

Going the distance

Cross country teams exceed expectations despite hardships

By ANDREW STRNAD
Staff Reporter

Despite facing a season full of injury and departure, the Nebraska men's cross country team surprised Nebraska Coach Jay Dirksen.

The Cornhuskers finished 11th at the NCAA Championships in Greenville, S.C., on November 25 and had two runners receive All-America status.

"Our guys ran just great," Dirksen said. "Two All-Americans and an 11th place finish is more than we could have ever hoped for coming into this season. I think this finish is tremendous."

Leading the way for Nebraska was senior Cleophas Boor, who finished sixth in the race with a time of 29 minutes, 22 seconds over the 10,000-meter course at Furman University - 28 seconds behind winner Mebrathom Keflezighi of UCLA.

NU freshman Jeroen Broekzitter finished 20th with a time of 30:06.

"Cleophas ran very well," Dirksen said. "The top six guys really took off, and Cleophas just went with them."

The women's team had hoped for similar results, but couldn't produce them as they finished 19th out of the 22-team field.

Freshman Amy Wiseman was the top Husker for the seventh straight time this season finishing in 94th place.

Overall, Dirksen said the season was an absolute success for the Huskers as they overcame the loss of 1997 NCAA runner-up Jonah Kiptarus and fellow senior and last year's third-place finisher Phillip Maiyo. Kiptarus, a native of Kapsabet, Kenya, did not return to Lincoln, and Maiyo missed the season with a knee injury.

However, it was the legs of runners like Broekzitter that salvaged what looked to be a disappointing season.

"If you would have told me before the year that this was going to happen, I wouldn't have believed it," Dirksen said.

The women's team echoed the men's squad at the Big 12 Conference meet with a second-place finish.

"Two All-Americans and an 11th place finish is more than we could have ever hoped for coming into this season."

JAY DIRKSEN
NU cross country coach

Leading the way for the Huskers was Amy Wiseman, who finished in sixth place.

Senior Nora Shepard anchored the team, which qualified for the NCAA meet for the

second consecutive season.

"We're ready to go out and rock and roll," Shepard said in preparation for nationals. "We want to reap the rewards of all the hard work that we've done so far."

The Huskers were rewarded and will look to repeat their performances later this fall.

Men's, women's track teams finish out of top 10

By ANDREW STRNAD
Staff Reporter

It was a new experience for the Nebraska track team in Indianapolis March 13-14.

For only the second time in 12 years, neither the men nor the women finished in the top 10 at the NCAA Indoor Track Championships at the RCA Dome.

However, of the eight Cornhusker athletes competing in the meet, four returned to Lincoln as All-Americans, including three of the four NU men.

Junior high jumper Shane Lavy finished in third place with a jump of 7-5, just 1 inch behind freshman Kenny Evans of Arkansas.

It was the best finish for Lavy, the four-time All-American, at the NCAA indoor meet.

"Shane had a lot of misses and wasn't very consistent," NU Head Coach Gary Pepin said. "But he was able to clear the next height whenever he had to."

"We were very pleased with Shane, and I know he's happy with where he placed."

Senior Scott Warren also finished third, and earned All-America honors in the 35-pound weight throw for the second straight year.

Warren's toss of 67-4/4 was a personal best and also an improvement over last year's fifth-place finish.

"I'm happy with my placing with how far I threw," Warren said. "I'm a little disappointed

because it's my senior year and I'm only a 67-foot weight thrower."

NU long jumper Chris Wright entered the meet with the third best jump in the nation this year at 26, but he was unable to match his earlier marks and finished sixth.

The senior from Nassau, Bahamas, jumped 24-8 1/2.

"He had his worst meet of the indoor season, and this isn't the place to do that," Pepin said.

Senior Byron Topps just missed qualifying in the 55-meter dash. His ninth-place preliminary time of 6.34 seconds was 0.02 seconds away from qualifying.

The Husker women had only one All-American and finished in 38th place, their

worst NCAA indoor finish ever.

Senior Meka Rembert didn't advance to the finals of the 55-meter hurdles but did in the 400-meter dash.

The Kentucky transfer finished in fifth place, earning All-America honors with a time of 54.01

Senior Christina Blackmer finished 10th in the 5,000 meters, sophomore Dalhia Ingram finished 14th in the long jump, and sophomore Kim Stewart finished 16th in the pole vault.

Big 12 Conference foe Texas won the women's national title, ending Louisiana State's run of six straight titles.

Arkansas won the men's crown, with Stanford finishing a distant second.

Swimmers focus on experience for 1998

Women's and men's teams place 118th and 18th, respectively, in the NCAA finals.

By LISA VONNAHME
Staff Reporter

After a slow start at the NCAA Championships in Minneapolis, the Nebraska women's swimming and diving team ended its season March 21 with an 11th place finish, while the men finished 18th in Auburn, Ala., March 28.

The women's team had a lot of expectations going into the meet, including a top-five finish, NU Coach Cal Bentz said. But the Cornhuskers were unable to meet all of their goals.

The championship meet was highlighted with eight



Pine

Cornhusker All-Americans, a runner-up finish in the 800-yard freestyle relay, finalist medals in three events and nine medals in consolation event finals.

NU's 800-yard freestyle relay squad of Anna Windsor, Helene Muller, Therese Alshammar and Shandra Johnson just missed a national championship by one tenth of a second. Nebraska finished in a Big 12 Conference and school record of 7 minutes, 10.89 seconds, but Stanford edged the Huskers to win the title with a time of 7:10.79.

"That relay was a defining moment," Bentz said. "We really needed that spark."

Eight Huskers - Windsor, Muller, Alshammar, Johnson, Beth Karaica, Destiny Lauren, Lenka Manhalova and Terrie Miller - earned All-America honors at the meet.

With two freshmen, eight sophomores and a junior making up the 1998 qualifying list, the women's team has high hopes for next year.

"We've got a lot of young athletes that are going to mature and be back here next year," Bentz said. "With the field getting as fast as it is, we need to focus more on saving some energy from this meet instead of doing everything it takes to get here. We'll be back."

The men's team will be back, too, after coming off its seventh-best showing in the team's 77-year history. The Huskers placed 18th at the NCAA Men's Championships in Auburn, Ala.

"Given the tightness of this meet, we had a pretty good three days," Bentz said. "All in all, being 18th is a fine finish. With the depth of competition getting deeper every year, we have to be proud to be in the top 20."

NU ended the three-day meet by scoring seven points on the final day of competition. The Huskers finished the meet with 80 points. Top-ranked Stanford won the meet title with 599 points.

For the second straight year, NU's Adam Pine qualified for the consolation finals in the 100-yard freestyle. Pine finished with a time of 43.80, placing him 12th. Pine, along with Mark Bennett, David Foster and Alex Shleifman, placed 16th in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

All of the Nebraska qualifiers - seven swimmers and two divers - earned All-America recognition.

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