

Kenyan shrugs off 2nd places to win marathon

NEW YORK (AP)—Joseph Chebet and Adriana Fernandez put the frustration of second place behind them.

Chebet of Kenya, the runner-up the last two years, used a powerful finishing kick Sunday to out-duel Portugal's Domingos Castro and win the New York City Marathon.

He became the first marathoner to win in Boston and New York in the same year since Alberto Salazar in 1982. Kenyans have won in New York the last three years.

"He tried to push me hard, and I tried to push him very hard," Chebet said.

Fernandez, who also finished second last year, easily won the women's division. The Mexican had a time of 2:25:06, the second-fastest in the race's history.

"I was feeling very strong and decided to take off," Fernandez said.

On a blustery day and running in a field of some 30,000 competitors, Fernandez was followed by Catherine Ndereba of Kenya in 2:27:34, Katrin

Dorre-Heinig of Germany in 2:28:41 and defending champion Franca Fiacconi of Italy in 2:29:49.

Chebet and Castro, more renowned as a track runner, ran side-by-side for about a mile until Chebet took command with about 1 1/4 miles to go. Between miles 24 and 25, he put in the fastest mile of the race, 4 minutes, 43 seconds.

Chebet, runner-up to countryman John Kagwe in 1997 and 1998, was timed in 2:09:14. He thwarted Kagwe's bid to become only the third male to win New York three straight years. The only two were Salazar, from 1980-82, and Bill Rodgers, from 1976-79.

Kenyan men took five of the first 10 places, with Shem Kororia third, Kagwe fifth, Elijah Lagat sixth and Simon Biwott eighth.

After last year's heartbreaking loss, when he was beaten by three seconds, Chebet said he would change his tactics.

"It's hard to take second-place finishes so often," he said.

Several teams will vie for title

NCAA from page 10

North Carolina has endured one of the toughest schedules in the country by playing Santa Clara, Penn State and Notre Dame. The Tar Heels are led by ACC player of the year Lori Fair.

UNC isn't alone in playing tough schedules. All six contenders have faced one or more of the top six teams in the country and numerous ranked teams.

Notre Dame Coach Randy Waldrum said playing the best teams early in the season is beneficial later in the season.

"Most teams like to play tough opponents early as a measuring stick," Waldrum said. "The problem with it (games against tough teams) is teams can make adjustments because they've played one another. Wins against a team early don't necessarily translate

into wins later."

If last year is any example, Santa Clara better watch out. In the 1998 season, North Carolina beat Florida during the regular season, but the Gators used the knowledge it gained in the first match to defeat the Tar Heels in the NCAA championship game.

One Santa Clara opponent, Nebraska, narrowly lost to the Broncos 2-1 in the regular season. The Cornhuskers are the Big 12 regular season and tournament champions. They sport six first-team All-Conference selections.

Notre Dame, another Bronco victim, also succumbed to North Carolina 3-2 in overtime. Senior All-American Jen Grubb was the defensive player of the year in the Big East Conference.

Penn State gained its top-five ranking by virtue of defeating North

Carolina 3-2 and winning 15 games in a row. The Nittany Lions are paced by freshman sensation Christie Welsh, who was named freshman of the year and player of the year in the Big 10 Conference.

Santa Clara's Smith said there are two theories about playing a tough schedule.

"One argument is it's difficult to beat a great team twice in the same season," Smith said. "Each of the last three seasons, the eventual champion lost to a team that it defeated in the NCAA tournament to win the championship."

"The other argument is, that since you have already beaten those teams in the regular season, it means you have the confidence to beat them later in the year."

"I don't know which argument will be more applicable this season."

Dorrance builds UNC legend

UNC from page 10

We are very careful with the people we recruit, because it's the players who sell our program.

"It's interesting, but a female recruit isn't going to make a decision on the success of a program. They are going to make a decision to go where they feel comfortable."

Unlike many programs whose coaches are the chief recruiters, Dorrance relies on his current players to sell the program.

And with a line of players that includes World Cup players Mia Hamm, Christine Lilly, Carla Overbeck, Cindy Parlow, Tiffany Roberts and current senior defender Lori Fair, it's easy to imagine North Carolina getting the top players every year.

A trademark of North Carolina is its intense style of play, which has the team pressuring the ball everywhere on the field. UNC also schedules tough games in the regular season to improve itself. And many schools around the country have followed suit by scheduling tough non-conference games.

Dorrance said games against tough opponents are critical in developing players.

"The competition breeds excellence. It's one of the reasons we've been able to have that margin between opponents and ourselves in past years."

The soccer program is so good that it has drawn the respect of Dean Smith. Smith, the winningest basketball coach of all time and former UNC coach, is one of the UNC soccer pro-

gram's top fans.

When he was asked by Football News in 1997 about the rise of Carolina's football program to share the limelight with the basketball team, he said, "This is a women's soccer school. We're just trying to keep up with them."

In the past few years, teams have begun to catch up with UNC in talent and in wins. This year, there are several teams with an opportunity to win the national championship.

Dorrance knows it's getting tougher to be at the top of women's soccer, but parity is better for the sport.

"The gap definitely is closing," he said. "Nebraska is a great example. (John) Walker has done a great job and is doing it the right way. People like John and schools like Nebraska make it tough for any program to dominate."

Nebraska hammers A&M in second half

HUSKERS from page 8

turnovers stopped Husker drives in the first half, but NU was able to overcome them in the second half with a power rushing attack. The Huskers racked up 285 second-half yards on the ground.

"In the first half, we felt we could open them up a little bit with the spread sets. To a degree that worked well," Coach Frank Solich said. "The second half we came out in some more traditional sets and decided to make them stop the run. They seemed to get worn down, and we kept picking up momentum."

Against that tired defense, junior I-back Dan Alexander picked up 108 of his 135 yards, and sophomore quarterback Eric Crouch gained 123 of his game-high 137 yards.

NU scored on five of its six drives and would have most likely scored on the sixth drive if Alexander wouldn't have fumbled the ball out of the end zone at the A&M 2-yard line. The fumble wasn't costly, though, as Ralph Brown intercepted a Randy McCown pass on the very next play and returned it back to the 2-yard line.

Crouch put NU ahead 23-0 on a 2-yard quarterback option. Nebraska capitalized on the five Aggies turnovers with 20 points.

Alexander had given NU a 16-0 lead at the 5-minute and 50-second mark of the third quarter with a 6-yard run. I-backs Correll Buckhalter and Dahrnan Diedrick rounded out the scoring in the fourth quarter. Diedrick's 3-yard score was his first as a Husker.

As good as the offense was in the second half, it continued to

struggle out of the gate. Nebraska led only 6-0 at halftime and amassed just 142 yards. Seventy-six of those yards came on the second drive of the game in which NU ran 15 plays and took seven minutes off the clock. In this drive, the Huskers relied solely upon the double wing set with the fullback in the middle.

"That really threw them off," Alexander said. "I think that was pretty successful, the first drive, because they hadn't seen Nebraska do that before. We really got them on their heels."

The drive went to waste, though, as freshman kicker Josh Brown hit the left upright on a 21-yard field goal attempt. NU had the ball in scoring position again later in the half, but Willie Miller fumbled at the 8-yard line.

"Early on it was certainly a struggle and anybody's ball game," Solich said. "We were passing over some scoring opportunities, and many times those will come back to haunt you. So there was some uneasiness. As we pressed forward things started to work themselves out. Our football team started to get control of the game."

Two field goal blocks by Vanden Bosch in the first half helped ensure NU had control, Solich said.

"Those were very important in the early stages," Solich said. "It kept them from having points on the board. What that means is all of a sudden they don't have the momentum. It jumped back into our court. Whereas, if they get a couple field goals, the score is 6-0, and they are feeling pretty good about things, and the momentum is on their side."

"Then it is a little different situation."

Offense wilts in A&M loss

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said.

The A&M defense did its best to slow Nebraska's offense down, but after 30 minutes of holding on, the "wrecking crew" spent the second half watching NU's offense bust loose.

Except for Nebraska I-back Dan Alexander's fumble, which rolled out of the A&M end zone, the Aggies failed to stop the Nebraska offense at all in the final 30 minutes.

By the end, NU had 430 total yards, 292 yards in the second half.

"They came out with different plays in the second half," defensive back Jason Glenn said. "They ran so many formations, and the ones they came with we hadn't practiced, and it kind of confused us."

"With their crowd being so loud, we could hear some of the calls. We just didn't play well."

Said Slocum: "Their offense is too good to keep giving them shots at you over and over and over again. We kept doing that, and our defense wore down some, and Nebraska made some plays because they're good enough to make some plays."

But Slocum said he didn't want to fault the defense, a unit that forced two NU turnovers and kept A&M in the game until late in the third period. Most of the blame fell back on an offense that figured to be among the Big 12's best before. In a season full of unfulfilled promise, the offense hit rock bottom Saturday night.

"It's one game," McCown said. "We have to put it behind us. The offense can't think about this game."

That'd be a good idea.

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