

Cross Country set for NCAA Regionals

Justin Hite
Sports Editor

After a thrilling Southern Conference meet the men's and women's cross country teams prepare for the NCAA Regional Meet this weekend in Louisville, Ky.

The men's team finished the conference meet in seventh while the women finished in fourth, the best finish ever.

"It gives us recognition as a team," coach Jackie Sgambati said. "We are more competitive in the conference and the other schools will take that into account. As we are more competitive in the conference schools will start to worry about us."

All-Conference runner, sophomore, Anna Mae Flynn and upstart freshman Caitlin Beeler led the women's team.

"The closer we are together, and the closer we are to the front, the better we can help the team," Beeler said.

For the second year in a row, the Phoenix took the Southern Conference Freshman of the Year. Beeler took the honor following the conference tournament, where she finished in ninth place. Beeler's time, 17:59.47, is her personal best and set the Elon women's record. For the first time in

Elon history, a cross country runner finished a race in less than 18 minutes.

"She has improved every meet and set a school record by 30 seconds," Sgambati said. "Anna Mae came in and was smashing school records, she broke her own record but Caitlin happened to beat it by four seconds."

Over the entire season Beeler has improved her times by just less than a minute. In her first race at the Gamecock Invitational, Beeler finished with a time of 18:58. Only two weeks before the conference meet, Beeler finished with a time of 18:54.

"In the first meet I went in with no expectations and it worked," Beeler said. "I just started setting my goals higher."

Flynn finished in 11th and in just more than 18 minutes.

Also pacing the Phoenix were sophomore Alissa Wilke, junior Katelyn Ealer and sophomore Jessica Doan, all finishing with personal bests and in the top-40 in the race. The top five finishers for the Phoenix will return for next year. Ealer as the only junior the Phoenix will continue to improve and mature in the coming years.

"Cross country is a building process," Flynn said. "The fact that we are at this level

right now, that's where we hope to start next year. We have girls coming in that run 18:30 and low 18's. We'll be really competitive and aiming for the top three."

The NCAA Regional Meet will conclude a women's cross country season which has been one of the best in Elon's history. The season included only one meet in which the team finished above fifth place. And featured two second place finishes and two fourth place finishes.

Along with Beeler's honors, Flynn was named Southern Conference Runner of the Week twice in September.

The men's team was not as successful as the women's team at the conference meet, but did feature one thing that the women's team did not, a first place finish. The men's meet win occurred at the first event of the season, the Gamecock Invitational.

As for the Southern Conference meet, the team was paced by junior Eric Garren, who finished with a time of 26:42.64, which was good enough for 27th place. Just behind Garren was senior Adam Lindsey who finished in 35th. Sophomore Eric Lewandowski led a pack just behind the leaders with sophomores Ricky Myers and Jason McCullom, finishing 38th, 39th and 40th, respectively.

Much like the women's team the men's team is very young, with only two seniors and two juniors.

"I'm confident that next year will be even better," Sgambati said.

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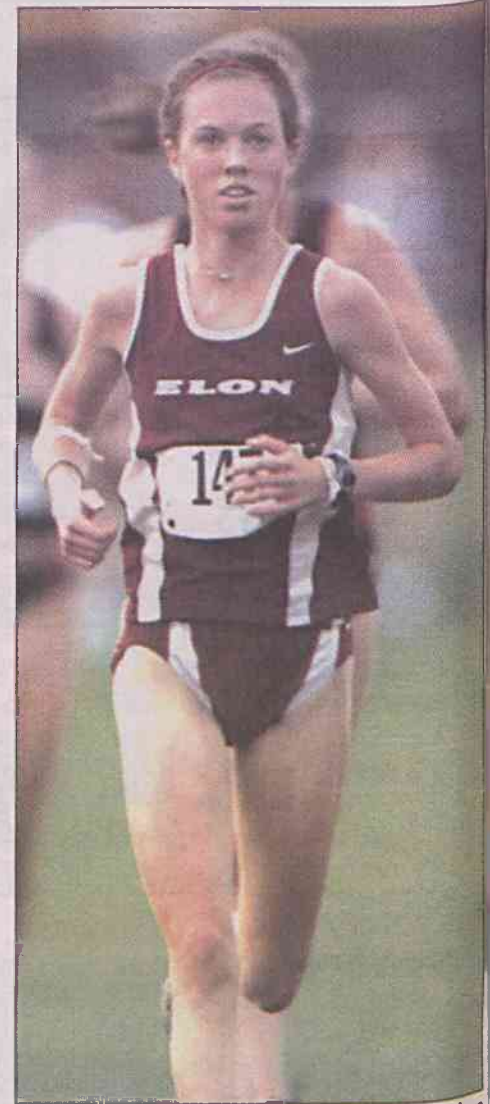


Photo Courtesy of Sports Information
Sophomore Anna Mae Flynn finished eleventh, behind Beeler at the SoCon meet.



Photo Courtesy of Sports Information

Freshman Caitlin Beeler led the Phoenix to a fourth place finish in the Southern Conference meet. In the process, Beeler set the Elon women's cross country record.

Thanksgiving event for runners

Justin Hite
Sports Editor

When Thanksgiving comes around, most people think of turkey, stuffing, gravy and relaxation. But Campus Recreation thinks differently. For the 16th consecutive year Campus Rec will host the Turkey Trot.

The annual 3-kilometer run will be held, the Friday before Thanksgiving, Nov. 17. The race is one of two special programs produced by Campus Rec, the other being Sportsfest.

"We've been doing it for years," Special Programs team leader Stephanie Beard said. "Campus Rec just started services events where we donate to a local organization. This is Campus Rec's annual service event."

Pre-registration for the event ends on Nov. 17, the day of the event. However, free T-shirts are available for the first 320 entrants.

Unlike Sportsfest, the Turkey Trot requires two canned foods, which will go towards the

Alamance County Loaves and Fishes.

Prizes are available for the winners and range from gift certificates to two AirTran Tickets, which are available to anywhere the airline travels.

These prizes will be raffled off after the event. The first, second and third place finishers in each group will also receive awards. Men, women and faculty are the three groups participating.

"It's a perfect opportunity to get a trip to anywhere you want for spring break," Beard said. "We got the tickets last year, but we didn't have enough participation to raffle them off. AirTran does this frequently and usually if there is some connection to a charity event."

Habitat for Humanity will host a dinner following the race. All those who participate in the race will receive \$2 off the dinner held in the Parish House.

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