

BC alum Cole Punchard storms to third at the UCI Mountain Bike World Championships

Three Tornados and another alumnus also represented Canada in Italy

Madeleine Pollock
Managing Editor

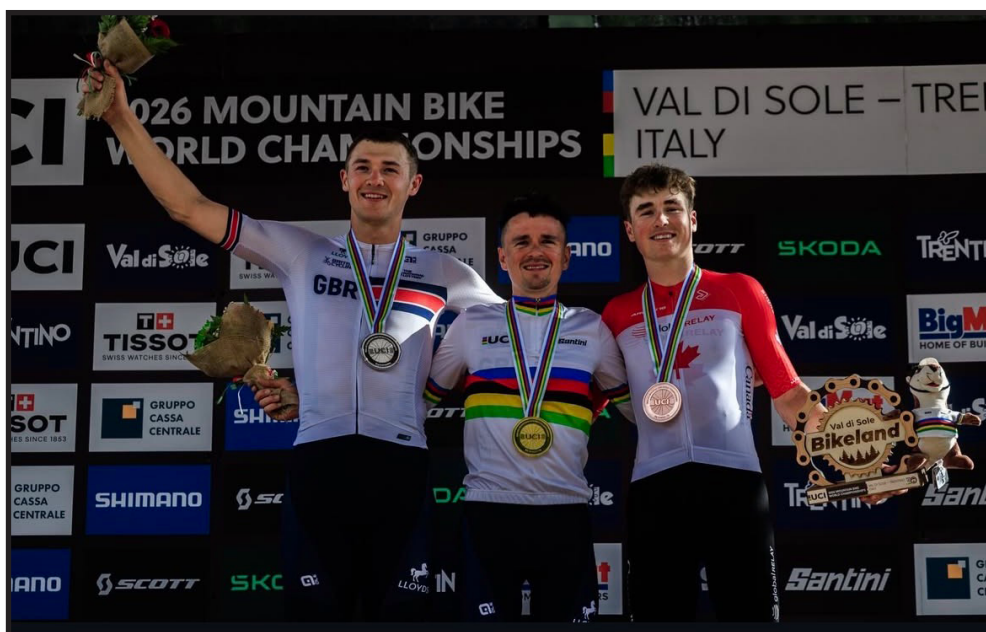
On Aug. 31, BC alumnus Cole Punchard wrote his name in the history books by finishing third at the UCI XCO Mountain Bike World Championships in Val di Sole, Italy. He represented Team Canada among three freshman cyclists and one other alumnus.

Punchard proved his talent by sharing the podium with legends of the sport; former Olympic Champion Tom Pidcock took the win, and former Junior World Champion Charlie Aldridge finished second. As a first-year Elite racer, this is a tremendous achievement.

“We are incredibly proud to have Cole on the podium at the Elite World Championships. He played a major part in shaping the current era of our program at Brevard and is simply a great person,” Cycling Head Coach Brad Perley says. “The BC cycling community is small and tightly knit. It’s been great to see current students, alumni and team supporters all celebrate this accomplishment.”

Punchard, of Huntsville, Ontario, is one of Brevard’s most decorated cyclists, having won five collegiate national titles during his time as a Tornado. He graduated in the fall of 2025 with a major in Business and Organizational Leadership and is currently a professional cyclist with Cannondale Factory Racing.

Freshmen Emilien Belzile of Sherbrooke, Québec, Ethan Wood of Pemberton, British Columbia, and Lacey Dennis of Squamish, British Columbia, also wore the leaf proudly—finishing 11th, 16th, and 52nd respectively in the Junior categories. Alumnus Tyler Orschel of Uxbridge, Ontario, also competed, finishing 54th in the



Cole Punchard took the third step among World Champions and Olympic Champions. Photo credit: Andy Vathis

Elite Men’s field.

“Racing at the world championships for the first time was an experience that I will never forget. Being surrounded by the best junior athletes in the world was surreal, and racing against them was the coolest thing I have ever done,” Dennis says. “While I didn’t have the greatest race, I still took in every moment of it, and used the crazy crowds to help me keep pushing forward.”

Since Belzile, Dennis, and Wood were away racing at World Champs during the cycling team’s season opener at Truett McConnell University, this means that their first race with the team will be this weekend in Kentucky.

“As I join the Brevard Cycling team, I most

look forward to travelling to different states with the team to race, and to also have an incredible support team around me who can train with me, and help keep me motivated and in the best state possible as an athlete,” Dennis says.

Coach Perley reflected on Punchard’s win, saying, “We have so many members of this community doing great things, and they all play a role in supporting these accomplishments. For our students, I hope it adds to their motivation and trust that they’re in the right place with the right people. Nobody reaches these goals all on their own, and I’m grateful for the community we have.”

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Meet your professors!

Liam Smith
Staff Writer

For week three of the Clarion's publications, I interviewed four more professors in the interest of helping students connect with them. Once again, hopefully these "Meet Your Professors!" articles make visiting or talking with your instructors less frightening or scary. In simpler words, they could share an interest with you!

This week I interviewed Austin Souto (OLE), Dr. Maveety (HON/BIO), Prof. Cagney (FYE/HIS), and Dr. Whitaker (HIS). If you have any specific questions for a professor or peer, or would generally enjoy reading an interview with one specifically, then email smithlj1@brevard.edu with those suggestions. I plan to switch up the fun questions for week four...

Austin or Souto (OLE)



Hometown: Scottsdale, AZ

Hobbies: Anything outdoors or involving river recreation

Favorite sports team and player: Spain's National Soccer Team, Real Madrid, and Lamine Yamal

Favorite meal: Brazilian Steakhouses, specifically Estilo Gaucho in TX

Dream destinations: New Zealand or Greece

Cooldest place he's ever visited: Wind River Range, WY, or Slot Canyon Gulch, UT

Cats or Dogs: Dogs

If you had a sandwich, what's the one ingredient that brings it all together: A sauce or melted cheese

What's your 'dad joke' of all time: Why did the

mushroom get invited to all the parties? Cause he's such a fungi.

Song that stood the test of time: "Numb" by Linkin Park

One piece of advice for students: Don't waste the opportunities to get outside that this area provides.

Office: OLE101

Office hours: Mon 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. and Fri 2 p.m. - 4 p.m., or any time his door is open

Dr. Maveety (BIO/Honors)



Hometown: Asheville, NC

Hobbies: Hiking, walking, spending time with family

Favorite team: BC Tornadoes

Favorite meal: Homemade chicken parmesan with Aldi's Red Bag chicken

Dream destination: Scandinavia during the winter

Cooldest place she's visited: The Sacred Valley, Peru

Cats or Dogs: Cats

If you had a sandwich, what's the one ingredient that brings it all together: cheese

Favorite band and album: "The White Album" by The Beatles

One piece of advice for students: Have confidence in yourself; everyone is capable of success.

Office: MS107-D

Office hours: Tue 10 a.m. - 11 a.m., or by appointment.

Prof. Guest or Cags (FYE/HIS)



Hometown: Rosman, NC (authentic hillbilly)

Hobbies: Driving fun vehicles on the most beautiful roads whilst listening to loud music

Favorite sports players: John Daly, but also Sumo athletes Aonishiki or Wakatakakage

Favorite meal: Hot Dog World ("IYKYK")

Dream destination: Edinburgh of the Seven Seas, Tristan de Cunha

Cooldest place he's visited: Bed-Stuy, NYC

Cats or Dogs: Both; he has a cat from a truck stop- Loulou- and a dog that was on sale at a humane society- Clarence.

If you had a sandwich, what's one ingredient that brings it all together: Duke's mayonnaise

What's your 'dad joke' of all time: Dad jokes are how I eye roll.

Favorite current song: "Never Fight a Man with a Perm" by IDLES

What's (more than) one piece of advice for students: "Shortcuts are fake. There's no way around being organized and responsible. Use resources! Google Calendar runs my life for me, and I just have to do what it says. Working a job that doesn't require a degree is generally WAY harder than getting a degree in terms of raw work and stress. Keep a master list of EVERYTHING you do/attend/join/participate in throughout your college career; just jot down the basic data, formatting will come later. This will eventually become your CV (curriculum vitae) and your resume."

Office: Student Center in Tornado Alley/ Coltrane

Office hours: When his office door is open!

Continued on page 5.

The Bookish Saga: reviewing Emily Bain Murphy's 'The Ivory City'

Elli Clark
Staff Writer

Hello all bookish people,

There can be an undeniable beauty found between a collection of thin ink stained sheets, both new and old.

"Books are the plane, and the trail, and the road. They are the destination, and the journey. They are home." - Anna Quindlen

Welcome to the Bookish Saga, where reviews are posted here on a monthly basis. Maybe your opinions on the novels chosen each month will differ from this writer's, but that is to be expected from an art of wide respects. The only goal of this saga is to either add a notch to your growing TBR list or give you a lift-up from that deadly reading slump we all occasionally find ourselves desperately trying to crawl out of.

For this month—the first edition—the star of the show will be Emily Bain Murphy's adult historical murder mystery, "The Ivory City." Set back in time to 1904, the St. Louis World Fair becomes the backdrop for this venturesome novel. Our main character, Grace Covington, embarks on a journey to find independence.

Grace's family has not been welcome in high society for some time. After her mother married for love rather than wealth, they were rejected and scorned. Despite this, her cousins—Lillie and Oliver—have always included her, sneaking her into social gatherings and introducing her to their wealthy peers. It is from them that Grace receives a special invitation to the most important event of the year: the World Fair. Here, she has great expectations that the course of her life will finally change, but when a member of the friend group is killed, plans go awry. Oliver is arrested for murder, and the police don't seem to be following any other leads. Grace takes it upon herself, with the help of a new friend, to solve the mystery and clear her cousin's name.

Murphy's effort to bring the world of the fair to life is not lost on the reader. The book is rich with historical research, and her descriptions are picturesque paintings that help the reader envision the magic and glamor of the miniature cities and palaces that the fair features. Famous cities on cities, parties on parties, beautiful dresses on dresses. It is an enticing read filled with in-depth scenes. At times, it may be easy to fall into the descriptions she writes, making the book feel a bit too heavy and slow. The first half of the book focuses more on Grace's desire to fit into society,

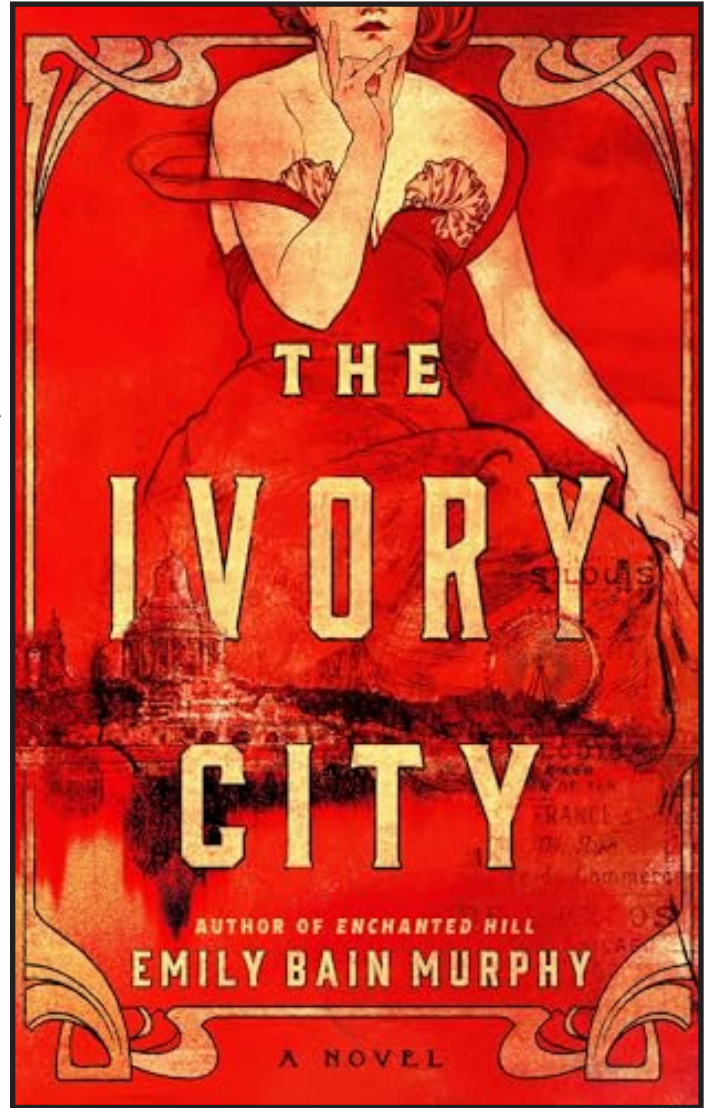
and the murder acts more like an impending event that will be highlighted in the second half.

That being said, when the investigation begins, things do pick up.

And quite the interesting investigation it is. By no means is it Sherlock Holmes level—that would be dumb since Grace is not a professional detective—but it does keep the reader on their toes. With every new piece of information that she gathers, it becomes harder to pinpoint which suspect is the real killer or what events led to the murder. In the end, it was easy to be both satisfied and unsatisfied with the resolution.

Something that was satisfying, or perhaps better said enjoyable, was the romantic plotline. Neither overly consuming compared to the other parts of the book nor too plain, Grace and her "friend" work through some misunderstandings and negative tensions naturally. The growth of their relationship isn't rushed, but feels like two people getting to know each other and growing fonder with each day that passes. Sometimes a little slow burn isn't a bad thing. There is one hiccup here, though, as nothing is perfect, and that is the details of their misunderstanding. It felt a tad...typical? At first, it felt unnecessary, and when it was finally revealed, this writer felt like things could've been patched up a long time ago. Then again, it's a push and pull: reveal the misunderstanding too late, and it feels dragged on, but reveal it too soon and you miss out on the natural connection that forms between the two characters.

At times, it could be debated whether or not the advertised "adult novel" should be better labeled as "young adult." With a distinctive tone that fea-



"The Ivory City" by Emily Bain Murphy

tures teenage characters seeking independence from their parents, the story would connect well with that younger age group. It is still enjoyable to read as an adult. It is important to be aware that some adult language is used and there are mentions of drug use throughout.

Either way, hopefully this has inspired you to give "The Ivory City" a fair shot.

Would this writer read another book by this author, you ask? Hand it over. Immediately.

If there are any recommendations you would love to see next month, please send them to clarion@brevard.edu.

Freak of The Week:

Sexually Dimorphic Venom in the Eastern Bark Centipede

Tom Webb
Staff Writer

When a person is asked what comes to mind when they think of the term “venom,” most often they think about the danger venom poses. They may talk about venomous snakes, spiders, perhaps even sharing a story where they or someone they know was bitten by one of these venomous animals. What does not come to mind, however, is what venom is.

To many, venom is merely a harmful substance; they do not think about what it does to the body on a cell-based level or how it works through a variety of means such as inhibiting proteins or blocking enzymes, and they especially do not think that one animal could have two different kinds of venom.

The Eastern Bark Centipede, *Hemiscolopendra marginata*, found throughout the deciduous rainforests of the Appalachian Mountains, is a small species of centipede that ranges from one to two inches long and is characterized by its bluish gray segments and pale, slightly orange-



tinted legs. According to the department of Biological Science at Florida State University, this species of centipede is the only centipede in the world known to possess sexually dimorphic venom, according to . In this context, sexual dimorphism refers to how the venom profile of the centipede varies based on what sex it is.

There are a myriad of theories on why the eastern bark centipede may have evolved to produce sexually dimorphic venom, but one of the primary theories is that it has to do with how the centipede rears its offspring. Female eastern bark centipedes are devoted mothers who protect their young by coiling around them and guarding

them until their first molt. It is theorized that, on top of guarding her young, the female could also potentially be coating them in her venom to protect the offspring from fungal infections. This is a behavior seen in ants with a similar toxin in their venom. Male centipedes would therefore not need this venom because they do not engage in the rearing of their offspring and instead have evolved a venom that serves only hunting and defense.

The Eastern Bark Centipede is an incredibly unique creature found in Southeastern Appalachia; its venom, while posing a minor threat to humans, should not be feared. Its maternal instinct and unique venom characteristics make this species an amazing representative of the biodiversity of this region.

Source:

Nystrom, G. S., Ward, M. J., Ellsworth, S. A., & Rokyta, D. R. (2019). Sex-based venom variation in the eastern bark centipede (*Hemiscolopendra marginata*). *Toxicon*, 169, 45-58.

THE CLARION

SENIOR STAFF

Editor in Chief Autumn Jones
Managing Editor Madeleine Pollock
Copy Editor.
Layout & Design Emma Murray
Faculty Advisor John Padgett

STAFF WRITERS

Elli Clark Tom Webb
Liam Smith Jordan Ramey

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The Clarion, Brevard College, One Brevard
College Drive, Brevard, NC 28712, or send
E-mail to clarion@brevard.edu
clarion.brevard.edu

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Meet your professors!

Liam Smith
Staff Writer

Dr. Whitaker (HIS)



Hobbies: Photography and baking (Unique B-day cakes included)

Favorite team and player: The Gators and Kylian Mbappe

Favorite meal: Fish tacos

Dream destination: Copenhagen, Denmark

Coolest place she's visited: Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii

Cats or Dogs: Dogs

If you had a sandwich, what's the one ingredient that brings it all together: Salted tomatoes

What's your 'dad joke' of all time: What do French groundhogs see on Groundhog Day? Their chateau.

Favorite song and artist: "Skinny Love" by Bon Iver

Fun fact: She used to work at the History Channel

What's one piece of advice for students: Be curious about the world around you.

Office and office hours: MG109, Tue 2 p.m. - 3:15 p.m., Fri 11 a.m. - 12:15 a.m., or by appointment!

Inside BC's CTL and faculty development hub

Autumn Jones
Editor in Chief

Brevard College's campus landscape has officially expanded its support for academic excellence. Thanks to funding from a Title III grant, the renovated library space now houses the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)—a space designed to elevate experiential education, empower faculty innovation, and optimize student success across all disciplines.

Guided by the foundational work of Dr. Jenny Kafsky, Director of Teaching and Learning, alongside the Brevard College Pedagogies (BCP) committee, the CTL addresses the growing demand for dedicated, collaborative faculty development and student learning resources. The CTL is also supported by the work of Jim Brooks, Educational Technology Specialist.

The center features two primary renovated areas.

One is an open, communal space equipped with flexible seating options, resource collections, and a dedicated maker space. It serves as an everyday workspace for students, faculty, and staff—remaining open for drop-in work even during small group meetings.

The other is a specialized, larger venue available for reservation to host workshops, events, and campus-wide programming.

While Brevard College is well-known for its experiential approach to education, the CTL adds a tangible layer of support to enhance classroom engagement and pedagogical research.

Campus community members can check out interactive resources from the CTL's library collection, including individual and classroom-sized portable whiteboards, community-building games, and folding camp chairs tailored for outdoor instruction.

The CTL offers one-on-one consultations covering course design, assessment strategies,

educational technology, and inclusive teaching practices. Through the BCP committee, faculty can also apply for small grants to fund classroom supplies, experiential field trips, and student professional development.

The center plans to host ongoing workshops, book clubs, and communities of practice. Upcoming sessions will explore the science of learning, evidence-based teaching and learning techniques, and emerging classroom technologies.

The Center for Teaching and Learning is fully accessible to the entire campus community. Students interested in utilizing the Hub for individual or collaborative work areas, exploring the maker space, checking out or requesting teaching and learning resources, or inquiring about work-study opportunities are encouraged to visit the space directly or reach out via email at ctl@brevard.edu.

Tornados take the first one on the road

Connor Sechrist
Contributor

The defending USA South Conference champs opened the season with a 1–0 shutout road victory over the Piedmont University Lions on Sept. 1.

The Tornados entered the season opener with several changes, including the loss of eight seniors, among them star forward Mikialya Zvekan. Zvekan helped the Tornados win a conference championship and secure a spot in the NCAA National Tournament for the 2025 season, recording 21 goals, 10 assists, and 52 points in 20 games, adding a 2025 USA South Player of the Year Award to finish her outstanding senior year.

The Tornados also lost key junior forward Kinlee Mozley, who sustained an injury in a preseason scrimmage against USC Upstate. Mozley scored 12 goals, added seven assists, and finished with 31 points in 20 games last season. The losses also came with new faces, as eight freshmen and three transfers joined the team.

The defending champs placed at the top of the board in pre-season polls for the 2026 USA South Conference. A fresh team and two key losses at forward for the Tornados made the target on their back much bigger going into the season.

The adversity didn't shake the Tornados, with a statement road win over the Piedmont Lions



Sophomore Addison Goins slides the ball past a USC Upstate defender. —photo by Alecia Janeiro.

Tuesday night. Only one goal on the scoreboard doesn't do justice to the offensive dominance that was displayed against the Lions; in the first half, the Tornados outshot the Lions 11–2 with five corners.

The Tornados broke through in the seventh minute of the first half, when sophomore midfielder Janie Steele would find the second goal of her career and the first of the Tornados' season. The first-half goal would be assisted by fellow midfielder Mikayla Rubin, marking the junior's 18th career assist.

In the second half, the Tornados continued

to apply strong offense, again outshooting the Lions 10–5. Not only did the offense put up numbers, but the dominant back line kept the game a clean sheet, only allowing the Lions to put up seven shots, with only four of them going in the direction of the two-time and defending USA South Goalkeeper of the Year, Abby Nunez. The senior saved all four shots she faced, earning her 21st career shutout.

The Tornados will head back on the road for their second game of the season against Oglethorpe on Sept. 9 at 6 p.m.

Futures' season kicks off

Jordan Ramey
Staff Writer

The football season at Brevard College kicks off with the Futures team taking on the West Bay Collegiate Academy this upcoming Saturday, Sept. 5, at noon. The Futures are predicted to get off to a hot start and showcase their skills on the turf at Ives-Lemel Field.

While the Futures roster is made up largely of freshmen, Coach Khayat is looking for those who can contribute to the Elders and see their development as their season progresses.

I reached out to first-year coach and Brevard College alum Baylee Ramey. He is coaching the linebackers on the Futures team, and I got the chance to ask him some questions about the first game coming up this week and the noticeable differences in playing and coaching.

What are you looking to see from the Futures this Saturday?

"This Saturday against West Bay Collegiate Prep, I'm looking to see our guys compete and play with confidence. This is an opportunity for the Futures to show the progress they've made throughout fall camp and put everything they've been coached into action. I want to see us play fast, physical, and disciplined football. More than anything, I want our guys to trust their preparation, play for each other, and take



All photos by Nettie Stokes via Brevard College on Flickr.

advantage of the opportunity they have to represent Brevard."

What is the biggest difference between being a player in fall camp and a coach?

"The biggest difference is seeing everything that goes into fall camp from the coaching side. As a player, your main focus is doing your job, learning the game plan, and getting yourself ready to play. As a coach, you're responsible for helping an entire group get better. You're constantly evaluating, teaching, correcting mistakes, and finding ways to put your players in the best position to succeed. It has always been my goal since I was young to be a college football coach, so it has definitely given me a different appreciation for how much preparation goes into building a football team during fall camp."

What are you looking for defensively on Saturday?

"Defensively, I want to see us play fast, physically, and together. I want our guys communicating, running to the football, being great tacklers, and doing their jobs within the defense and the scheme. We've spent fall camp teaching these guys how we expect Brevard defense to be played, and Saturday is their opportunity to put that on display. We want to create negative plays, force turnovers, get off the field on third down, and most importantly play with grit and be able to fight adversity for four quarters. For a lot of these guys, this is a chance to show what they can do in a real game when their number is called. Some don't realize how big of a jump it is from high school football to college football: the speed, size, and the intention to detail across the board. For me personally, it was a fast

adjustment period as I played on the elders as a freshman. But I think this is a great opportunity for the young guys to show what they can do defensively, fly around and make plays."

We thank Coach Ramey for his time and look forward to the football season ahead!



Brevard Cycling races to 17 podium finishes and a relay win at season opener

Elli Clark
Staff Writer

Brevard cycling had an incredible start to their season at Truett McConnell University on Aug. 29 and 30. With a large turnout of 25 Brevard athletes, they readily took on five events over two days: cross-country, dual slalom, relay, short track, and downhill.

In the men's Pro/Cat 1 cross-country, freshman Asher Boegner pulled out a second-place finish in his first collegiate race. Not too far behind, junior Owen Jones rolled in with fourth, and freshman Grayson Franks took fifth. On the women's side, Brevard took over the podium with sophomores Elli Clark and Lily-Rose Marois fighting it out for first and second, while junior Ayana Gagné took third.

In the men's Category 2/3 cross country, senior Drew DeGarmo finished fifth, and in men's Category 3, senior Elliot Salisbury stole the win and sophomore Wilsen DeGarmo finished fourth.

Saturday's racing was far from over as the day moved on to dual slalom, where a handful of Brevard athletes gathered to rip down the track. Senior Matthew Mitchko gave an impressive effort, landing in third place, while on the women's side freshman Matilda Gentry and



Matilda Gentry and Elli Clark go head to head in dual slalom finals. Photo taken by Icon Media Asheville.

Clark competed together in the finals to finish first and second, respectively.

Bright and early on day two of the race weekend, Boegner, Jones, Gagné, and Marois rode to victory in the team relay. This was followed

shortly after by the short track, where Marois finished first, Gagné took second in women's pro cat one, and Boegner placed fourth in the men's pro cat one.

Sunday's racing wrapped up with the fifth and final discipline: downhill. After spending the afternoon dialling in the technical track, which had a large gap jump and big jumps, the team tallied up a few podium results. The duo Clark and Gentry took first and second in women's Pro/Category 1, while Mitchko took second place in men's Pro/Category 1.

The Brevard cycling team is gearing up for the season's next conference race hosted by Lindsey Wilson in Greensburg, Kentucky. With some freshmen returning from racing at the World Championships, there is sure to be some serious fire power behind the team.



From left to right: Asher Boegner, Owen Jones, Kevin Vereecke, and Grayson Franks get ready to roll to the start line. Photo taken by Dustin Vanover.