

Reed Qualifies for NCAA National Meet

SAN FRANCISCO - Chris Reed became the first Western Oregon University cross country athlete to qualify for the NCAA Division II National Championships as he placed eighth at the West Regional in Golden Gate Park Saturday.

Reed earned All-West Region honors and will be the first Western Oregon runner to ever represent the Wolves in the national cross country championships. He earned his spot by recording a 31:26.1 on the 10k course and being the first finisher among the 18 non-qualifying schools.

Joining Reed, on the all-region team was Mike Schmidt. Schmidt placed 14th at the regionals with a time of 31:46.3 and just missed being the second WOU runner to qualify for the national championships by seven seconds.

With Reed and Schmidt leading the way, the men's team finished fourth at the regionals placing its five qualifying runners in the top 31 and all seven of its runners in the top 46 to earn 105 team points. This is the third straight season the Wolves' men's team has missed qualifying for the NCAA DII Championships by one spot. Today it finished only nine points behind third place Alaska Anchorage, despite having its seventh place runner beat the UAA's fifth place guy, as the Seawolves' took advantage of three runners placing in the top 10.

"Our men's team is one of the top team's in the nation, we just have to find a way to get out of our region," said head coach Mike Johnson. "We did not have enough to get past Alaska Anchorage and their Kenyan runners today, but we are making a culture change in the tradition of running at Western Oregon that has not been seen since the 1980s."

The women's team finished 10th at the regional with 303 points. Tricia Morrison was the top finisher for the Wolves, placing 43rd with a time of 23:03.0.

"We haven't had the continuity throughout the season to run the race we are capable of," explained coach Johnson about the women's team. "Individually we had good enough races but haven't been able to put it all together."

The men's team received strong efforts for all of its runners in addition to Reed and Schmidt. Freshman Conner Kasler recorded a 25th place finish as was the third qualifier for the Wolves. Braxton Jackson and Brandon Snook rounded out the scoring for Western Oregon, placing 30th and 31st, respectively. Justin Karr placed 33rd and Dan Sprinkle 46th, just missing the cut for qualifying scores.

On the women's side, Annan Applebee was the second qualifier for Western Oregon placing 53rd with a time of 23:19.0 on the 6k course. Other qualifying scores for the Wolves were handed in by Janelle Everetts (62), Erica Snawder (63) and Megan Everetts (82). Amanda Wright and KayAnna Cecchi were the other runners for Western Oregon, placing 101st and a 106th, respectively.

The NCAA Division II Cross Country Championships will be Saturday, Nov. 21, in Evansville, Ind.