

Watson Earns All-American Honors

EVANSVILLE, Ind. - Barak Watson finished 38th on Saturday afternoon to earn All-American honors at the NCAA D.II Men's Cross Country National Championships, hosted by the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, Indiana.

Watson (Fr./Nampa, ID/Columbia HS) clocked a time of 32:30.1 to become the first NNU USTVCCCA Division II Cross Country All-American, as the top-40 athletes qualify for the award.

"Barak ran a really solid race and it's pretty exciting for us," commented NNU assistant coach Ben Gall. "He started off strong, was running in about 50th-place at the halfway mark, and then started passing people and moving up as the race continued."

Adams State's Reuben Mwei won the individual national championship with a time of 30:27.8, leading his Adams State team to the national team championship.

Watson posted the third-highest GNAC result, trailing only Jordan Welling (13th, 31:44.6) of Western Washington and Chris Reed (35th, 32:28.5) of Western Oregon.

Asked how he felt about his performance, Watson commented, "I felt really good about my race. I would have liked to finish a little higher, but to make All-American and to run well against such experienced and fast runners was great."

"We have been working on running a complete race...not having lapses in the middle," Gall continued. "Today he really stayed in the race and his results were terrific."

"The course was tough, you never really had a chance to settle in and get 'used' to it, but I liked it," Watson added. "There were a couple long, steep uphill climbs and it really challenged us."

"The best part for me is that I have been able to keep improving and getting a little bit better each race," Watson commented.