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Teams sweep at UTC Opener

Chemaoui remains perfect after two races

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CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. - The men's and women's cross country teams won both races at the UTC Opener meet, Friday at the Moccasin Bend race course in Chattanooga, Tenn.

The men's squad ran a solid team race staying in a tight pack for the first two miles of the 5,000 meter race before Festus Chemaoui and William Songock pulled ahead to battle it out for the final lead. Chemaoui edged Songock in the final 1,000 meters to keep his perfect 2009 record in tact, winning in a time of 15:30. Songock placed third in 15:44.

The remaining men's team was led by Chris Mason who placed eighth in 16:12 with Isaac Biwott and David Emery both pushing hard finishing with a time of 16:17 placing 11th and 12th, respectively. Josh Wheeler placed 38th in 18:25.

The team beat host Chattanooga in team score 28 to 48 to take the meet.

Songock spoke of the veteran experience on the men's, "Today we wanted to go out as team and run the first two miles together. We are more interested in the team and not individual titles. Festus' and my endurance are very high because of our experience and we want to bring everyone along and show them we are team and our individual finish is not as important as the team.

In the women's race, Zamzam Sangau fought hard and earned a second place finish for the second week in a row. She ran the two mile course in 11:24. Jackie Serem placed fourth and teammate Marla Bailey seventh with respective times of 11:47 and 12:04 as the two continued to improve in the early season.

Head coach Dean Hayes, "Jackie probably ran the best race of the whole bunch. She really looked strong and finished with a good time for her in 11:24."

Amber Kassuba led the freshman women placing 13th followed by 17th place Alissa Ruggle and 18th place Kayla Bryan. Samantha Hunt and Stephanie Smith rounded out the women's team finishing in 21st and 24th, respectively.

The women beat Chattanooga by one point with a score of 42 to 43.

The fight for the fourth and fifth spots on both teams was the story of the day with both teams having strong frontrunners, but still searching the crucial team depth that will be key in larger races.

"Our four and fives did well today, those are really the key for us. Isaac and David really got competitive which we needed. We want to get more solid in those positions so we are not so spaced out between our top three and the rest of the teams," said Hayes.

The squads resume competition next Saturday in Bowling Green, Ky. as they will compete in the Old Timers Classic hosted by Western Kentucky. Full results and coverage will be available on goblueraiders.com



Festus Chemaoui capture first place at the UTC Opener in a time of 15:30 ()

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