

Runners, Brothers, Hellions

Chris Catanach



**The Story of the 2005 Columbus
Hellions Cross Country Team**

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Christopher Michael Catanach

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Dedication



Dedicated to the four warriors who fought alongside me every day of my high school life. Our battle was long and our army of supporters was small, but the fire I saw in your eyes was what made it a battle and a cause worth fighting for. Every mile I ran, every step that I took was for you guys, so that we could stand on that podium together. A dream is nothing without believers, and you guys showed me that hard work and a little faith in yourself can take you a long way. No matter what path you choose to follow in life, I know you will be successful because of the lessons you learned here. Don't ever forget the times we spent together and what we accomplished throughout these four awesome years. Andres Davila, Andres Pacheco, Chris Gilbert, and David Ocon – remember that we are always Hellions and that our legacy will live on through the program we jumpstarted and the dynasty we established. We went to hell and back to fight for what we believed in and who we are, and like Gilbert said, at least we did it together. I still run today in memory of you guys, and I dedicate this book and my collegiate running career to the four of you, my brothers of sweat and blood.

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The 2005 Columbus Hellions

Chris Catanach

Senior

Height: 6'1 Weight: 150 lbs.



Chris Catanach is the captain of the 2005 Hellions squad and the narrator of the story. He gives a first-person account of his experiences during his fourth and final season as a Hellion, from his summer training, to his races, and finally the moment of truth at the 2005

Class 4A State Championship Meet. He shares his thoughts and reactions to the ups and downs he and his teammates experience throughout their 2005 campaign and state title run. Although he aims to improve his stride by opening up his long legs and quickening his turnover cadence, Catanach's main struggle takes place between his ears as he tries to take control of his thoughts and emotions. He has plenty of miles under his belt entering his senior cross country summer and season, but Catanach must win the psychological battle in order to mobilize his training and become a lethal asset to the Hellion top five.

Personal Bests: 17:04 5K, 10:17 3200m, 4:41 1600m

Accomplishments: 3rd Team All-Dade County
7th Place 4A District 8 Championship 2004

Michael Cugno

Junior

Height: 6'0 Weight: 150 lbs.



Michael Cugno enters his second season of high school cross country in hopes of making the varsity top seven. Despite inexperience and minimal training, Cugno held a varsity spot in 2004 until shin problems prevented him from racing during

most of the 2004 postseason. The injury carried on throughout his sophomore track season, putting him in a hole as he enters the summer of 2005. However, several good months of training could make Cugno a solid 17 minute 5K runner and a legitimate top seven threat. Cugno's tall frame and athletic build blend with the toughness he inherited from his days as a football player, allowing him to run well after taking lots of time off. Michael Cugno looks to support his senior teammates in 2005 by assisting in the Hellion's 2005 run for the title in any way that he can, and making the top seven is the first step he needs to take.

Personal Best: 18:22 5K

Accomplishments: All-Dade County Honorable Mention 2004

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Andres Davila

Senior

Height: 5'9 Weight: 135 lbs.



Andy Davila is consistently the best runner on the Hellion squad, and looks to make some noise at the state level in his senior season. A supremely talented athlete and runner, Davila relied on his tremendous leg speed to propel him ahead of the rest

of the competition in Dade County in only his second year of high school cross country in 2004. The former backup quarterback on the Columbus football team, Davila did not start running cross country until his sophomore year in high school. Andy continues to improve as he accumulates mileage and gains experience, and looks to have the best season of his high school career in 2005. If he can remain healthy for the duration of the season, Davila will be a frontrunner in most races and a key proponent in the team's push for the title in 2005 as he leads the Hellion front five in practices and races.

Personal Bests: 16:25 5K, 10:01 3200m, 4:40 1600m, 2:04 800m

Accomplishments:

- 1st Team All-Dade County 2004
- 1st Team All-State 2004
- Junior Orange Bowl Champion 2004
- GMAC Champion 2004
- 4A District 8 Champion 2004
- 4A Region 4 Champion 2004
- GMAC 3200m Champion 2005

Chris Gilbert

Senior

Height: 5'8 Weight: 135 lbs



Chris Gilbert is the most experienced runner on the 2005 Hellions squad, however a string of injuries throughout his high school career limited his ability to train and race successfully during his sophomore and junior cross country and track seasons. A talented

and gutsy runner, Gilbert uses his strength and powerful turnover to blow past the competition when healthy. Gilbert has managed to compete at a high level despite his multiple injuries and minimal training, and is looking forward to having an injury-free summer and senior season in 2005. He will not run the same mileage as the rest of the top five, but will still be a potent force at the front of the Hellion pack. A healthy Gilbert would mean great things for the team as he brings strength and consistency to the Hellion top five.

Personal Bests: 16:32 5K, 10:27 3200m, 4:53 1600m, 2:06 800m

Accomplishments: 2nd Team All-Dade County 2004
4th Place GMAC Championships 2004
2nd Place 4A District 8 Championships 2004
4th Place 4A Region 4 Championships 2004
2nd Place 4A District 15 3200m 2004

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Paul Julmeus

Junior

Height: 5'9 Weight: 150 lbs.



After an extremely successful sophomore track season, Paul Julmeus decided to join the Hellion Cross Country team in his junior year. An 800 meter specialist, Julmeus will try to adjust to the 5000 meter distance during his rookie season in order to compete

for a spot on the varsity seven. With speed and strength already present due to his natural talent and running ability, Paul has three months to take a crash course on cross country running by putting in a large number of miles. If he can build a solid base and gain sufficient endurance for the 5000 meter race, Paul could easily run in the 17 minute range in only his first cross country season. Although he originally joined the cross country team to gain endurance and improve his 800 meter race, Paul Julmeus realizes the dream in progress that exists among the Hellion runners, and he will stop at nothing to help make that dream a reality. Hard work and talent compensate for Paul's inexperience as he dives headfirst into the crazy sport of cross country running in hopes of surfacing as a member of a state championship team.

Personal Best: 2:01.8 800m

Accomplishments: 4A District 15 800m Champion 2005

Alex Laos

Senior

Height: 5'6 Weight: 130 lbs.



Alex Laos, the team's fifth runner in 2004, returns for his senior season in hopes of rounding off the Hellion top five. Although he missed his junior track season, Laos looks to shake off his shin problems and remain a healthy and solid asset to the varsity team in 2005.

Alex Laos has been a part of the state championship dream since he and his senior teammates were freshmen, and now he looks to seal the deal through his veteran leadership and experience. Laos is excellent at long runs and has a solid mileage base as a result of his well developed aerobic system from his background as a soccer player. Although he has lost a step since 2004, Laos looks to put in a good summer so that he can have a healthy and successful senior season in 2005.

Personal Bests: 17:36 5K

Accomplishments: All-Dade County Honorable Mention 2004

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Reniel “Reni” Licea

Freshman

Height: 5'3 Weight: 100 lbs.



Entering his first season of high school cross country, Reni Licea brings young talent to a senior-heavy Hellion team. Despite his inexperience and diminutive size, Reni finds himself in the hunt for a spot on the varsity team. Incredibly hardheaded and

persistent, Reni plans to consistently and quietly put in mileage to challenge the upperclassmen by the time the season starts. His slow turnover is compensated for by his mechanical and efficient stride that allows him to make use of his endurance capabilities. Reni hopes to assist the 2005 Hellions in any way he can, while setting himself up to step in as a young superstar runner after many of the Hellions of 2005 graduate. Young talent such as Licea marks the beginning of the rebuilding process of the Hellion dynasty, as he will help Columbus reload for the 2006 cross country season along with many more to come.

Kevin Mulet

Senior

Height: 5'9 Weight: 135 lbs.



Although he is more speed oriented and built to run track and field, Kevin Mulet is eager to make the Hellion top seven in 2005. Mulet, a transfer from Miami Springs High School after his sophomore year, ran with the varsity seven for most of the 2004

postseason as well as at states. After just one year of experiencing the winning tradition at Columbus, Mulet is prepared to help the team take their dominance to the next level and win the state championship in 2005. He enters his senior cross country season in hopes of putting in enough mileage to get him on the same page as everyone who has been running under the Hellion system for several years. If Mulet can build up enough endurance to compliment his speed and quick turnover, he could definitely be a contender for a spot on the varsity roster by the beginning of the season. His toughness and public school mentality put Mulet up to the task, but patience and perserverance are what he must master in order to play a strong supporting role in the 2005 Hellion's quest for the state title.

Personal Bests: 18:35 5K, 2:06 800m

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David Ocon

Junior

Height: 5'9 Weight: 140 lbs.



After tremendous improvement in his sophomore cross country season, David Ocon enters his junior year looking forward to even more success. Despite a disappointing sophomore track season, Ocon took huge steps to increase his

mileage and intensity of training, setting him up to be a force in 2005. A master of long runs and a true endurance athlete, Ocon runs with the front pack of seniors and plans to run 100 miles a week with them during the summer. Ocon hopes to run low 17 minute races during the season since he has put himself in position to score for the varsity team in 2005. With a whole summer in front of him, Ocon looks to improve his stride and become more consistent in speed workouts to make him a strong all-around runner. Although he is only a junior, David Ocon knows that 2005 is his best shot at winning a state championship, and he is therefore willing to put everything on the line in order to help propel the team to the top in his junior year.

Personal Bests: 17:53 5K, 11:10 3200m, 5:03 1600m

Accomplishments: All-Dade County Honorable Mention 2004

Andres “Pachi” Pacheco

Senior

Height: 5'5 Weight: 140 lbs.



After breaking the school record for the 5000 meters with his 16:07 performance at States in 2004, Andres Pacheco is poised to finally become one of the top ten runners in the state in 4A. Although he suffered a number of minor injuries and setbacks during his

junior track season, Pacheco has remained consistent with his training and has run a large number of miles over the years to prepare for his senior cross country season. Andres is powerful and efficient when he runs, and grinds opponents down over the course of the 5000 meter race. His mental toughness allows him to outwork the competition and even his own teammates in races and workouts. If Andres can duplicate his record-breaking performance in 2004, he could become a lethal frontrunner who would compliment the strong Hellion pack excellently. His value as a runner is matched by his veteran leadership that is made evident by his work ethic and dedication to the sport and the dream of winning the state championship in 2005.

Personal Bests: 16:07 5K, 10:08 3200m, 4:48 1600m

Accomplishments: 1st Team All-Dade County 2004
1st Team All-State 2004
14th Place FHSAA Class 4A State Finals 2004
2nd Place Junior Orange Bowl 2004
2nd Place 4A Region 4 Championships 2004

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Coaching Staff

Jorge Fleitas



Jorge Fleitas graduated from Christopher Columbus High School in 2001 and was a member of the 1997 State Championship Cross Country Team. The 22 year-old mathematics teacher is looking to lead the 2005 Hellions squad to

similar success in only his second season of coaching at his alma mater by helping them capture their first State Title since 1997. An experienced runner from years of high school and college cross country at Florida State University, Fleitas imparts knowledge of the sport as well as important lessons on life to his athletes.

Although he is a rookie in the field of coaching, Fleitas lights a fire under the Hellions squad through his toughness and “refuse to lose” attitude that helped make him a state champion in high school. Fleitas will play a greater role in coaching the team and will have many new responsibilities in his quest to bring glory back to the Hellions program in 2005.

Antonio Oses



After assuming the position as Head Coach of the Hellion team in 2004, Antonio Oses has rebuilt the once powerhouse program from the ground up. Starting off with a talented class of sophomores, Oses introduced the principles of

high mileage and interval training to the team. Now, entering his third year as Head Coach of the program, Oses's sophomores from his first year of coaching have grown up and are now seniors. Coach Oses looks to put the final touches on the masterpiece that he has been building and perfecting for four years as he will try to lead the senior-heavy Hellion squad of 2005 to a state championship. Antonio Oses graduated from nearby Miami Springs Senior High School in 1992 and went on to earn a BS in Biotechnology and a MS in Biology from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts. After teaching at LaSalle High School, Homestead High School, and Miami Dade Community College, Oses interviewed for a job at Columbus and began teaching there in 2001. An avid reader and student of the game, Oses has found success during previous coaching stints of sports such as soccer, water polo, and swimming. However, 2005 is the first year that Oses has coached a team that is poised to win the state championship. Despite his lack of experience as a runner, Antonio Oses looks to put the 2005 Hellions in the history books by having them run 100 miles a week during the summer in order to make them the fastest cross country team in school history.

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Eric Pino



Like Coach Fleitas, Eric Pino is a Columbus graduate who ran on the 1997 State Championship Cross Country Team. After graduating in 2000, he went on to Florida International University where he earned a degree in Education. Fresh out of college, Pino

came back to Columbus and was given a job as a freshman algebra teacher. Pino joins the Hellion coaching staff late in the summer of 2005 in order to assist the team in its push for its second state title. In only his first season as an assistant coach, 22 year-old Eric Pino hopes to use his experience as a high school runner and a state champion to help make lightning strike twice on the Hellion program and take the 2005 team to the top.

2005 Columbus Hellions Cross Country Schedule

Date	Event	Location
9/10	Astronaut Invitational	Titusville, FL
9/17	FSU Invitational	Tallahassee, FL
9/24	Great American XC Festival	Cary, NC
10/1	fllrunners.com Invitational VI (Pre-state)	Dade City, FL
10/7	Dade County Youth Fair Championships	Miami, FL
10/14	Junior Orange Bowl Championships	Miami, FL
10/22	GMAC Championships	Miami, FL
10/27	4A District 8 Championships	Miami, FL
11/5	4A Region 4 Championships	Miami, FL
11/12	FHSAA State Finals	Dade City, FL