

# XC: Cougars dominate region



Photos by Brittany Home The Clackamas Print

The men of Clackamas await the start of the race held Saturday at Lewisville Park in Battle Ground, Wash.

Continued from Page 1

Jessica Mildes of Spokane CC placed first in the women's 5 kilometer race with a time of 17:51. Freshman Kira Norton followed closely behind Repp; she finished second for Clackamas and placed 32nd with a time of 20:44. Also close-after was Clackamas' Jessie Hansen, scoring 35th with 21:01.

"Jessie Hansen had a pretty good race, she looked good today," said Cougar cross-country director Keoni McHone.

Kylee Johnson earned 39th with 21:21. Grace Kloviski placed 49th at 22:16. Falisha Aho got 58th at 23:03 and Allison Pugsley earned 60th with 23:21, finishing 7th for

the Cougars.

"It was alright, it was a hard race, it wasn't easy," said Repp.

At noon, an hour after the women's race began, the men were off. After the first bend in the trail Cougar Badane Sultessa was at the lead of the pack with only one runner in front of him.

"After the third mile the other group took off," said Sultessa. "Our plan was to work together, but right when the race started we got separated."

The men's eight kilometer race was a grueling fast pace. Clackamas' runners struggled to stay ahead. The cold weather and the pressure of NWAACC championships were factors to be considered for the racers.

"Everyone is nervous, you

kind of have to use those nerves to your advantage," said Gil-Juarez.

Sultessa finished second for the team and sixth in the race with 24:45. Third across the finish line for Clackamas was week six NWAACC athlete of the week Bake Benthin, who finished 14th at 25:16. Austin Peila placed 22nd at 25:40. Danny Robertson earned 25th with 25:53. Jackson Baker was 27th in 26 flat. Scott Schmitt came in seventh for the Cougars and 45th out of the 68 placing runners at 26:37.

The Cougars men's team placed third in the championships, the women placed sixth. As a whole, the men and women ranked fourth in the combined result.

"The season was really

good," said Sultessa. "The team was the best I ever had, better than last year."

Sultessa earned the NWAACC athlete of the week award for week eight. Also awarded an NWAACC athlete of the week title was Gil-Juarez for week one. Gil-Juarez was happy with the cross-country season, but like many others he is now getting mentally geared-up for track pre-season training.

"Cross went amazing this year and if track goes well too I might think about going to Oklahoma State," said Gil-Juarez. "They have a good animal science program and a good steeplechase program. Steeplechase is my event."

Also eyeing track season is Sultessa, who runs the 800-

meter and 1500-meter races in track. Even though he is an outstanding distance runner, he prefers a firm, consistent track over bumpy, winding trails.

"My focus is track," said Sultessa. "Everybody takes two weeks off, then we start practicing for track."

Head coach Kaitlyn Reid has lead the Cougars through a very successful season of cross country. She was awarded head coach of the year honors at the Southern Region Championships. On home turf the Cougar men's team won and the women took sixth.

"We had a really good season," said Repp.

The NWAACC championship was a close race, but the Cougars remain dominant in the Southern Region.



The men rush past fans as they complete the first circle of the race.



Nearing the finish line the men end a good season taking third in NWAACC championships.