

Cross country teams post mixed results at Invitational

By Zack Feldman
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Though rankings suggested it, Saturday's race proved Penn State's cross country teams will be underdogs again this season.

The No. 24 Penn State women's team turned in a third-place finish, while the men placed fourth at the Harry Groves Spiked Shoe Invitational at the Penn State Golf Courses Saturday morning.

After finishing 11th nationally last season and winning the Big Ten championship, the team finished behind only No. 11 Georgetown and No. 7 Princeton, and both runners and coaches expected a finish on par with what the teams ended up with over the weekend.

"We're pleased with the third-place finish. I think we competed very well against [Princeton and Georgetown]," coach Beth Alford-Sullivan said. "When the rubber hit the road a little bit on this course — the last half is very difficult — I didn't think our women ran as tough as they can. But it's September, and you don't want them to run as tough as they can

until October and November." In similar fashion to last week's Dolan Duals, both the men's and women's teams ran in a pack for the first part of the race.

Junior Kara Millhouse came out on top for Penn State, placing seventh overall with a time of 21 minutes, 16.6 seconds on the 6,000-meter course, averaging a 5:45 mile.

"I think it was one of my better races I've had here. I think it has to do with me maturing as a runner," Millhouse said. "But we have so much talent in the front pack of our team. Any day, we could run this race and someone else will finish in front."

Alford-Sullivan said she was happy with the men as well as the women, saying the men have shown much more focus and determination already this season. Led by juniors Kyle Dawson and Vince McNally in the 8,000-meter race, Penn State earned two of the top seven spots.

Though Sullivan said she was happy with the men's results, McNally said he wanted to beat unranked Navy, which finished in third place, just ahead of the Lions.

"It would have been nice to be third. It was pretty close," McNally said. "It kind of sucks

that we're trying to set our sights on the Georgetowns and Princetons, to have Navy slip in there was a little disappointing."

McNally said the team will continue trying to run as a pack for the bulk of races, but identified a weak spot in the team's game Saturday on which to improve.

"It's kind of tricky, because we wanted to run more as a team [Saturday], but we went out a little hot," McNally said. "Getting up there with Kyle, [Chris] Cipro and I in what I call the peloton, we could have been back leading our whole group of guys instead of being in our own little pack out front."

With the next meet coming on Sept. 25 in Minnesota, both teams' runners are anticipating competition of even higher quality.

And while neither team finished above their expected performance, McNally said September is all about building up the team and solidifying the team's strategy.

"It's September, so I think this was a good baseline, especially off of what we were last year," McNally said. "We're content [with this race] as a team. So we're just going to build off this race and keep getting better."



Kelly Rootes-Murdy/Colegian
Lucia Sofo (4127) runs for Penn State at the Harvey Groves Spiked Shoe Invitational this past weekend.

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Field hockey team pleased to be back in the win column

By Joe McIntyre
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

The last time the Penn State field hockey team got a win was back in late August.

Back then, the sun was shining, the bleachers were hot and the water jets provided a treat for fans watching the game at AstroTurf Field. But a lot can change in a little over two weeks.

Today on a cloudy, chilly and damp mid-September day, the Nittany Lions did something they failed to accomplish against the No. 3 and No. 5 teams in the nation — get a win.

The No. 16 Lions defeated Lock

Haven 3-1 on Sunday behind goals by Brittany Grzywacz, Jessica Longstreth and Lauren Purvis.

Coach Char Morett said it feels great for the team to get back to its winning ways, but there's always more to a game than just coming out with the victory.

"You know, it does feel good to get a win," Morett said. "But you know, it's always like, 'How did we play?' I thought that we played a great second half against Connecticut [last weekend], and that's what we talked about at halftime. We've always come back in the second

half and played a better second half. And I felt that we did that today."

Not only did Penn State need the win for the rankings and standings, senior captain Daneen Zug said pulling out the victory was psychologically huge.

"It feels great. I think we needed to get that win," Zug said. "Today was a big game. We want to see those wins, we don't want to see those losses, but when you play tough teams, when you have a tough schedule, it happens sometimes and you've just got to play through it. And I think we came out well today."

Lock Haven was the first team Penn State has played all season that wasn't nationally ranked in the top 20. Although it may seem

as if playing an easier opponent would help the team relax, forward Lauren Purvis said it actually did the opposite.

The freshman goal scorer said it's in fact tougher to play a squad the team is expected to beat. And if the team didn't come out with a win today, it would have been a huge disappointment.

"Well there's always pressure to do well and always win," Purvis said. "But when you're the higher seed it's kind of, 'If you don't win you're like, it's not good.'"

Morett said the best way for the team to overcome the added pressure is to come out of the locker room with a game plan and stick to it. She said executing the aspects of the game they've worked on in practice during the

week is the main goal of the game. After that, everything else will fall into place.

"I think the kids probably feel a little added pressure," Morett said. "But I think for us, the youth that we have on the field, let's try to stick to the game plan, let's try to keep the field spread."

But Morett said she was happy with how her team handled the expectations against Lock Haven in Sunday's victory.

"And I think you can see the way we transferred the ball across the field, that we were able to get the ball down the field, was something that we were very effective with today," Morett said. "So that was very positive."

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Men's and women's golf seasons begin with meets on the road

By Matt Clancy
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State men's golf coach Greg Nye knew when the season began that he had a relatively inexperienced team that would have to grow as the season went on.

However, it was the least experienced member of his squad, true freshman Michael Miller, who played the best this weekend at the Wolf Run Intercollegiate in Zionsville, Ind.

"I'm really really excited about Mike Miller's play," Nye said. "A lot of his game is very sound and he's highly competitive."

Miller, who was making his collegiate debut, shot a 217 to finish as the Nittany Lions' top golfer.

"It was a good opening tournament for his first tournament as a Penn Stater," senior Tommy McDonagh said.

Miller said that he thought he played well, and was not worried about his first college experience.

"I was more excited than nervous," Miller said of his debut.

However, Penn State's upper-

classmen struggled on what both Nye and his golfers said was a tough course.

McDonagh and fellow senior T.J. Howe, the only two returning members of the team who played regularly last year, struggled through the first two rounds and entered the final round of play in ties for 59th and 65th place, respectively, in the 81-man field.

"I didn't play nearly as well as I played on," Howe said. "I was a little rusty, I haven't played competitively in about a month. There was a little flaw in my swing that caused me to have some issues

and didn't allow me to put up some very good numbers."

Howe recovered to shoot a 70 (-1) on the final day, but McDonagh's hardships continued with a 78.

McDonagh, who set a personal goal of being an All-American this year, said that while he drove the ball well he struggled with his iron, which cost him.

"I'll be hitting balls all this week," McDonagh said, "and hopefully figure it out."

As a team, Penn State finished 12th out of 15 teams.

Meanwhile, the women's team

opened its season Sunday at the Cougar Classic hosted by the College of Charleston.

The tournament will continue through Tuesday, but Penn State shot an opening-round 297 on Sunday, leaving it tied for seventh in the 21-team field.

"We have a much better team attitude this year," said senior Gia Fanelli, who shot an opening-round 73, tied for the team-best with senior Giulia Carando. "We are all just putting in the extra time that we didn't last year."

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