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Men's x-country makes NCAA cut, takes third in Districts

By ADAM ROTHSCHILD
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REPORTER

Sophomore Nolan Swanson's 11th-place finish led a balanced attack as the Deacons placed third in Saturday's District 3 Championships at Furman in Greenville, S.C. The 19th-ranked Deacons thus qualified for the NCAA National Championship Meet for the sixth time in eight years. The championship will be held Monday at Iowa State

University in Ames, Iowa. The team overcame horrendously cold and rainy conditions to place third in the meet. The recently soggy east coast weather produced knee-deep puddles in some areas of the Furman course. "The conditions were pretty wild," Head Coach John Goodridge said. "You could almost call it a lake." Swanson overcame the water hazards in finishing 11th overall with a time of 32:10 for the 10K course.

However, Swanson enjoyed plenty of support. The Deacons' six remaining runners all finished within 45 seconds of one another, an outstanding team split that prevented other teams from breaking up the Deacon pack. Senior Steve Guerrini came up big for the Deacons, placing second on the team and 20th overall. Junior Jon Russell and sophomore Eric Dunn crossed the line 29th and 35th, respectively, and juniors Ben Boyd and Pat Fitzgerald and freshman Brett Strahan

finished 40th, 41st and 42nd, all within one second of each other. "It was probably the most balanced effort we've had," Goodridge said. "(It was) not necessarily the best effort or performance we're capable of, but we avoided any of our athletes having a bad day. That kind of a time spread is a beginning benchmark of our balance. The key is where your split is." Goodridge was especially pleased with his squad's mental preparation prior to and dur-

ing the event, something the Deacons must duplicate if they are to place highly Monday. "I was impressed at the team's focus before the race through the distracting, discouraging weather conditions," Goodridge said. "It was a very smart, directed race. We got out into a good solid position and had some very consistent efforts from our athletes. "I'm very proud of our group. Obviously it was a gut check time after a disappointing ACC meet and a frustrating October."

Men's soccer team beaten by Devils in first round of ACCs

By ROBERT NEELY
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REPORTER

The men's soccer team closed out its season with a 3-1 loss to Duke in the first round of the ACC Tournament. The Deacons finished the season 11-9-1 and 2-5 in the ACC and were ranked sixth in the South Region. Included in the Deacons' win total was the team's second win ever over North Carolina, its first since 1982. The team notched a road victory over No. 4 South Carolina as well. "We took a lot of steps in the right direction," Deacon Head Coach Jay Vidovich said. "I'm happy with the fact that we're playing a better level and quality of soccer. That makes it more attractive to watch. "I'm also happy that we were able to get big wins against ranked teams. Last year, our record was about the same, but we had only one big win."

The Deacons fell to Duke for the second time this season in the ACC Tournament. Freshman Kyle Bachmeier's second goal of the year gave the Deacons a 1-0 halftime lead despite the fact that the Devils outshot the Deacons 12-2. "They (Duke) had chances in the first half," Vidovich said. "In the second half we played better, but they won the game. But in this game, they had to earn their goals." Duke scored three unanswered goals in the second half, led by Brian Kelly, who had two goals and an assist. The Deacons now look forward to next season, and have a strong nucleus returning. Senior forwards Erik Brandsma and Ryan Scott and defender Mike Petry are the key departures from this year's squad. "I was happy with Brandsma's performance," Vidovich said. "He was able to play every match. Sometimes he had defensive tasks while other times he was looked at to score goals, and his dedication to the team was certainly obvious."

Brandsma leaves the Deacons with 10 career goals, including three this season, and 15 assists, six this season. Scott led the Deacons in scoring as a junior and had four goals and an assist this season before breaking his wrist against North Carolina. "Scott will definitely be missed," Vidovich said. "He is a great attacking forward. He had bad luck in his senior year, but we will definitely miss him." Petry was hampered by injuries throughout his senior year, but was a key contributor at midfield and defender. "He had a nightmare of a senior season," Vidovich said. "He started injured, was starting to get into a rhythm of play, and then got injured again."

The good news for the Demon Deacons is that several players are expected to take advantage of redshirt eligibility and return for a fifth year. Senior defender Mark Young may return next season while pursuing a double major, and senior Aaron Budzinski may come back after missing the entire season due to a broken leg suffered last season. Another possible returnee is senior goalie Tim Woods, who started the second half of the season for the Deacons. Two Deacons were honored by conference coaches. Freshman Serge Daniv and junior Josh Timbers were named to the second-team All-ACC squad. Vidovich said that he is excited about the returning players next year. He added that he hopes to bring in six players in next season's recruiting class. "We have a foundation set with players showing maturity," Vidovich said. "And our youth got some big games under their belts. With the addition of new players, we're ready for a good season next year."

Deacons drop first exhibition to Nancy

By MICKEY KRAYNYAK
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The team name Nancy of France may not strike fear into opponents' hearts, but it connoted quite enough problems for the Demon Deacon men's basketball team in its 1995-96 debut game Saturday night in Joel Coliseum.

The French professional team, after nearly being blown off the hardwood in the first half of the Deacons' exhibition, rallied in the second half to outscore the Deacons 49-31 in the last 20 minutes to steal an 80-78 win.

In an ominous turn of events, the Europeans shocked the Deacons on the evening of the day that it was released that sophomore guard Jerry Braswell is academically ineligible for the fall semester portion of the team's season. The loss was largely due to the lackluster play the home team elicited from its slew of inexperienced guards.

The possibility that Braswell's suspension may be extended to cover the entire season does not bode well for the Deacons, especially in light of Saturday's game.

The Deacons' performance against their French foes was a fine example of role reversal. After smoothly executing their way to a 47-31 halftime lead, thanks largely to phenomenal shooting from the floor, the Deacons came out with a flat defensive effort in the second half and allowed Nancy to steadily chip its way back into the game.

With less than a minute to go in the contest, Nancy had clawed its way to a two-point lead, and after junior center Tim Duncan was fouled on the Deacons' next possession, the Deacons were forced to rely on Duncan's two free throws to level the score.

Duncan drained both of the foul shots, and the Deacons went on the defensive with the game tied at 78.

However, Nancy forward Derrick Lewis was subsequently able to put in a miss by teammate Herve Dubuisson to give his team a two-point lead with 12.2 seconds to play, and sophomore Deacon guard Tony Rutland was then unable to find Duncan with an errant pass after penetrating deeply into the Nancy defense on the final play of the game.

Despite the loss, the Deacons played the first 20 minutes of their season in surprisingly fluid fashion. Lead by Duncan's 12 first-half points (on perfect six-for-six shooting from the floor) the Deacons shot an impressive 65.5 percent before halftime.

"I think we played well in the first half," Head Coach Dave Odom said after the game.

"We got lots of open-court baskets, our offense was clicking, and our fast break was clicking. I thought defensively we were pretty good, and I thought we rebounded the ball well.

"I was very surprised, really, that we played as well as we did the first half," Odom said.

Junior forwards Ricky Peral and Sean Allen also had strong first halves. Peral went four-for-eight from the floor (including one-for-three from three point range) in the first half, and he scored the first points of the Deacons' season on a jam from the left baseline. Allen, meanwhile, shot a perfect three-for-three from the floor and two-for-two from the free throw line before the intermission.



Joe Weeks

Junior Tim Duncan shows Nancy of France what a preseason All-American can do.

The play of Allen, who finished with 15 points in the game, was especially encouraging for the Deacons, as it provided a preliminary solution to the personnel problem the Deacons have at power forward this season. Allen also tallied five rebounds and a team-leading three steals in the contest and struggled with an intensity that the rest of the team played to generate.

The second half saw the Deacons' execution on both sides of the ball come to a grinding halt, as none of the home team's assortment of guards proved able to either take away the perimeter shot on defense or run a coordinated offensive attack.

"Our offense went stagnant," Odom said of the second half. "We had no movement. They alternated between zone and man (defense). We didn't handle that very well."

Rutland, particularly, seemed as though he may not be completely ready to assume the role of Deacon floor general. The guard hit only one-of-

six shots from the floor in the second half (he finished with 10 points on three-of-11 shooting), and turned the ball over five times in the contest.

Partly as a result of Rutland's poor decision-making, the Deacons' performance on the offensive end of the floor suffered in the second half. In Braswell's absence, neither sophomore guard Steven Goolsby nor freshmen guards Joseph Amonett and Armond Wilson seemed comfortable at shooting guard, though Goolsby did manage to hit three treys and finish with 11 points.

"I thought down the stretch our inexperience at guard showed," Odom said. "We didn't get into the sets we wanted to."

Duncan, meanwhile, put together a very quietly dominating 38 minutes. Though the center had problems at times with the smaller, quicker Lewis, he finished the game with a rounded stat line that reflected his very solid performance: 26 points on 11-14 shooting, 12 rebounds and five blocks.

Stevenson qualifies for x-country nationals, team places disappointing sixth

By ADAM ROTHSCHILD
OLD GOLD AND BLACK REPORTER



Wendy Coulson

Senior Nicole Stevenson and sophomore Katie Brandy compete at Districts Saturday.

The result of Saturday's NCAA District 3 Meet at Furman University in Greenville, S.C. hardly seems fair. In fact, the outcome of the race, held in what Head Coach Eric Goodridge described as, "the worst conditions I've ever seen," can be accurately declared an outright tragedy.

The women's cross country team, which established itself as one of the nation's best early this season, will not get a chance to compete in the NCAA National Championship Meet Monday because of an unfortunate circumstance that no training strategy or prior preparation could have prevented.

Less than 400 meters from the finish of one of her best races ever, sophomore Katie Brandy collapsed from extreme physical exhaustion. Seventy-one runners passed her as she painfully struggled to the finish, and the Deacons fell from a position of contention to sixth place in the meet and out of championship consideration.

Senior Nicole Stevenson ran an incredible race for the Deacons and was near the front of

the pack over the entire 5K course. Stevenson wound up second overall, four seconds behind North Carolina State junior Kristen Hall and ahead of the ACC champion, North Carolina's Karen Godlock, and Florida's Becki Wells, the 1993 District champ.

Stevenson's high finish qualified her to compete at Monday's NCAA National Championship as an individual. Goodridge said of the 1993 All-American and top Deacon runner, "She now carries the Wake Forest banner into the seventh NCAA Championship in which Wake Forest has competed as a team or on an individual basis."

Senior Cindy Moreshead crossed the line 10th overall in her final collegiate race. Moreshead ran exceptionally well despite the frigid downpour and poor drainage of the course. The 5-0 Moreshead ran through water and mud up to her waist in places.

Junior Liz Cotter, rebounding from a sub-par race in the ACC Championships, finished 14th overall and in the team's third position. Junior Chrissy Person crossed the line fourth for the Deacons and 42nd in the race.

As the race unfurled, the Deacons appeared to have a great chance of finishing third in the

meet and earning an NCAA National Championship berth. Goodridge said, "Through three of the top-five scoring positions, Wake Forest had it won. At two miles, our fourth runner was holding 17th place, running one of her best races ever, and Chrissy Person our No. 5, although back in 42nd place, still held us as a team in third and a probable national qualification. Then disaster struck in the final stretch of the race.

"Our hopes as a team for this season were dashed in that final stretch as we went from being a team more than capable of contending for a top national finish to a non-qualifier."

For Goodridge, Saturday's race was a bitter end to a potentially magical season. "We went into this competition as defending champions whose great early season had taken a downward spiral. It was show-me time, and most of the team responded with gutsy performances, only to suffer a heartbreaking loss at the end.

"In my 23 years of coaching I have never had a team more able, relative to their competition, to win big. After a season of such great promise, I can only be extremely disappointed with the final result."