

Women's Cross Country Team finishes first at A&M Invitational

BLAINE DIONNE
The Battalion

The Texas Aggie Harriers are letting their presence be known in the cross country world this season. After a successful start to the season two weeks ago in Seattle, the Aggies were ready to come home to the annual Texas A&M Cross Country Invitational and flex their muscles for the home fans.

After all, in the 11 years A&M has hosted the event the home team has never taken home first place as a team. That was all supposed to come to an end Friday.

For the women, it did. Sophomore and top finisher Andrea Bookout led the Aggie charge with her fourth place finish, with Brooke Edwards and Melissa Gulli also finishing in the top ten, tying Rice for the most representatives.

Bookout was pleased with her performance, but not ecstatic. "It was OK. I felt pretty tired," Bookout said. "I know, during my race, that I should have been running faster, I would have run harder when I needed to."

Kaycie Waters was ecstatic about the team win.

"It's just awesome," Waters said. "To be on this team and to be working so hard in practice and to have it pay off in the meets - it's really exciting."

Coach Dave Hartman was also very encouraged by the way his women came out and performed.

"The women ran great," Hartman said. "They went right to the front and really controlled the tempo of the race. Overall, they ran a solid race."

The men had the same expectations as the women, looking for their first win in their home meet, but the competition was stiff with the University of Texas and Rice University, proving to be too much in the team as well as individual categories.

Two Aggies did, however, finish in the top ten. Fifth year seniors Scott Lengefeld and Steven Erath pulled their experience to finish fourth



CODY WAGES/THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Men's and Women's Cross Country Teams hosted the Texas A&M Invitational this weekend, finishing third and first, respectively

and sixth, respectively, but the next Aggie finisher was not until Mike Hummel at 17. With the way scoring works in cross country, finishing that far apart will not win team titles.

Hartman knows that and was duly disappointed in his men.

"Right now, I hope we got third," Hartman said. "I think Rice and t.u. beat us and that's obviously not the results we were looking for."

Even though it was disappointing for the Aggies that they did not win the team title, they know this is not their ultimate goal. All that matters is the conference and NCAA meets, and that is what the Aggies hope to dominate.

Hartman said the upcoming meets will be the main focus of the Aggies.

"I'd rather get our butts kicked today," Hartman said. "And turn

around and do some butt-kicking in November [when the NCAA meet takes place]."

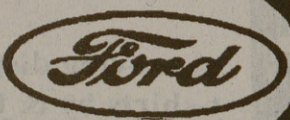
Top finisher Lengefeld echoed that sentiment just after his race.

"We're training for a race November 13th, that's the race we want to run well at," Lengefeld said. "Now don't get me wrong, we can't continue to lose to Texas and Rice and expect just to turn it on in that one day, but we can build from here and move up, we can get 'em."

The Aggies will get a great chance to move up Saturday when they travel to Bloomington, Indiana to face 20 of the top 25 teams in the nation for a pre-NCAA meet.

The next opportunity to see the Aggies locally will be on Oct. 30 when they host the Big 12 Championships.

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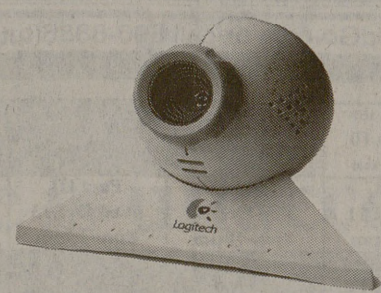
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