

Cross Country team returns from Regions victorious



The women's side of the cross country team waits for the start of the run. All six runners on the team finished in the top ten.

Hodges prepares for trip abroad

by Aaron Brown
Sports Editor

Cross Country Coach Mike Hodges is not only known locally as a great coach, but internationally as well, and will be continuing his "international" recognition as he returns to Sudan on Nov. 15.

Hodges started a coaching developmental school in Sudan, in order to teach prospective students the art and science of coaching. His first trip was back in 1987 when he started the school. Hodges then went back in 1988 and began a coaching certification program, and also helped train Sudan's Olympic team for the Seoul Olympics.

This year, he hopes to upgrade the school and the process from beginning philosophies to more intermediate coaching styles. The people in Sudan have really

made his experience enjoyable.

"They are the nicest people I have ever met," commented Hodges. "There is no racial prejudice. In fact, I'm about the only white person there, yet they treat me as an equal. In fact, it seems that skin color is not even a consideration."

Hodges really has received an excellent reception over in Sudan. He has had opportunities to meet the Prime Minister, Chief Justice, and a myriad of others.

"It is really neat; the people almost go overboard and wait on me hand and foot, and bring just about anything I need," commented Hodges.

Coach Hodges has been just as gracious by donating books and materials for their library which has been named after him, a fact that Hodges downplays.

Hodges is also looking forward to the tail end of his trip, when he'll get a chance to spend a few days in Paris.

"I've toured the country, but I have never spent more than a day in Paris itself. Hopefully, I'll get a chance to see the Louvre, and other sights."

Hodges feels that his experiences in Sudan have helped him with his coaching and teaching.

"The experience makes you really value your position and the ability to influence students' lives. I always come back ready to coach," stated Hodges.

In that case, we should also look for a strong track season to go along with the outstanding cross country season, after Hodges returns from Sudan on Dec. 24.

by Aaron Brown
Sports Editor

It was quite a weekend for the Cross Country team as they ran off with the Southern Region Championship at Maclver Park, Saturday.

"It was a fantastic performance from both teams," commented a proud Mike Hodges, coach of the cross country team.

The men's and women's team both blew away the field on a wet and slippery course, and along the way took the coed crown as well. Clackamas had a combined point total of 74, outdistancing second place Mt. Hood by 44 points. Clark came in third with 140 and Umpqua was fourth with 174 points.

"I was particularly proud of the men. We turned what could have been a rebuilding year into a championship year," commented Hodges.

The men's team, sparked by a first place finish from Gene Branderhorst (his time was 26:32), finished with a score of 53, ten more than Mt. Hood who finished second.

"Gene did a good job of setting a hard pace early to string out the competition," stated Hodges.

The entire men's team finished strongly; Mike Paulson placed third at 27:08, Billy Borkus ran ninth in 27:49, Nathan Matlock (11th) completed the race in 28:09, and Tim Marshall rounded out the team with a time of 29:48.

"Three of the team were sick or injured. Billy Borkus missed all but Monday's practice with a chest cold, Nathan Matlock had been

riding an exercise bike instead of running due to shin problems, and Tim [Marshall] couldn't get out of bed [because of the flu]. He [Marshall] showed a lot of grit," related Hodges.

The women's team turned in a fantastic performance with all runners finishing in the top ten, creating a score of 21, and boasting the nearest competition by 34 points, which was Mt. Hood once again.

"We expected to win, but we did push a little harder," said Hodges. "It was not our best, but it didn't need to be. We felt confident to look past to the Northwest Championships."

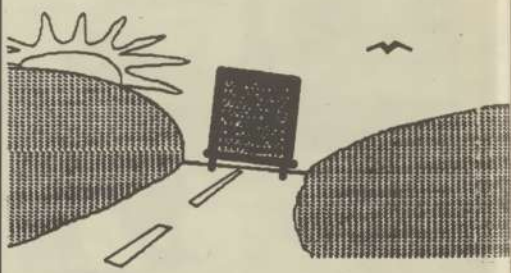
Roni Del Sol finished under 20 minutes once again at 19:39, good enough for second overall. Kristy Morgan placed third with 20:11, Wendi Smith completed the run fourth at 20:29, Stephanie Rosen was fifth in 20:30, Dianna Polack (eighth) finished with a time of 21:33, and Sonia Schmuland completed the 5k run 10th overall at 22:23.

"The women's team showed a lot of character, considering that they are all freshmen this year," related Hodges.

The wins proved to be the fourth region title in five years for the men's team, and the third region championship in row for the women's team.

Coach Hodges was also selected as Coach of the Year for both teams for the second year in a row. The team hopes to dominate at the Northwest Championships in Seattle.

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PROFILE

MIKE HODGES

Team coach of: Cross country
Career coaching record: 401-86
Hometown: Eugene. "I was born and raised in Eugene. I'm a native Oregonian."

Hobbies: "I love to golf, read, and travel. I have enjoyed books by Clive Cussler and Tom Clancy. Travelling is really enjoyable; I have been to Russia, and the Sudan twice and will be going a third time."

Course load: "I teach physical education courses."

What was/is your career highlight?:
"My five years at Clackamas have

been outstanding with my international travel in a coaching role. Overall, having the opportunity to work with young people; it's given me a lot of intangible awards."

How do you feel about the Iraqi situation?: "I'm going to Sudan, who philosophically aligned with Iraq. I'm not wise to say anything, but a response is necessary."

What are your short and long term plans?: "I wouldn't be surprised if I was at Clackamas until I retire. I would eventually like to get into administration."



Qualifications: bachelor's degree and master's from U of O
Years coaching: 26