Men's Cross Country runner-up at SBC Championships

Women place fourth

October 30, 2010 · Christian Lemon

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. - The Middle Tennessee men's cross country team finished second as a team at the 2010 Sun Belt Conference Championships on Saturday at the Kereiakes Park Race Course in Bowling Green, Ky. The Blue Raider women placed fourth.

The Blue Raider men totaled 76 in a second place effort at the '10 championships. UALR would earn the title, scoring 50 points with South Alabama finishing third with 97 points.

Festus Chemaoi was unable to outlast the continuous assault by host WKU's Shadrack Chipchirchir and Dues Rwaheru over the grueling hilly five mile layout en route to a third place overall finish. The MT senior put on a heroic effort hoping to stay with the Hilltopper frontrunners to the last mile and out kick the duo the last 800 meters.

Running neck and neck with the pair in an even five minute pace over the first three miles, Chemaoi feel back into to third and was unable recover the lead. The Ainobkoi, Kenya native would complete the difficult course in 25:02.8 as the meet's second runner-up.

Head coach Dean Hayes commented, "Festus ran a great race. In his four years here, he has proven he has range like no other. As an athlete who excels so much in the 800 and 1,500 meters

events, it is impressive to watch him challenge the best at this distance."

Chris Mason placed 11th in 25:52.1, just missing his second All-Sun Belt mention in as many years. Isaac Biwott finished 13th with a time of 25:55.4 and Justin Cacaro came in 19th in 26:24.0. David Boiywo was the last Blue Raider scorer taking 31st in 27:11.5.

"You have to give Little Rock a lot of credit. They did not have a star, but they had eight solids, which is what you need in cross country. I am proud of our team. You always want to defend your title, but all of them ran well and will be important to us in the track seasons."

In the women's race, Deanna Brasz led the Blue Raider squad for the sixth consecutive race in 2010. The freshman placed ninth overall to become just the third Middle Tennessee runner in school history to be named to the All-Sun Belt team in their rookie season.

Brasz ran strong through the first half of the race, pacing with the lead trio in 5:32 for the first mile. Unfortunately, Brasz was unable to stay with the leaders and crossed the line in 18:36.9.

WKU's Marion Kandie was crowned the SBC individual champion completely the 5,000 meter layout in 17:34.2 to lead her Hilltoppers to their fifth consecutive team title. Brasz's ninth place finish was run in 18:36.9.

Fellow freshman Autumn Gipson ran her strongest race of the year, finishing second on the MT roster and 18th overall in 19:09.23. Teammates Kristen Tithof, Carolyne Tanui and Alissa Ruggle rounded out the Middle Tennessee scorers with times of 19:16.9, 19:38.0 and 19:38.6, respectively.

As a team, the Blue Raider women placed fourth overall with 100 points behind third-place Arkansas State, runner-up Florida Atlantic and champion WKU.

"It was good experience for our young women's team. It hurt us not having anyone from our top last year."

Some of the Middle Tennessee cross country runners will return to action in two weeks as they will vie for NCAA berths at the 2010 NCAA South Regional in Birmingham, Ala. Full results and coverage will be available on GoBlueRaiders.com.

Blue Raider Men's Finishers:

3. Festus Chemaoi - 25:02.8
11. Chris Mason - 25:52.1
13. Isaac Biwott - 25:55.4
19. Justin Cacaro - 26:24.0
31. David Boiywo - 27:11.5
34.Keith Davis - 27:27.b

2010 Sun Belt Men's Cross Country Standing:

1. UALR - 50
2. Middle Tennessee - 76
3. South Alabama - 97
4. WKU - 124

5. Louisiana-Monroe - 162
6. North Texas - 167
7. Florida Atlantic - 172
8. Arkansas State - 175
9. Troy - 175
10. FIU - 235
11. Louisiana-Lafayette - 299

Middle Tennessee Women's Finishers:

9. Deanna Brasz - 18:36.9
18. Autumn Gipson - 19:09.3
20. Kristen Tithof - 19:16.9
26. Carolyne Tanui - 19:38.0
27. Alissa Ruggle - 19:38.6
31. Stephanie Smith - 19:46.7
36. Rachel Islam - 19:56.4
51. Marla Bailey - 20:28.1

2010 Sun Belt Women's Cross Country Standing:

1. WKU - 39
2. Florida Atlantic - 86
3. Arkansas State - 94
4. Middle Tennessee - 100
5. South Alabama - 154
6. North Texas - 157
7. Troy - 161
8. UALR - 213
9. FIU - 215
10. Louisiana-Monroe - 232
11. Louisiana-Lafayette - 252

Printed on December 12, 2013
Original URL: http://www.goblueraiders.com/content.cfm/id/48976