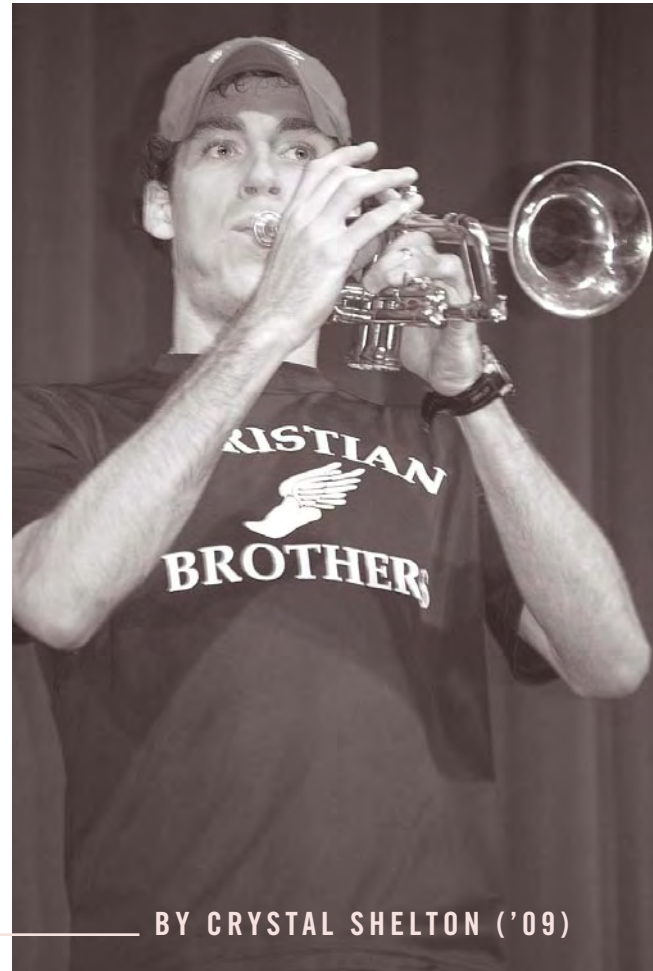
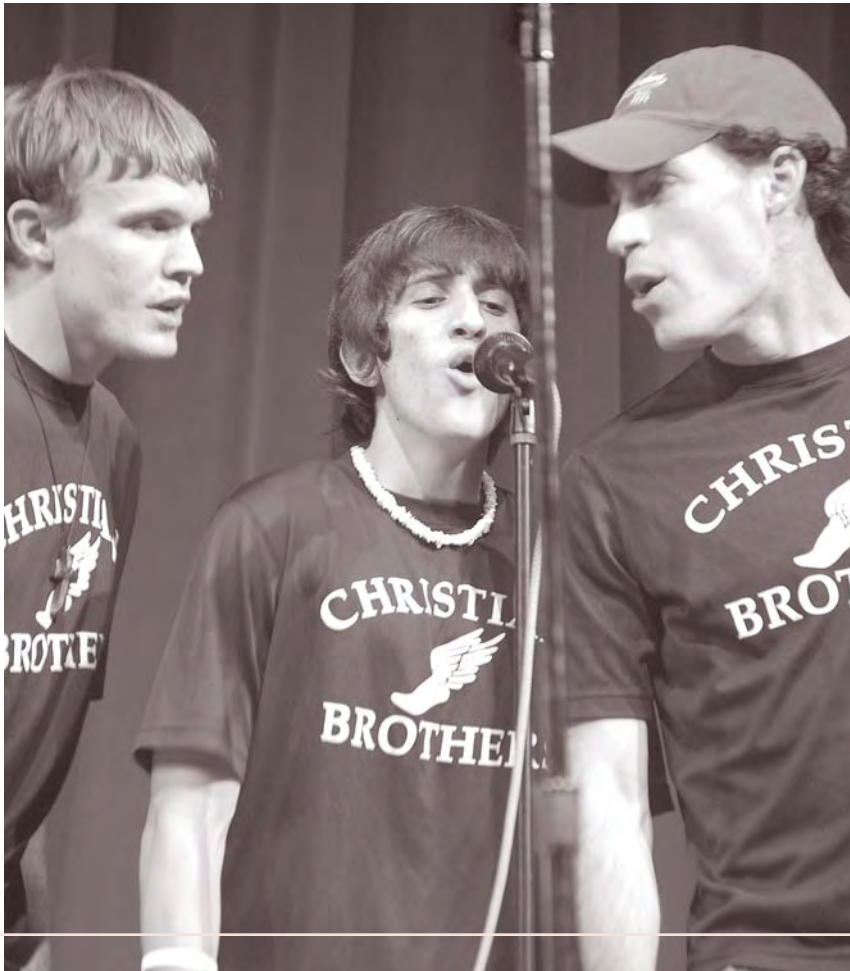


Going the Extra Mile

CBU's Cross Country Team Is Running to the Beat of Its Own Drummer—Literally.



BY CRYSTAL SHELTON ('09)

This page: (left) John Waldorf, Spencer Ridenour, and Stephen Hill harmonizing; (right) Stephen Hill on trumpet.

On your mark, get set, go! The customary start to any race, but the Christian Brothers University men's cross-country team is anything but customary. They run at their own pace and most definitely to their own tune.

Of their team of 13, they have ten runners on the Gulf South Conference Honor Roll, multiple All-South Region honorees, as well as an NCAA All-American. However, brawn and brains aren't their only talents. They are also known around campus for their sweet tunes and cool hair cuts. Interestingly enough, the team has rivaled top fraternities in the coveted "All-Sing" annual competition and has been serving this year as a cover band for the men's and women's basketball games.

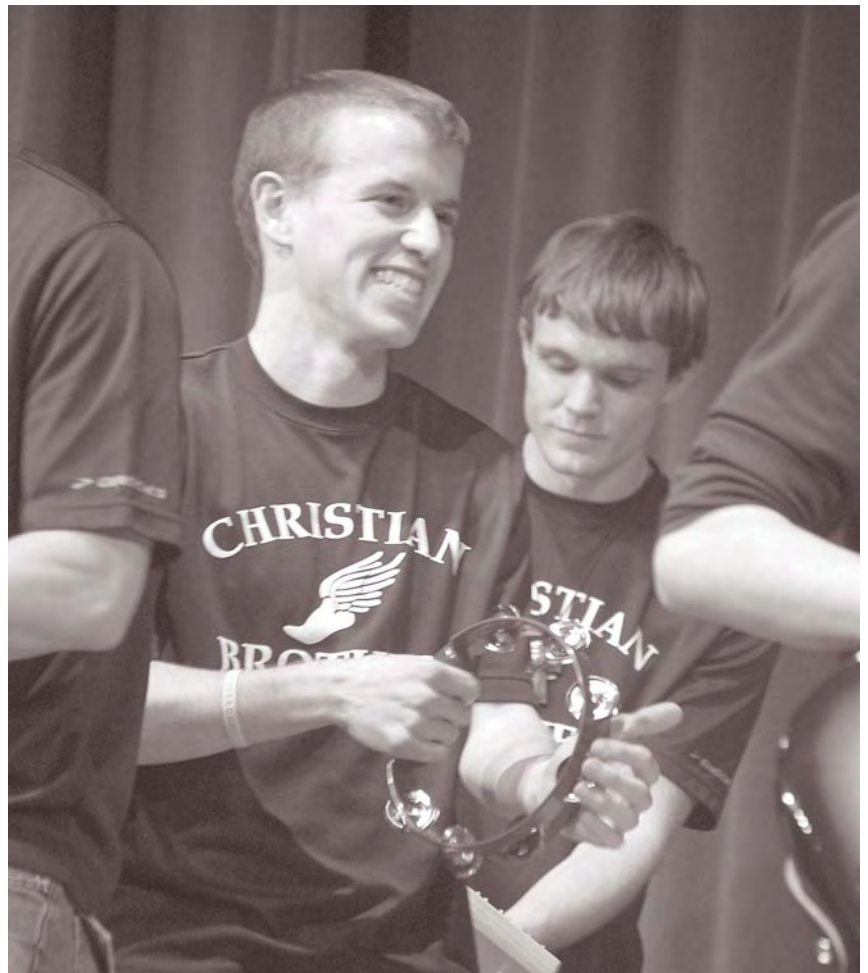
So how does a team of runners evolve into a social club and gigging band? Let's start with senior business major, cross-country runner, and bandleader Jordan Michael. Michael grew up in a musical household and has always been a musician of sorts. Over time he has

acquired a knack for an arsenal of instruments, and has performed solo as well as with the Michael Brothers, a band fittingly comprised of himself and his brothers.

He was introduced to the "All-Sing" during his freshman year at CBU. The competition is one of the many events during Homecoming Week and is traditionally dominated by Greek organizations that most often perform a medley of songs adapted to reflect their respective organizations. "It would be cool to go all out for something like that," Michael thought.

When "All-Sing" came around in his junior year, he did just that. With only seven days until curtain, he got his running buddies all riled up and helped to transform them from runners into musicians, from a team into a band. Ten guys bought into the project; of the ten, four had experience playing their own instrument—but two of those four had not picked up an instrument in years. Needless to say, they had their work cut out for them.

No sweat for a runner; they took it all in stride.



They employed an array of instruments—keyboards, trumpet, trombone, percussion, drums, harmonica, bass, electric, and acoustic guitar. Their song selection was just as diverse. They covered songs in the classic rock, contemporary, and even rap genres, most of which referred to distance or racing—like Paul McCartney’s “Band on the Run,” The Eagles’ “In the Long Run,” Hoobastank’s “Why Are You Running Away?” and the self-coined “Cross Country Rap.” The ten-man band played a 15- minute set and received a standing ovation.

“In running, you try to hit your physical peak for your race,” says Michael. “All your training has to come together for that one race, and that is exactly what we did for the performance that night.”

The band won the “All-Sing” competition, and the team was encouraged to participate in the rest of the Homecoming competitions. They took home first place in “All Sing,” Homecoming Olympics, and Spirit Day; third place in the chili cook off; and second

place in the float competition—which they built from featured CBU dumpster materials (Way to go green!). The team went the extra mile and crossed the finish line with a first place trophy in the 2008 Homecoming Week Competition.

After they won Homecoming Week, Martin Brock, CBU director of events management, invited the band to perform at a disaster relief fundraiser. They have also been featured at the Annual CBU Christmas Tree lighting as well as men’s and women’s basketball games.

The ten-man band took home second place in this year’s “All-Sing” and finished second place overall for the 2009 Homecoming Week Competition. They have also come together to raise funds for St. Jude and have participated in Locks for Love. These guys are a true testimony to the diverse talents of the students at Christian Brothers University. They are serving the campus and the community in the Lasallian way, encouraging us all to go that extra mile. ■

This page: (left) Jordan Michael on guitar; (right) Max Group and John Waldorf on percussion.