

UAA Men, Women Qualify For National Meet

By UAA Sports Information

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. - Both the Alaska Anchorage's men's and women's cross country teams are headed to the 2009 NCAA Div. II Cross Country Championships after the women's team won their first ever title at the West Regional and the men's squad placed third on Saturday morning. Junior [Marko Cheseto](#) made UAA history, becoming the first Seawolf runner to win an individual title.

The undefeated women's team, ranked No. 2 in the region and No. 5 in the nation, upset No. 1/2 Chico State for UAA's first West Region title. The Seawolves placed all five runners in the top 15 for a program-best 35 points on the Golden Gate Park's Speedway Meadow course.

Chico State finished second with 58 points, while Great Northwest Athletic Conference foes, Seattle Pacific (75) and Western Washington (121) placed third and fourth, respectively - each earning a bid to nationals.

Prior to today, the highest placing for the women's team was third - accomplished on three occasions (2008, 2005, 2004.), while the men's best finish was second, registered last season.

Paced by junior [Hallidie Wilt](#) (Unalaska, AK) in third place with a time of 21 minutes and 11.5 seconds, the Seawolves finished within 35 seconds of each other for the title and All-West Region honors. Sophomore [Ruth Keino](#) (4th, 21:11.8) and freshman [Miriam Kipngeno](#) (5th, 21:17.9) rounded out the top 5, while senior [Laura Carr](#) (21:30.3) and sophomore Shoshan Keegan (21:45.7) placed ninth and 14th, respectively, in the 6K race.

Carr became the first Seawolf woman to post three All-West Region honors (2009, 2008, and 2006).

Also running for the women's team was junior [Emma Bohman](#) (26th, 22:19.7) and sophomore Ariel Roelle (39th, 22:54.5).

"I'm continually impressed with the women's team," stated 20th-year head coach [Michael Friess](#), "We came into the meet looking to qualify for nationals and that's what we did. We ran relaxed and strong with great enthusiasm and came out on top."

On the men's side, Cheseto (Kapenguria, Kenya) raced to an individual title in a time of 30 minutes and 42.5 seconds in the 10K race after finishing runner-up last season. Cheseto led the No. 4/22 Seawolf pack to third place with 96 points. Claiming berths to the NCAAs was Chico State in first with 42 points and the GNAC's Western Washington (74) in second.

Freshman [Micah Chelimo](#) and sophomore [Alfred Kangogo](#) each finished in the top 15 for All-West Region honors. Chelimo completed the race in third place in a time of 31:05.6, while Kangogo was 10th, crossing the line at 31:35.8.

Rounding out the UAA scorers was senior [Paul Rottich](#) (37th, 33:04.7) and Anchorage native, sophomore [Michael Adams](#) (47th, 33:32.7). Also running for the Seawolves were freshmen [Thomas Hill](#) (34:30.0) finishing 72nd and William Estes (34:33.6) in 74th.

"On the men's side it was a tighter situation," said Friess, "they basically had to run with their hair on fire to get to Nationals and with Cheseto leading the way, they did just that."

Both teams secured their second consecutive NCAA trip. The men's berth marks UAA's sixth trip overall, while the women's team will be making their fourth appearance at Nationals. The championships will take place on Nov. 21 in Evansville, Ind.