

## College teammates cruise in 5-K

**RUN FOR RELIEF: Race intended to raise funds for war-torn Burma.**

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Sam Chelanga and Ryan Cox ran beside each other, stride for stride down Wisconsin Street in West Anchorage on Saturday morning. The Liberty University track and field teammates were leading the 5-K Run for Relief, but didn't appear to be exerting themselves.

As they approached the finish line in the parking lot of the Faith Christian Community Church, Chelanga slowed to let Cox win the 3.1-mile race for the third straight year. Cox finished in 16 minutes flat and Chelanga crossed 10 seconds later.

"He's so much faster than me," Cox said of Chelanga.

Chelanga, who ran a 5,000-meter race in 13 minutes, 45.35 seconds at the NCAA Division I national championships in June, is the reigning Big South Conference men's track and field athlete of the year. He set the NCAA record in the 10,000 meters in May in 27 minutes, 8.09 seconds. At the time, it was the third-fastest time in the world for 2010.

Saturday's race was by no means intended to be competitive.

"Today was just to encourage Ryan and have fun," said Chelanga.

"It's just a training run," said Cox. "Last year, I was all by myself. It was kind of boring."

Cox, 20, and a graduate of Grace Christian High School, befriended Chelanga, a native of Kenya, at Liberty University in Virginia, and invited him to make his first trip to Alaska. Chelanga arrived Friday night and plans to stay for eight days.

Both runners are just starting to think seriously about the cross-country running season, which begins in September.

Chelanga said he took three weeks off from running after the track and field season ended in June. He said Saturday's 5-K was a good chance to get some mileage in.

Over the summer months, Chelanga logs about 50-60 miles a week, compared with 80-90 miles during the school season.

"People don't realize how hard Sam works," said Cox. "Some people think because he's from Kenya, he's supposed to be good at running."

Cox hasn't done much running this summer, finding himself compelled to hike or go rock climbing instead.

Cox and Chelanga are not the only ones getting ready to increase their training.

Esther Jurasek won the women's race in 19:26. The 47-year-old flight attendant plans to run the New York City Marathon in November and said pretty soon she will go from training two or three days a week to training six or seven days a week.

She said she decided to get in the Run for Relief the night before the race. It was for a good cause, and it wasn't too long or too early in the morning.

"It started at 10, so I could sleep in a little bit," she said. "I was glad it was just a 5-K."

She said she really wasn't expecting much of herself.

"This is a celebration of the fact that you are physically able to run," she said. "I think about people around the world who are not allowed to run or cannot run."

The race was intended to raise funds for war-torn Burma by supporting Free Burma Rangers, a multi-ethnic humanitarian group bringing aid to the Internally Displaced People of Burma, and to bring awareness to the world regarding the plight of the Burmese.

Stephen Dun, an advocate on behalf of the Karen and other ethnic peoples of Burma, was a guest speaker after the race. Dun came to the U.S. in 1997 after the Burmese army overran some of the major Karen bases.

Dun said raising funds takes a back seat to raising awareness, and races like Saturday's do a great job of getting people involved.

"You are helping the people of Burma survive," he said to all the participants at the end of his speech.

The country officially changed its name to Myanmar in 1989.

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### Saturday's race results

**Top 50 Overall** -- 1) Ryan Cox, 16:00; 2) Sam Chelanga, 16:10; 3) Sam Tilly, 16:28; 4) Jacob Kirk, 16:32; 5) Andrew Arnold, 17:31; 6) Peter Walls, 17:43; 7) John Klein, 17:51; 8) Lucas Hepler, 17:54; 9) Scott Clemetson, 17:56; 10) Quinton Metcalf, 18:01; 11) John Weber 18:18; 12) Brad Benter, 18:56; 13) Brian Cresop, 19:13; 14) Bob Davis, 19:15; 15) Esther Juraseck, 19:26; 16) John Wiram, 19:29; 17) Daniel Tedrick, 20:00; 18) John Brewer, 20:05; 19) David Allen 20:10; 20) Leisha Anderson, 20:10; 21) Guy Schwartz, 20:20; 22) Andy Kirk, 20:26; 23) Toby Widdicombe, 20:39; 24) Claire Trujillo, 20:45; 25) Luke McLaughlin, 20:57; 26) Sydney Stewart, 20:58; 27) Robert Arnold, 21:12; 28) Polly Wheeler, 21:14; 29) Tara Edwards, 21:27; 30) Jordan Edwards, 21:28; 31) Drew Edwards, 21:29; 32) Elle Arnold, 21:38; 33) Michael Clark, 21:43; 34) Tyler Houson, 21:48; 35) Rob Whitney, 21:53; 36) Polly Wirum, 21:55; 37) Joel Brandt, 21:57; 38) Keegan Crow, 21:58; 39) Cheyenne Applegate, 22:01; 40) Nicole Leman, 22:05; 41) Justin Goodman, 22:06; 42) Mark Clark, 22:18; 43) Brenda Applegate, 22:19; 44) Betsy Winkle, 22:23; 45) Jesse Foster, 22:30; 46) Shane Metcalf, 23:06; 47) Erich Wallace, 23:07; 48) Bethany Weber, 23:08; 49) Drew Snyder, 23:10; 50) Scotty Borg, 23:13.

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