

Crews to continue career at Brunswick Community College

BY AMANDA KELLEY
SPORTS WRITER

After 13 years dedicated to the sport and months scouring colleges and entertaining offers Julia Crews settled on Brunswick Community College in less than a week.

Brunswick head coach Ashlyn Burke said she has been following the Lady Panthers for the past year after multiple people told her she needed to check out the shooting guard at Carolina Forest.

She made the call to Carolina Forest head coach Stacy Hughes to check on Crews' college status just eight days before the official signing.

Four days later Crews and her father Billy took the 47-mile trip north to check the school out and it was an immediate fit.

Billy Crews said they visited several schools and after each trip she had a minimal response. He said she was ready to stay home, attend Coastal Carolina, and try to walk onto their program when the call came through.

It was an immediate fit for both the school and the Crews family. "She fell in love, we fell in love, it was one of those things," Burke said. She said they look for good character, leadership and grades at Brunswick because those qualities build a successful program, and they are all qualities found in Crews.

It was right for the family, too. Crews is the oldest at 18 with a 15-year old sister



AMANDA KELLEY | FOR THE CHRONICLE

Carolina Forest's Julia Crews (right) grins to a round of applause after signing with Brunswick Community College last week.

Christin and an 11-year old brother Billy. Her parents have never missed a game and now they can attend the majority of her games for at least the next two seasons.

"Brunswick was really close and the facilities were really nice," Crews said. "I'm really glad [my family is close] because they always come to my games and they would never miss it. I didn't want to go far away."

Her father is a self-diagnosed "basketball junkie," and largely responsible for her involvement in the sport.

Usually composed, he choked up for the first time

recalling his daughter at 5-years old. "I was watching girl's basketball on TV," Billy said. "And she asked me what it would take for her to be able to play on TV like that."

He told her it would be hard work and dedication, but nobody realized how hard it would be for her to achieve her childhood dream.

She was diagnosed with juvenile arthritis at 9-years old and all her dreams nearly crumbled. "I remember carrying her from her bed to the bathroom and from the bathroom to the sofa and back," Billy said. "I didn't think she was ever

going to be able to walk."

With treatment and therapy she was able to get back on her feet which her father attributes to her determination and her faith, and she has pressed forward through the injury and the pain ever since.

Crews played four years on varsity under Coach Hughes. In her junior year she was moved to the point guard position because it was where she was needed. In her senior season back as shooting guard she stepped up both her leadership and her game for the Lady Panthers.

"She's always had the scoring capability, but she

took on the role for us," Hughes said. "She knew she was our scorer and that it was what we needed her to do.

Her main role was to put the ball in the hole and thank heavens she did get her 20 points a game, because the previous year we lost about 40 points of offense."

Crews became the second basketball star in school history to pass the 1,000th point mark after scoring nearly half of the points in her senior season.

According to stats compiled on Maxpreps.com Crews averaged 19.6 points per game, with a game 36 points in the girl's victory over Sumter in January.

She scored 68 three-pointers this season, the most in all of AAAA, and broke the school record by scoring eight in a single game.

Her efforts earned her a position on both the All-Region and All-State teams.

Crews was also named co-captain with fellow senior Alex "Chicago" Savage-Davis. Hughes said she was never vocal, but she was a leader by example.

Her father said about 80 percent of her tuition will

be covered through an athletic scholarship and the rest should be taken care of through other academic scholarships. At the last count, her GPA was 3.4.

While her love for the game comes from her father, she will be following her mother Cathy in her career dreams.

Crews said she shadowed her mother while she was teaching and knows she wants to be a teacher too. She expects to teach at the elementary level because she likes little kids.

While she is excited to become a Dolphin she said she will miss Coach Hughes and the Black Hole (the student cheering section) the most after leaving Carolina Forest.

Her new coach, Burke, said Crews will be one of their shooting guards, a position to be shared with Wilson's Brittany McIver.

"We're going to get her in there and develop her and we're going to find a place for her to play basketball at another level," said Burke. "I'm looking up to McIver and Julia to knock down the shots that others can't."

The first games of her college career will begin this November.

Putting drills to improve distance control

If you want to be a great putter, you must have great speed control.

It makes no sense to practice only aim, when the speed your ball rolls is the main factor determining line.

So here are a couple of drills to help develop your speed control on the greens. And with proper speed control, finding your line will be a breeze.

This has been written for a right-handed golfer. If

you're a lefty, just reverse the information.



LEARN GOLF, LOVE GOLF

Jeff Diehl

DRILL #1

This drill is a wonderful way to achieve distance control on long lag putts. Because

your right hand and

fingers play such an important role in how you feel distance, this drill is a great way to develop touch.

Take 10 balls and place them in the middle of the green.

Mark the spot from where you're putting with a tee. Take a comfortable stance and grip the putter with your right hand only.

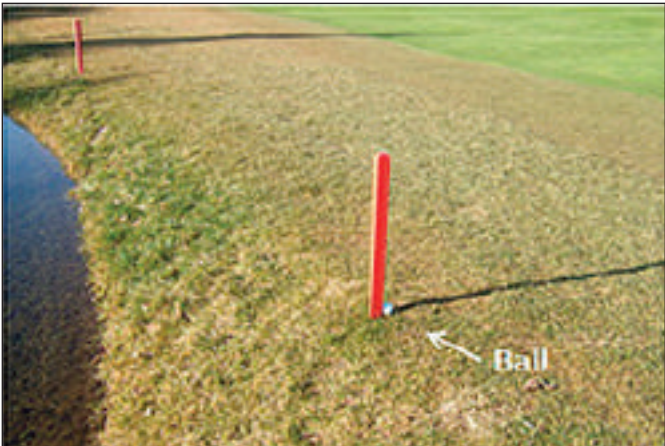
From there, putt the first ball with just your right hand at a spot on the fringe of the green.

Your goal is to get the ball to stop as close to the fringe, without actually touching it, as you can.

Take the second ball and, using the same technique, putt to a spot about five yards right of your first ball. Again, you want it as close as possible to the fringe without touching it.

Continue this all the way around the green until your last ball has been putt.

When you're done putting the balls to the fringe,



COURTESY PHOTO

Is this ball considered in the lateral hazard and may the player remove the red stake to play his ball?

walk to your golf balls and putt them back to the tee. Make sure you're still using just your right hand. One lap around the green with 10 balls is considered a set.

Do a couple sets a week when practicing. When doing this drill use your eyes.

Focus on the fringe and let your eyes determine how hard to hit the ball. Also, feel your entire arm swinging not just your hand and wrist.

DRILL #2

This drill is a wonderful way to develop touch, as well as visualizing the putting line. Again, obtaining feel in your right hand and fingers will give you the ability to judge distances from all over the green.

Set 10 balls in a row beginning five feet from the hole.

Each ball should be three feet away from the previous ball.

When you are finished setting the balls, the first will be three feet away from the cup and the tenth will be thirty feet away. Then, put a tee in the ground 18 inches on the other side of the cup. To start the drill, set up comfortably to the first ball.

Grip the putter with your right hand only and stroke

the ball toward the cup. Your only thought should be to knock it in with the correct speed.

The ball should not go further than 18 inches past the hole on a missed putt. Use the tee as your guide.

After you've stroked the first putt, go back to the next ball in line and start the process over. Continue this procedure until all balls are putt. They should either go in or get past the hole — but not past the tee.

So, you want all balls in that 18 inch zone past the hole if not holed.

This is optimum speed. Ten balls make a set.

Strive to do five sets a week when practicing. Again, use your eyes.

Before hitting each putt, take two practice swings while looking at the hole. Feel your entire arm - not just your hand and wrist.

Please e-mail me your comments at gpro268@msn.com. I would love to know whether this has helped you with your putting.

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