

## SPORTS

# Women's cross country receives All-Academic Team Award

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The women's cross country team not only succeeded in the 2008 season by placing third at the AMCC Championships, but they also succeeded as a team through their academics.

The team's academic accomplishment was recognized when they were selected as United States Track & Field Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCA) Division III All-Academic Team.

"Finding out that our women's cross country team was given such a notable award was very exciting for all of us," said freshman runner Jenna Fatica. "It is a great feeling knowing we had such a successful season both athletically and academically. Hopefully we can continue to fulfill these accomplishments in the following seasons."

According to head coach Greg Cooper, the academic award is given to teams who have an average cumulative grade point average of 3.10 and who ran as a team at the NCAA Regional Championships.

The Behrend Lions exceeded the minimum grade point average needed to be considered for the USTFCCA award with a GPA of 3.218 for the 2008 fall semester.

The women's team has been consistent with being honored

with the award as they have received it four times out of the past five seasons.

Thirteen athletes earned the award for this past season.

"The team was excited to be honored again," said Cooper. "It is an award we've become used to receiving, however each year we have to earn it again. It's great to see our women be as successful in the classroom as they have been, and on top of that, they have been successful on the cross country course as well."

One hundred and fifty-six Division III women's programs received the USTFCCA's All-Academic Team honors this year, which set a record. Last season, 141 schools earned the academic award.

Time management and not procrastinating are two main keys to balancing academics and athletics.

"Being a student-athlete since high school, I know the importance of time management and how to balance my studies with athletics," said Fatica. "It can be pretty stressful at times, but to avoid that as much as possible, I always try to finish my school work as soon as it is assigned. I do this because I know I do not have as much time as other students do to finish their work. Avoiding procrastination has definitely helped me out, which is the main key

to being a successful student-athlete."

Looking forward to the upcoming 2009 women's cross country season, both Cooper and Fatica are determined to claim the AMCC Championship title.

"One goal we fell short of this year was winning the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference championship, and we would like to win that back," said Cooper. "Academically, it is our goal to continue earning this award, as it demonstrates that we are truly student-athletes. Regionally, it is our goal to improve on our place at the NCAA regional meet from a year ago."

Fatica has team and individual goals for next season.

"I am really looking forward to this upcoming cross country season," said Fatica.

"Although we came short of winning the AMCC Championship this past season, we are all determined to reach our goal. My main personal goal is to definitely keep improving my times, but most importantly to have our team keep getting better as a whole. We do a great job of staying together in races, and if we can work on that a little more we will have a very promising season."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The women's cross country team was selected for the USTFCCA Division III All-Academic Team.

## Potter and Kaiser named to AMCC All-Conference team

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Junior guard Adam Kaiser and junior forward Adam Potter were named to the AMCC All-Conference team for their performances during the 2008-09 season.

"I am very honored to be recognized on the AMCC All-Conference Team," said Potter. "The AMCC is a very talented conference, and there were a lot of other players who could have deserved it as well. I am also very thankful for my team and coaches, who, without them, this would not be possible."

Kaiser was named to the first team and Potter was named to the second team.

This was the first time both players were honored with the

award.

"When I found out [about the award], we were still in our season so I was more concerned about the next game that we had," said Kaiser. "It was an honor to be named first team, but at that time our next game was the only thing on my mind."

Kaiser was second, behind Potter, in total points with 350 and led the team in scoring with 13.5 points per game. The 3-point shot was Kaiser's strength this season, as he led the AMCC in 3-point field goals made with 80 while averaging 3.20 a game. Shooting 42 percent from 3-point range ranked Kaiser fourth in the AMCC.

Potter started every game this season for the Behrend Lions as he led the team in total points with 356 and was second to Kaiser with 13.2 points per game. He scored in the double-figures in 17 of the 27 games.

Potter also led the team in rebounds with 158 and averaged 5.9 rebounds per game. He shot 51 percent from the field and 68 percent from the foul line.

"We grew a lot as a team this year and came a long way from the first week till now," said Potter. "While we never want to be satisfied with not winning the AMCC regular season and tournament, we did accomplish a lot considering our injuries, youth, and inexperience at different positions that will carry over to next season."

The Behrend Lions finished with an overall record of 18-10.

The team made it to the AMCC Semifinal game where they lost to Pitt-Bradford by a score of 54-62. The Blue and White were then selected as a number four seed in the ECAC South Tournament.

In the first round game, the Lions defeated Bethany 73-69. Their next task was the number one seed Cabrini in the ECAC Semifinals. The Lions ended their season with a loss against Cabrini by a score of 65-72.

"I think that the season went well for the most part," said Kaiser. "We had a lot of young guys and they got to play in some big games, so the experience for them was good. I don't think that we reached our expectations for the season because we wanted to win the AMCC and play in the NCAA tournament which did not happen this year."

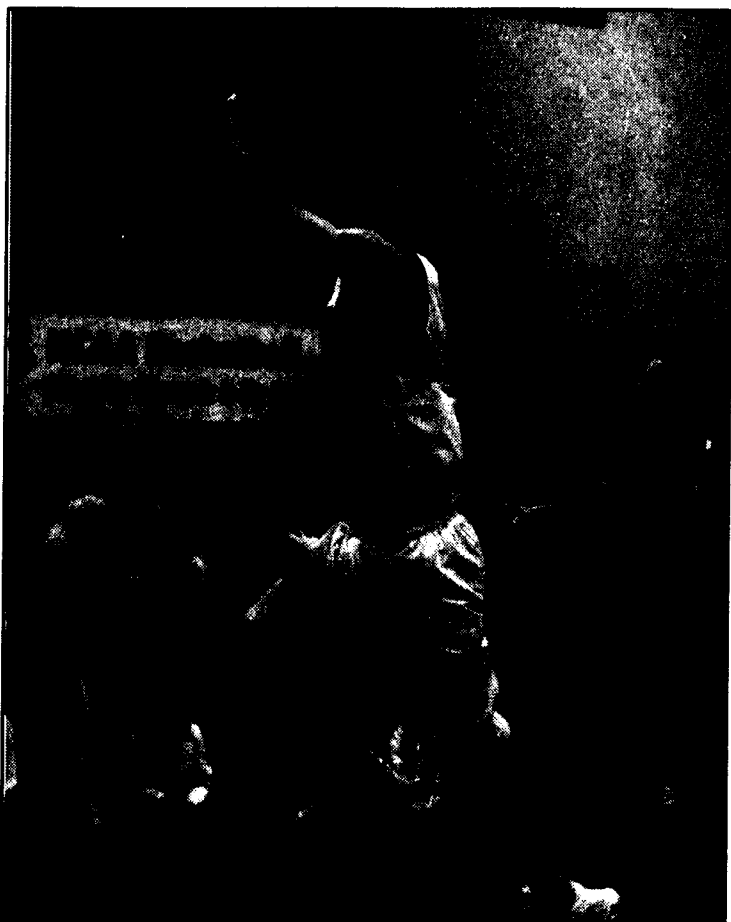


Both Potter and Kaiser believe that the team goal for next year is to win the AMCC.

"Our team goals are to win the AMCC and play in the National Tournament," said Kaiser. "My personal goals are to be a great leader on the team and help the young players as much as I can."

Before the season started, the Behrend Lions had many players inexperienced at the college level. With a year of regular season, AMCC Tournament, and ECAC Tournament play behind them, the Lions bring more experience for next season.

"Next year we lose two seniors, Drew and Tom, who have meant so much to the program, and replacing them will be very difficult," said Potter. "However, our young team this year now has grown a lot and now understands what it takes to be successful in a competitive conference. Our goals for next season are to win the regular season and AMCC tournament, and only through hard work this off season and a commitment to each other will this be possible."



DANIEL SMITH/The Behrend Beacon

Junior forward Adam Potter goes strong to the basket for a layup.

DANIEL SMITH/The Behrend Beacon

Top: Potter is ready to play defense against an opponent. Bottom: Junior guard Adam Kaiser shoots the basketball.