

Seawolf Women Fifth In NCAAs

EVANSVILLE, Ind. - The Alaska Anchorage men's and women's cross country team's season came to an end with a program-best fifth place finish from the Seawolf women and a 17th place finish from the men's squad at the 2009 NCAA Div. II Cross Country Championships on Saturday.

The women's team concluded their stellar season with one more record; posting the best NCAA finish by a UAA cross country team with 158 points. The Seawolves, ranked No. 3, finished behind Great Northwest Athletic Conference foe, Seattle Pacific (151) in fourth, while Adams State (73), Grand Valley State (81) and Missouri Southern State (104) rounded out the top three, respectively.

The fifth place Seawolves were led by GNAC's Freshman of the Year, [Miriam Kipngeno](#), who registered UAA's best ever individual finish on the women's side. Kipngeno, from Eldoret, Kenya, completed the 6K race in 21 minutes, 16.7 seconds for 14th place.

"Kipngeno had a tremendous day," said head coach [Michael Friess](#), "Finishing in the top 15 and getting on the podium is a very special achievement."

Kipngeno was less than a minute behind Seattle Pacific's Jessica Pixler (20:22.6) who made NCAA history in becoming the first female Division II athlete to win three individual cross country championships.

Joining Kipngeno on the All-American team was sophomore [Ruth Keino](#) in 39th with a time of 21:58.2. Scoring points for the Seawolves was junior [Hallidie Wilt](#) (22:09.9) in 45th, sophomore [Shoshana Keegan](#) (22:16.3) in 53rd and senior [Laura Carr](#) finished 63rd in 22:27.1.

Carr became the only Seawolf woman to compete in four NCAA Championships (2009, 2008, 2006 and 2005).

Also running for the UAA women was junior [Emma Bohman](#) (152nd, 23:58.5) and sophomore [Ariel Rolle](#) (172nd, 24:54.0).

Friess expressed how the 5th place finish was bitter-sweet, "We are disappointed that we didn't finish higher, but at the same time, only four other teams can say they are better in Div. II. The team accomplished a lot this year, and nothing can minimize that."

On the men's side, freshman standout [Micah Chelimo](#) led the Seawolf charge, squeezing into the top 40 for All-American status at 40th - the fifth-best finish for a Seawolf at the NCAAs. Chelimo, a native of Kapkoi, Kenya, finished the 10K race in 32 minutes, 34.3 seconds.

Just four seconds behind Chelimo was junior [Marko Cheseto](#), who was clocked at 32:38.8. The West Region Champion finished in 42nd place out of 182 racers.

Recording points for the Seawolves was sophomore [Alfred Kangogo](#) (33:39.6) in 94th, freshman [Michael Adams](#) (34:56.4) in 143rd and freshman William Estes (36:42.5) in 174th.

Also racing for UAA was senior [Paul Rottich](#) - his second NCAA appearance - who crossed the finish line at 37:26.5 for 180th.

"The men's achievement was getting to the NCAAs," said Friess, "We came in ranked No. 19 and finished higher. At the end of the day, we still produced one All-American and are the No. 17 team in Div. II. We appreciate that accomplishment."

The men's race was won by Adams State (23), who posted all of its five scorers in the top 15. Western State finished in second with 86 points, while Colorado Mines was third with 153 points. GNAC's Western Washington was 4th with 170 points.

The 17th place team finish (415 points) marks the sixth time Friess has led the men's team to a top 20 finish. In their fourth showing at the NCAAs, the women's team bested the programs previous best finish - ninth - posted last season.

"Now we focus on track and field," stated Friess, "track practice starts Monday, and we are ready to start our next adventure."