson at the top of the Commodore finishes, followed by 2006 Kentucky State High School 1600 meter Champion freshman Thomas Davis.

"Our top three

runners were consistent in the mid-25 range and now we need to narrow the gap and bring up runners four, five, and six under the 26 minute mark as well."

Overall, the 2006 season showcased Commodore improvement despite several setbacks.

"I was happy with our season," Keith said. "We had some tough luck, we were able to move on. We learned a lot about ourselves and how to compete at the SEC. It's a great starting point for next year and future seasons." ♦



Brittany Sizer (left) earned SEC Athlete of the Week honors for leading the Commodores mid-season. Austin Williamson (far right) also earned SEC honors in 2006. Williamson and Weaver (right) shared the Commodore top position with freshman Thomas Davis.

all at the race which featured more than 250 athletes from several cross country powerhouses including Louisville, Georgia Tech and Kentucky. Sizer proved her ability to run with the elite when she held third place at the half way mark of the race and finished with her first career sub 18 minute effort (17:56) at the 5k.

The following week, Sizer earned SEC Athlete of the Week honors for her performance in the Blue Ridge Open in Boone, North Carolina. Sizer earned her second career finish as the Commodores' lead runner at the meet, finishing with an

# 2006 Race Results



Women	Belmont Invite (4k)	Commodore Classic (5k)	Louisville Invite (5k)	Blue Ridge Open (5k)	SEC (6k)	NCAA Regional (6k)
Ellen Black	16:12 (56/9)	20:46 (22/10)	20:17 (169/9)	20:32 (58/9)	23:50 (89/8)	
Christine Brown	15:33 (39/7)	20:11 (13/7)	19:33 (96/6)	20:03 (44/8)	23:39 (83/6)	
Shannon Capps					24:07 (95/9)	
Julie Eckerly	15:13 (33/5)	18:55 (3/3)	18:50 (42/2)	19:27 (23/4)	22:11 (49/2)	23:07 (59/3)
Melinda Eshelman	18:49 (Unatt.)					
Julie Ann Fenstermaker		22:21 (39/14)				
Val Kazmer	15:23 (36/6)	19:15 (4/4)	19:08 (64/5)	19:09 (12/3)	22:43 (58/5)	24:02 (85/5)
Kellianne Kleeman	17:20 (Unatt.)	21:12 (27/13)				
Allison McMahon	15:42 (46/8)	20:24 (18/9)	20:16 (168/8)	19:59 (40/7)	24:11 (99/10)	
Carmen Mims				19:40 (27/5)	22:24 (57/4)	22:56 (56/2)
Lauren Pence	16:26 (66/9)	21:02 (25/12)	20:36 (187/11)			
Erika Schneble	14:20 (7/1)	18:19 (1/1)				22:20 (34/1)
Amanda Scott	15:07 (16/3)	19:21 (6/5)	18:55 (48/3)	18:36 (5/2)	22:17 (52/3)	23:25 (64/4)
Sarah Scott	16:30 (67/10)	20:48 (23/11)	20:20 (172/10)			
Brittany Sizer	14:31 (11/2)	18:30 (2/2)	17:56 (5/1)	18:05 (2/1)	21:38 (34/1)	24:19 (92/6)
Mindy Skelton	16:32 (68/12)	20:21 (16/8)	19:52 (133/7)	19:41 (28/6)	23:43 (84/7)	
Ashleigh Wetzel	15:08 (28/4)	19:40 (7/6)	19:00 (55/4)			
<b>Team Finish</b>	<b>5th (11 Teams)</b>	<b>1st (7)</b>	<b>6th (31)</b>	<b>2nd (10)</b>	<b>7th (12)</b>	<b>10th (23)</b>

Men	Belmont Invite (5k)	Commodore Classic (8k)	Louisville Invite (8k)	Blue Ridge Open (8k)	SEC (8k)	NCAA Regional (10k)
Adam Banks	16:47 (52/10)	30:10 (22/7)	28:11 (277/8)	27:58 (84/7)	28:10 (90/8)	
Thomas Davis	15:10 (6/2)		26:07 (93/3)	25:32 (13/1)	26:05 (51/3)	34:22 (83/3)
Mike Gabrys	16:33 (43/7)	30:14 (23/8)				
Matt Long	16:38 (48/9)					
Chris Noel	15:57 (24/4)	28:49 (12/6)	26:18 (106/4)	27:22 (65/6)	28:00 (87/7)	36:09 (127/7)
Michael Nordlund	15:59 (25/5)	28:03 (7/3)	27:22 (251/6)	27:08 (56/5)	26:37 (68/5)	34:38 (101/4)
Rick Semones	16:35 (46/8)	28:35 (11/5)	27:47 (253/7)	28:15 (95/8)	27:46 (84/6)	35:30 (116/6)
Austin Weaver	15:28 (14/3)	26:59 (2/2)	25:16 (36/1)	25:35 (14/2)	25:54 (48/2)	33:19 (51/1)
Rob Whiting	16:23 (38/6)	28:23 (4/7)	26:33 (138/5)	26:34 (40/4)	26:35 (66/4)	34:50 (101/5)
Austin Williamson	15:10 (5/1)	26:32 (1/1)	25:26 (45/2)	25:53 (20/3)	25:41 (41/1)	33:20 (53/2)
<b>Team Finish</b>	<b>2nd (11 Teams)</b>	<b>1st (7)</b>	<b>11th (36)</b>	<b>3rd (14)</b>	<b>10th (11)</b>	<b>13th (25)</b>

## Cross Country Support Staff



**Max Martin**

Women's Academic Counselor



**Jamie Teasley**

Men's Academic Counselor



**John Thorpe**

Assistant Director of Facilities



**Katy Hamlett**

Media Relations

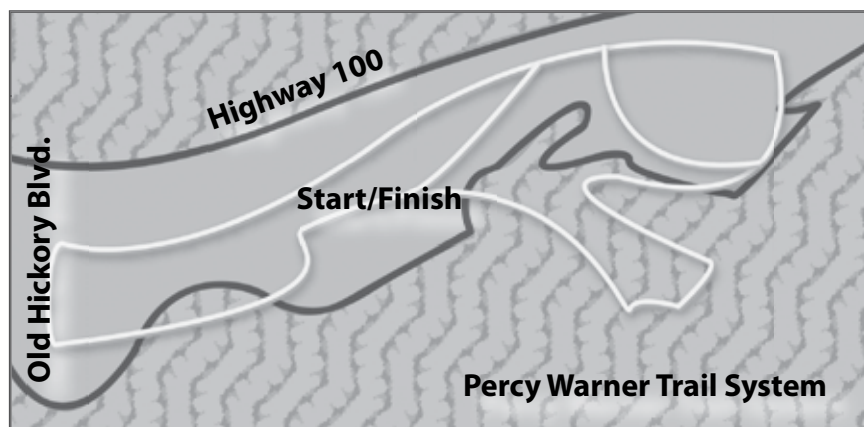


# Nashville, Tennessee

## Percy Warner Park

The Vanderbilt Cross Country team's home site is Percy Warner Park, just a short drive west of campus. Percy Warner is part of the Warner Park system, which encompasses 2684 acres of forest, trails and an equestrian steeplechase course.

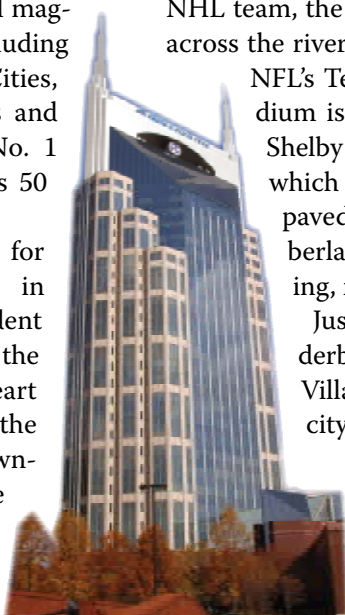
The Vaughn's Gap course can be used for any race distance from 4k up to and including 10k events. It features gently rolling hills through wooded areas as well as open stretches that allow up close viewing for spectators. ♦



## Commodores in Music City

There's something special about Nashville. Recently, the big city that still has an open-arms appeal has topped some of the premier national magazines lists of hot spots, including Kiplinger's Seven Cool Cities, Forbes Top 10 for Business and Careers, and is currently No. 1 on Expansion Management's 50 Hottest Cities.

Nashville has something for everyone, including those in Vanderbilt's diverse student body. Just three miles from the Vanderbilt campus is the heart of music city, which sits on the bank Cumberland River. Downtown Nashville features some of the South's hottest night-spots, as well as the Gaylord Entertainment Center



which brings in some of the most popular acts on the music scene, as well as serving as the home rink for Nashville's NHL team, the Nashville Predators. Just across the river is LP Field, home to the NFL's Tennessee Titans. The stadium is also a stop on the city's Shelby Bottoms Greenway, which features over 14 miles of paved trails that line the Cumberland and are perfect hiking, running, or biking.

Just a quick walk from Vanderbilt's campus is Hillsboro Village, another hub in the city. "The Village" features boutiques and eclectic shopping, coffee shops, restaurants, and a few other favorite student hang outs. ♦

### Nashville Attractions/ Distance from Vandy Campus

- ♦ The Parthenon, Centennial Park/ 0.1 mile
- ♦ Frist Center for the Visual Arts/ 2 miles
- ♦ Gaylord Entertainment Center/ 2.3 miles
- ♦ TN Performing Arts Center/ 2.5 miles
- ♦ Schermerhorn Symphony Center/ 2.7 miles
- ♦ Country Music Hall of Fame 2.8miles
- ♦ Adventure Science Center/3 miles
- ♦ LP Field (Tennessee Titans)/6 miles
- ♦ Cheekwood Botanical Gardens & Museum of Art/6 miles
- ♦ Nashville Shores Water Park/ 14 miles



# The Commodores



## Ellen Black

FR/Marietta, GA

Walton HS

**Major:** Medicine, Health and Society

**Other Notes:** Personal records include 19:45 (5k) and 12:12 (3200)...had 8th place team finish at SEC Championships.



## Christine Brown

SO/Potomac, MD

Holton-Arms

**Major:** Human Organizational Development

**Other Notes:** Set 5k PR at Louisville Invitational (19:33)...had 6th place team finish at SEC Championships...holds HS records in 800 and 3200.



## Shannon Capps

SR/Knoxville, TN

Knoxville Central HS

**Major:** Chemical Engineering

**Other Notes:** Ran 5k personal best at Notre Dame in 2004 (18:23)...also set 5k PR in track at 17:53 in 2005.



## Julie Eckerly

JR/Columbus, IN

Columbus North HS

**Major:** Microbiology

**Other Notes:** Finished second for the Commodores at the Louisville Invite in 2006 (18:50)...posted track PR of 10:02 for 3k in 2005.



## Val Kazmer

JR/Grand Rapids, MI

Forest Hills Central HS

**Major:** Economics

**Other Notes:** Season best was 19:08 at the Louisville (5k)...ran 22:43 PR as team's 5th runner at the SEC Championships.



## Allison McMahon

FR/Carmel, IN.

Carmel HS

**Major:** Human Organizational Development

**Other Notes:** Ran in five races in her first season as a Commodore...best 5k finish was 19:59 the Blue Ridge Open.



## Carmen Mims

SO/Louisville, KY

Mercy Academy

**Major:** Economics/Art Studio

**Other Notes:** Finished second for the Commodores at the NCAA Regionals (22:56)...10:34 high school 2-mile personal best.



## Erika Schneble

GR/Hendersonville, NC

Hendersonville HS

**Major:** Neuroscience

**Other Notes:** Earned All-American Honors in 2004...All-South Regional Recognition...VU record 5k time of 16:08.



## Amanda Scott

SO/Virginia Beach, VA

Cape Henry HS

**Major:** Chemical Engineering

**Other Notes:** After redshirting 2005 Scott competed in all 2006 races with season best team finish at Blue Ridge Open (2nd/18:36).



## Brittany Sizer

GR/Kingwood, TX

Kingwood HS

**Major:** Education

**Other Notes:** Led the Commodores through 3 meets in 2006...finished 5th out of 200+ at Louisville Invite (17:56)...4:58 indoor mile PR in 2005.



## Mindy Skelton

SO/Columbus, OH

Thomas Worthington HS

**Major:** Engineering Science

**Other Notes:** Had best 2006 5k finish at Blue Ridge Invitational (19:41)...finished 18th overall at Commodore Invitational.



## Ashleigh Wetzel

SR/Lewisburg, PA

Lewisburg HS

**Major:** Human Organizational Development

**Other Notes:** Earned All-NCAA and All-Regional honors in 2005...earned highest VU finish ever at SEC Championships in 2004 (5th/21:07).



# The Commodores

## Adam Banks

JR/The Woodlands, TX

John Cooper HS

Major: Biomedical Engineering

**Other Notes:** Ran 2006 season best at Blue Ridge Open (27:58)...helped lead HS to back-to-back championships.

## Thomas Davis

FR/Louisville, KY

St. Xavier

Major: Biomedical Engineering

**Other Notes:** Had 1st place team finish at the Blue Ridge Open (25:32)...HS All-American...KY State Champion in 1600m (4:18).

## Mike Gabrys

SR/Northville, MI

Northville HS

Major: Human Organizational Development

**Other Notes:** Ran 16:33 at Belmont Invitational (5k) and 30:18 at Commodore Classic (8k).

## Matt Long

SO/Columbus, OH

Upper Arlington HS

Major: Anthropology

**Other Notes:** Ran 16:38 in Belmont Invitational 5k...set 5k PR in track in 2005 (15:39)...redshirted 2006 season.

## Chris Noel

JR/Brentwood, TN

Brentwood HS

Major: Computer Science/Math

**Other Notes:** Had 4th place team finishes at the Belmont Invitational (15:57) and Louisville Invitational (26:18)...set 8k PR in 2005 (25:56).

## Michael Nordlund

SO/Palo Alto, CA

Palo Alto Senior HS

Major: French/Economics

**Other Notes:** Finished 4th for VU at 2006 NCAA Regionals and set new 10k PR (34:38)...finished 3rd for VU at Commodore Classic (28:03).

## Rick Semones

JR/Louisville, KY

St. Xavier

Major: Biochemical Engineering

**Other Notes:** Had highest team finish at NCAA Regionals (6th/35:30)...finished 11th at Commodore Classic (28:35).

## Austin Weaver

GR/Nashville, TN

Notre Dame

Major: Finance

**Other Notes:** Led the Commodores at NCAA Regionals and Louisville Invite...3-year letterwinner at Notre Dame...holds 3 TN HS 3200m titles.

## Rob Whiting

SO/Fernandina Beach, FL

Fernandina Beach HS

Major: Economics/East Asian Studies

**Other Notes:** Had 4th place team finishes at Blue Ridge Open (26:34) and SEC Championships (26:35).

## Austin Williamson

JR/Des Moines, IA

Roosevelt HS

Major: Psychology/Sociology

**Other Notes:** Finished in VU top 3 at every meet in 2006...2006 SEC Athlete of the Week... PRs include 25:26 (8k), 32:26 (10k), and 15:05 (5k)



The 2006 cross country teams spent fall break at running camp in scenic Blowing Rock, North Carolina.