Athletics

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When Eddie Perry was a child, sports were his passion. Raised in an athletic family, he started young, playing everything from soccer to basketball. “When I was a kid, sports were my way of interacting with [hearing] kids,” says the DePaul sophomore from Dellwood, Minn., who was discovered to be deaf at 18 months of age. “I know kids probably looked at me differently. But sports kind of blew by that. You just played,” he says.

A cochlear implant and hearing aid inserted when he was a toddler gave Perry most of his hearing back, and he attended a specialized preschool to learn how to talk and speak. Perry was recruited by DePaul during his junior year at St. Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights, Minn., where he was a dual-sport letter winner in soccer and basketball. He helped lead St. Thomas to the 2017 sectional title and was named the 2016–17 Defensive Player of the Year. In 2017 he was the recipient of the Tony Sanneh Foundation Most Inspirational Person Award.

Today, the DePaul sophomore is a valued member of the Blue Demons men’s soccer team. “It feels like family here, and it’s only six hours away from home. I love my teammates, the coaches and the city,” he says.

Playing college-level sports is a family tradition. His sister, Carly, now studying abroad, played on the women’s soccer team at American University in Washington, D.C., and his cousin, Bianca Perry (BUS ’17), played women’s soccer for DePaul.

So far it’s been thrilling to be part of the team. “I was really proud last year when we finished off the season strong. We beat Marquette and knocked them out of the BIG EAST Tournament,” says Perry, who plays defender.

Despite the modern-day miracle that has given him hearing, Perry still faces challenges. “I have to look around so much more than the usual person just to see what my teammates are saying. There are times when I’m facing away from everyone, and it’s hard for me to hear. Or if there’s a windy or a rainy day, it’s going to be tough,” he says.

Anticipating his challenges, Perry briefs his teammates at the start of the year. “I tell them about my hearing loss so they can understand what I’m hearing and not hearing. Then I give them tips on how to talk to me,” he says.

Coach Mark Plotkin (BUS ’10) says, “Eddie is one of the most well-liked guys on the team. He also does a great job of putting himself in positions to help himself be successful.”

Although Perry continues to work hard on his speech and comprehension, he is grateful for who he is. “My hearing aid and implant have helped me learn to appreciate everything in life,” he says. “Not everything is given to you. You’ve got to work for it, and you’ve got to make the best of your situation, too. I might not be able to hear everything, but I can hear what I can, and make great friends along the way.”
Kelly Campbell and Mart’e Grays Earn Preseason Honors  DePaul junior guard Kelly Campbell was named to the Street & Smith's Basketball Yearbook Preseason All-America Third Team. She was also selected to the Nancy Lieberman Point Guard Award Top 20 Watch List and to the Top 50 Watch List for the prestigious Citizen Naismith Trophy, which is given to the player of the year in women's college basketball. Campbell's teammate Mart’e Grays was named to the Cheryl Miller Small Forward Award Top 20 Watch List.

Women's Basketball Garners National Acclaim  Experts on women's basketball and prognosticators nationwide have a great deal of respect for coach Doug Bruno and his Blue Demons. The two leading national polls, the Associated Press and the USA Today/Coaches, both ranked DePaul at No. 15 early in the 2018-19 season. Lindy's Sports Magazine had the Blue Demons at No. 13, ESPNW at No. 14, Street & Smith's Basketball Yearbook at No. 16 and Athlon Sports magazine at No. 18.

Another Winning Season for Women's Soccer  Led by forwards Franny Cerny and Morgan Turner, the Blue Demons qualified for the BIG EAST Championship for the seventh year in a row. They battled Xavier through two overtimes before falling on penalty kicks. Cerny was named to the All-BIG EAST First Team and defender Adrian Walker was selected to the All-BIG EAST Second Team. Mollie Eriksson and Ellie Mink made the BIG EAST All-Freshman Team.

Morgan Turner Shines On and Off the Pitch  This past fall, sophomore Morgan Turner was named to the 2018 Google Cloud Academic All-District Team. Turner was second on the team in goals, with five, and in points, with 12. The Wayzata, Minn., native notched her first career hat trick last season in a 7-0 victory over UMass Lowell.

DePaul Athletics Pays Tribute to Benefactor Jack Cummins  Emotions ran high last October during a special halftime tribute to former Blue Demon soccer player, longtime donor and former co-chair of the Athletic Advisory Council Jack Cummins, who passed away in the winter of 2018. The corporate lawyer who built the prestigious Cummins & Associates law firm often served as a mentor to student-athletes and helped them launch successful careers. He established the first endowed scholarship for men's soccer and was instrumental in fundraising for the Sullivan-McGrath Campaign, which raised more than $3.9 million for DePaul's athletic programs. Cummins once offered to contribute $25,000 to the university if 450 people would make a gift to DePaul in one day. On Jan. 28, 2016, 672 members of the DePaul community made donations, and Cummins was good to his word.