

13th ECAC XC Championships

Morven Park, Leesburg, VA

November 13, 1993

CHAMPIONSHIP

Individuals

1. Carole Zajac, Villanova, 16:41.2; 2. Jennifer Rhines, Villanova, 16:42.1; 3. Becky Spies, Villanova, 16:46.5; 4. Marcie Homan, William & Mary, 16:52.9; 5. Amy Rudolph, Providence, 17:03.9; 6. Caryn Landau, Georgetown, 17:11.8; 7. Kristin Beaney, Princeton, 17:13.3; 8. Vanessa Molloy, Providence, 17:14.5; 9. Christine Stief, Boston University 17:17.0; 10. Katie O'Toole, UConn, 17:21.4

Other Penn State finishers

12. Jen Weaver, 17:30.6; 13. Kelli Hunt, 17:31.7; 18. Candida McCarthy 17:42.4; 20. Jamie Rutkowski, 17:46.0; 22. Erin St. John, 17:54.8; 38. Mary Hohnka, 18:17.5.

Cornell finishers: 7. Pam Hunt, 17:22.6; 14. Michelle Deasy, 17:34.5; 16. Laura Woeller, 17:37.5; 17. Martina Hoppe, 17:39.5; 30. Kate Walker, 18:10.4; 33. Allison Mulcahy, 18:12.2; 44. Mieke van Zante, 18:28.1.

Sophomore Chris Rolleri of Delaware placed 93rd out of 199 with a time of 18:41.9 over 3.1 miles, while Katie Guarracino finished in 18:54.7 and Ellen Strickler finished in 18:59.4.

Team results

1. Villanova 36; 2. Cornell 106 3. Georgetown 111; 4. Dartmouth 149; 5. Providence 150; 6. William & Mary 205; 7. St. Joseph's 240; 8t. Princeton 245; 8t. Boston University 245; 10. Massachusetts 305; 18. UConn 444

UNIVERSITY

TOP 10 FINISHERS — 1. Siobahn Murphy (St Johns) 18:10, 2. Fran Lord (Georgetown), 3. Kim Sheekey (Monmouth) 4. Julie Gloss (Lafayette) 18:31, 5. Suzanne Gould (Fordham), 6. Megan Timney (Geo Mason), 7. Claudine Kelly (F), 8. Urlene Dick (Liberty), 9. Nikki Shaw (Villanova), 10. Janet Fu (Columbia). Other Lafayette finishers — 11. Megan Smith, 31. Jeannine Sluck, 50. Dawn Pfeiffer, 61. Melissa Pearce, 110.

WOMEN'S TOP FIVE TEAMS — 1. Fordham 88, 2. Bucknell 114, 3. Lafayette 142, 4. Wagner 183, 5. U of Maine 213.

Also, Rutgers' Lady Knights finished 26th out of a field of 60 at the ECAC Championship race held Saturday in Leesburg, Va. The top finisher for the Lady Knights was Jennifer Heggie with a time of 17:56.9 for 36th place.

Lady Lions qualify for NCAA championships

When the Penn State women's cross country team lost all-Big Ten runner **Kris Kelly** to a case of shin splints, doubts arose as to whether the No. 6 Lady Lions would qualify for the NCAA Championship meet at Saturday's District II qualifier in Leesburg, Va.

But despite Kelly's absence, Penn State placed five runners in the top 20 to finish behind only Villanova and sew up an automatic bid on the wet course at Morven Park.

Kelly's sister, fellow all-Big Ten honoree **Kim**, led the Lady Lion charge by covering the 5,000-meter course in 17:27 for a 10th-place finish. **Jen Weaver** finished 3.5 seconds behind Kelly to place 12th, with teammate **Kelli Hunt** 13th, **Candida McCarthy** 18th and **Jamie Rutkowski** 20th — all within 21 seconds of Kelly.

Erin St. John just missed adding a sixth Lady Lion to the top 20, finishing 22nd.

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Villanova, defending NCAA champ, scored 30 points to win regional honors. Penn State had 73 for second.

"It's going to be a nice ride home," Coach Teri Jordan of Penn State said Saturday afternoon. "Mary Hohnka (former State High runner) had a sore back and still ran 18:17.5 good for 38th. But we had a solid grouping 19-second grouping. And we did it without Kris Kelly. We're not sure if we'll have her for nationals or not."

Carole Zajac, one of the top distance runners in the world, won the event in 16:41.2, just about one second ahead of teammate Jennifer Rhimes. Zajac is a former PIAA standout, the same as Cornell's Pam Hunt, who finished seventh.

Jordan said Tresa Hohnka, a true freshman from State College, won the Coaches Race, in 18:02, some eight seconds ahead of teammate Gretchen Kline.

Women aim for fifth straight title

It has all the ingredients for "Changing of the Numbers," Part II. The fans called the Notre Dame and Florida State showdown in South Bend last weekend "The Day the Numbers Changed." Now the Villanova and Arkansas women's cross country teams prepare for the same type of situation for their Nov. 22 match-up at the National Championships.

Do not expect to hear any of the jawing on the starting line, or even close to the amount of hype that the Irish and Seminoles received, but this meeting between the Wildcats and Razorbacks is a long awaited confrontation that will see one team fall and the other one climb.

The scenario has persisted throughout the year as Arkansas has been planted in the No. 1 spot since the preseason, while 'Nova has been forced to prove its excellence despite being the defending NCAA champions. Both teams are perennial powerhouses. However, this year the Cats were dropped from the top ranking and were forced to settle with ratings anywhere from fifth to seventh. The Razorbacks may have appeared stronger on paper but the season has definitely witnessed the fact that Villanova is just as good as before and the ladies are more than ready to defend their title.

The Wildcats head to the nearby Lehigh University course, the sight of the championships, after embarrassing two separate regions at the ECAC championships in Leesburg, VA. A plethora

of the country's highest rated teams competed including Penn State, Georgetown, Cornell and Providence. That did not stop the Cats from running away with the title. Villanova placed first with a low total of 30 points while the closest competitor, Penn State, ended the day with a second place tally of 73 points.

In 1989, the Wildcats went into the ECAC Championships with far too much confidence and it almost cost them the meet. Ever since then, Head Coach Marty Stern has forced his team to go into the meet with much more concentration. There is no questioning the Cats' confidence at the meet, but they certainly were not complacent.

"We know that its winners stay in, so the team was very intense and I think we surprised a lot of people," said Stern. "Like we've been doing all year, I think we surprise a lot of cross country fans, but I don't think we surprised ourselves."

The first three athletes to cross the line were Villanova's "three-pack-attack." Senior Carole Zajac broke the tape at 16:41.2 with sophomore Jen Rhines right on her heels finishing at 16:42.1. Junior Becky Spies placed third at 16:46.5.

Tosha Woodward, who was unable to run at the Big East Championships, was not misleading anyone when she said her hip flexor was better. She finished ninth in District II at 17:26.2. Emer Molly continues to run at top form as she crossed the line 15th at 17:36.7.

"If everyone runs the same race that they ran at the ECAC's, it will be very, very difficult for someone to beat us," said Stern.

The National Championships will also witness the return of Megan Flowers, who opted to transfer to Arkansas over the summer. She is perhaps the Razorback's best runner which ultimately means Villanova's 1-2-3 punch could still grab the first three positions.

This is by no means a stab at the ability of Flowers or any of Arkansas's other runners, but one would have to assume that the Razorbacks will be a bit out of their element so far away from their school. Flowers will definitely be nervous facing her former teammates.

Even though the Wildcats hold the title, it is hard not to get the feeling that this meet is for the Razorbacks to lose. They have the No. 1 ranking at this point, so Villanova is still striving for the apex of the 1993 season.

"I have no concerns," said Stern. "I feel very good. I feel as confident as I've always been."

'Nova will arrive at Lehigh as the crowd favorite, but certainly the least favorite team to compete against. The Cats have been the only organization in the last four years that no school has been able to overcome. The Wildcats plan on keeping it that way.