

Men's X-Country claims fifth straight NWAACC title

Jesse Sowa
Sports Editor

Ryan Burck and his teammates let everyone know who is the best team in the region on Saturday at the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC) Championship Cross Country Meet.

Burck led the Cougars to their fifth consecutive Northwest title at Lane Community College in Eugene with a second-place finish overall in 27 minutes, 38 seconds. James Longoria of Lane CC won the individual title in 27:12.

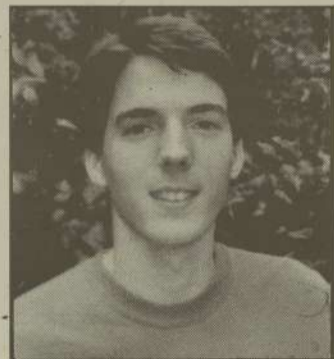
Clackamas finished with 34 points for its five top runners, defeating Clark CC (43), the team that beat the Cougars to win the Southern Region title two weeks in Portland. Mount Hood CC was third with 98, followed by Spokane (103), Lane CC (121), Skagit Valley CC (141), Highline CC (142), Chemeketa CC (234) and Umpqua CC, Lower Columbia College, and Bellevue were incomplete.

Clackamas runner Dean Rowell was third in 27:48, trailed by Jon Cox in sixth (28:09), Juan Sanchez in ninth (28:27), Evan Goin in 14th (28:43), Scott Bills in 25th (29:33) and Jon Gotchall in 38th (30:34).

The Cougars ran again with-

out one of their best runners, Travis Armstrong, who was held out of the race because of a mild case of mononucleosis, or mono.

"This is the sweetest one of the five," said Clackamas Coach Mike Hodges. "I knew we could do it, but I knew they (Clark) were



Burck

tough, too. We were definitely underdogs, big underdogs."

"This is what you do to win championships," he added.

Hodges gave credit to Burck for coming through big when his team needed him the most. "He's tougher than nails at the end of the season. He was that way in high school, too."

Jon Cox and Evan Goin were high on Hodges' "praise list" after the meet. "Jon had his best race of the year," Hodges said. "Evan did a good job of closing the back

door (finishing fifth on the team). I think this was the best race of the year for Rowell, Cox and particularly, Sanchez."

Hodges sees this title as being a good building block for the track season. "It's going to be real important," Hodges said. "This will set the tone."

The women's team finished in fourth place with 83 points. Mount Hood CC edged Lane CC for the team title, 43-46, while Clark CC edged the Cougars for third with 81. Chemeketa CC was fifth with 143, trailed by Spokane CC (147), Bellevue CC (155) and Skagit Valley CC (223), while Umpqua CC and Lower Columbia College were incomplete.

Jaime Fairchild guided the Cougars with a fourth-place individual finish in 20:14. Heather Peterson took 13th in 21:18, followed by Becky White in 17th (21:36), Shannon Henley in 25th (22:20), Mishe Simantel in 32nd (22:49) and Jenny Newell in 34th (23:02).

Newell, who is usually Clackamas' number two runner when she's healthy, was slowed by her recurring stress fracture in her foot. Hodges believed that Newell did the best that she could have considering her injury. "She was courageous."

Newell was unable to do

much running over the past three weeks, practicing only once, and the wet, sloppy condition of the course seemed to make her injury worse.

"They (the women) all ran well," Hodges added.

Despite the women's team



Fairchild

finishing fourth, Clackamas held on to win the NWAACC Co-ed Title for the seventh consecutive year.

"This is a total team thing," Hodges said of the co-ed title. "They (the teams) have a sense of pride in the history of the program. We're together. We're a team."

Hodges tries to keep his teams as focused and prepared as possible.

The Cougar Cross Country and Track & Field programs have

a tradition of dressing up the night before their Northwest meets and going out for dinner. On Friday night, when the teams went out, they ran into the Clark Cross Country teams, who were dressed in t-shirts and shorts. A Clark team member told one from Clackamas that the Cougars "made them look like scum."

"We really try to be a classy program," Hodges said.

Hodges gives credit to his assistant coach, Jack Kegg, who was once a cross country runner at Clackamas and has helped to build the program to where it is now.

Hodges had hoped for a better start to the season, as both the men and the women did not come into training camp in top shape. A slow improvement throughout the season allowed the program to capture the co-ed title on Saturday.

Not only did the Cougars cause their own adversity, but Clackamas had two of its women runners transfer to four-year colleges before the beginning of the season.

Despite all of the injuries, illnesses and other problems, Hodges feels that his program has come through just fine. "They never gave up on themselves," he added.

Clackamas student enjoys thrill of skydiving experience



photo contributed by Brad Zimmerman

Clackamas student Brad Zimmerman took a dive in September as he made his first jump from a plane.

Pamela Sirianni
Staff Writer

Brad Zimmerman, a student at Clackamas Community College, experienced the rush of jumping out of an airplane when he went skydiving recently at Skydive Eagle Creek located at Beaveroaks Airport.

Zimmerman works for the *Oregon Spectator*, a local newspaper, whose office is located in the Western Parachute Sales building. This is the same location as Skydive Eagle Creek. It is here that he was first exposed to skydiving.

He had always thought that skydiving looked interesting, but it was when his friends Cisco Freese and Braden Hvam told him how much fun it was that he decided that this was something he had to experience.

"It looked like a lot of fun and I got to the point where it seemed normal for me to want to go out and skydive. It didn't seem like something that some madman was going to go do. It seemed like a normal sport," said Zimmerman.

It is required that a person be 18 years of age before he or she

can skydive. The weekend after Zimmerman turned 18 he went skydiving for the first time.

The first step was to take a four hour extensive training class. This class included videos describing proper procedures, practice using mock parachute rigs and thorough explanation of how to deal with possible emergency procedures.

"I was really surprised how thoroughly they covered every possible emergency procedure. If I had a problem, I probably could have dealt with it," said Zimmerman.

Then it was time for Zimmerman to experience his first skydive. When Zimmerman was asked what it felt like to jump he said he didn't have time to think.

"Actually, I wasn't thinking about falling. You don't have time to think. My mind just kind of blanked out, it was reeling from the situation, it couldn't handle that I was jumping out of an airplane, so it stopped thinking for a few seconds until I was safe again," said Zimmerman.

Once his brain began to function again, Zimmerman was able to enjoy the scenery as he was falling.

"That was the best part of my first skydive, not the actual skydiving part, but where I could steer the parachute and look at the ground and it was just me and my parachute. It was a lot of fun," said Zimmerman.

His second skydive developed a minor emergency situa-

tion. When Zimmerman was exiting the plane his hand hit something and caused him to spin around a bit. This caused his parachute to twist. Fortunately, he knew what to do to solve the

“Actually, I wasn't thinking about falling. You don't have time to think.”

situation and there were no further complications.

"That was the only time I have ever had a problem and it was basically my fault. I wasn't out on the wing strut far enough and I don't

know what my hand hit," he said. When Zimmerman was asked if he would consider himself a thrill-seeker he said that he would not.

"I don't believe skydiving is that dangerous. I feel skydiving is probably actually safer than

driving a car," said Zimmerman.

Zimmerman plans to continue skydiving and is planning to get his 'A' license by next summer, which requires him to complete 20 free fall jumps.



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