



LIGHTNING

WATCH — Rebecca Johnson

It hasn't taken St. Mary's Lightning Cross-Country runner Rebecca Johnson long to establish herself as an athlete to watch this season.

The first year Bachelor of Education (Elementary) student has already finished in second and fifth place in the first two races of the young season and figures to only get better as the season rolls along.

Johnson's second overall finish in her first race was the best finish for a St. Mary's Lightning Cross-Country athlete and was a surreal experience for Johnson.

"I didn't think I could actually reach that level, it's a little surreal," explained Johnson. "I've always been into running and running on my own so when I came to St. Mary's it was a perfect opportunity to try a team out so when I made it to second

place I was really proud."

For Johnson, racing allows her to set goals and challenges that force her to persevere through obstacles.

"Racing to me, is a challenge where I can have a goal in mind and helps me not to give up," said Johnson. "It helps me in other things in life, I relate it all to a race."

"There's going to be hills, there's going to be hard times and you're going to feel like giving up but you keep pushing through because it could end in good results."

Johnson has set some pretty clear goals for herself both in athletics and in the classroom. With sights set on becoming a special-education teacher, Johnson hopes to absorb all that she can from her classes and practicums to help her achieve her goal.

Attending a new school is never an easy task but Johnson credits the welcoming nature of St. Mary's and the closeness of the cross-country team as helping her find her footing.

"I feel very at ease and very at home here at St. Mary's," said Johnson, whose sister also previously attended the university.



"I always wanted to transfer here, I had heard about the community feeling and the small class sizes and it's been very welcoming."

The future looks very bright for Johnson as a major piece of head coach Donna Dixon's cross-country team.

"Everyone is working together towards the same goal and I think we will only get stronger as a team as the season goes along."

