Chemaoi wins Belmont Opener

Sangau takes second for women

September 4, 2009 · Christian Lemon

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Festus Chemaoi won the men's 5,000 meters at the Belmont Invitational at Percy Warner Park Friday evening with female teammate Zamzam Sangau taking second in the women's 4,000 meter race.

Chemaoi with teammates William Songock and newcomer Chris Mason, led the charge in the men's race holding top five positions from the very beginning. With one mile left, Chemaoi had distanced himself by almost 15 seconds from the rest of the field easily gliding to victory in a time of 15:11.96.

Chemaoi said, "I felt very good the whole race. I was looking back hoping someone would help my push to improve my time."

Songock ran hard and placed third overall in a time of 15:36.59 with Mason finishing sixth in 15:47.40.

Head coach Dean Hayes said, "Festus really ran well. He has been training hard all summer and he looked good. William is still recovering from a stress fracture and ran well. Chris Mason had a good first showing as well giving us a solid top three."

Other men's finishers were Isaac Biwott placing 18th in 16:24.15, David Emery placing 23rd in 16:26.67, and Josh Wheeler placed 54th in 17:50.00>

The men's team placed first in the team scoring edging host Belmont 45 to 57.

Chemaoi said, "I'm very excited right now. Everyone is running well and should get better. I feel

really good about our chances this season and think we can take the Sun Belt."

For the women, Sangau placed second overall with a time of 14:17.00 behind winner Jackie Areson of Tennessee. Sangau ran with the top three throughout the race and claimed the second spot in the last 1,000 meters of the race.

Sangau said, "I liked the way I started the season. I will be able to run better, I got tired on the last hill. I feel good going into the rest of the season."

Marla Bailey was the second Blue Raider finisher placing 20th as Jackie Serem came in 26th with respective times of 15:03.48 and 15:12.95.

Stephanie Smith led the pack of Middle Tennessee freshman placing 34th with teammates Kayla Bryan and Alissa Ruggle taking 55th and 56th, respectively. Amber Kassuba placed 61st and Samantha Hunt rounded out the Raider team placing 77th.

Hayes said, "Zam ran a very tough race. She is just getting in shape. This meet is just getting us loosened for the Sun Belt Championships. Marla Bailey has improved and Jackie (Serem) and Stephanie Smith ran well for our top four and now we just have to sure up our fifth spot. The freshman got experience because most are not used to running on this level."

The team returns to action next Friday in Chattanooga, Tenn. at the UTC Opener. Stay tuned to goblueraiders.com all season long for updates and coverage.

Printed on July 30, 2014
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/40730