

# Sports

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## Cross country finishes 11th in NCAA finals

BY ADAM ROTHSCHILD  
SPORTS COPY EDITOR

The men's cross country team concluded its 1996 campaign Nov. 25 with an 11th-place finish at the NCAA Cross Country Championships, run in the heat and altitude of the Dell Urich Golf Course in Tucson, Az. Senior Jon Russell, in the last cross country race of his collegiate career, ran a time of 31:25 and placed 20th overall to earn All-American honors. Russell is the third Deacon cross country All-American and the team's first since 1989.

Russell's teammates worked together in a pack to protect the team's high standing in the meet. Junior Nolan Swanson placed 77th, senior Eric Pragle finished 83rd and junior Pat Fitzgerald 84th for the Deacons.

Junior Matt Shady rounded out the scoring for the Deacons with his 118th-place finish.

The Deacons' 11th-place finish in the nation was two slots higher than their 13th-place rating in the national polls. The placing is nine positions higher than the 20th-place finish at last year's NCAA Championship achieved by what was essentially the same Deacon team.

In addition, the Deacons defeated ACC champion N.C. State for the first time this season. The Wolfpack defeated the Deacons by narrow margins at the ACC Championship Meet and at the NCAA District III meet, but, in Tucson, the Deacons finally got the better of their rivals from Raleigh.

"That was a bonus," Head Coach John Goodridge said of the team's victory over State. "It is a good, healthy rivalry. There is a good deal of respect between the two distance running programs."

"I was very, very happy with the team's performance, and for that proud to have placed 11th in the national polls. It can all be proud of," Goodridge continued. "It was a very strong field this year. All of the teams in front of us were very strong teams, and we beat some very strong teams."

Stanford took home the NCAA title, claiming five of the top 14 places. Godfrey Siamusiye of runner-up Arkansas was the individual champion, running the 10K course in 29:49, a convincing 31 seconds ahead of the second-place finisher, Jonah Kipurur of Nebraska.

Three Demon Deacon seniors finished their cross country careers in Tucson: Russell, Pragle and Ben Boyd. They will be missed, but the Deacons do have a solid core of athletes returning for the 1997 season.



Photo courtesy of John Goodridge

Senior John Russell rounds a bend in Arizona.

## Deacons smite Mississippi State

Braswell's hot hand catalyzes runaway win over Bulldogs in Chicago

BY MICKEY KRAYNYAK  
SPORTS EDITOR

Facing their fifth opponent in 10 days, the Demon Deacon men's basketball squad drubbed an unranked Mississippi State squad 74-43 in the first DIRECTV Great Eight contest of the 1996 event in Chicago Tuesday night. The win pushed the Deacons' record to 5-0 on the season as the team prepares for its ACC season opener this weekend at N.C. State.

Head Coach Dave Odom's squad entered the United Center as the second-ranked team in the country, according to both major polls. The ranking is the highest ever in the history of the Demon Deacon basketball program.

The Deacons systematically eliminated the inexperienced Bulldogs, who lost both Eric Dampier and Dante Jones to the NBA draft at the close of last season, and who started a lineup whose members boasted fewer than 20 total starts between them.

"Obviously the game went our way from beginning to end," Head Coach Dave Odom said.

Holding to early season form, the Deacons jumped out to an early lead thanks to the flammable shooting of junior Jerry Braswell, who continues to demonstrate his abilities to both shoot from outside and creatively penetrate to the basket. Braswell lit up the Bulldogs for 10 early points (including two three pointers) as the Deacons jumped out to a commanding 28-9 lead.

The Deacon guard, whose torrid shooting touch has now triggered early runs in three of the Deacons' first five games, finished the first half with 12 points on five-for-seven shooting.

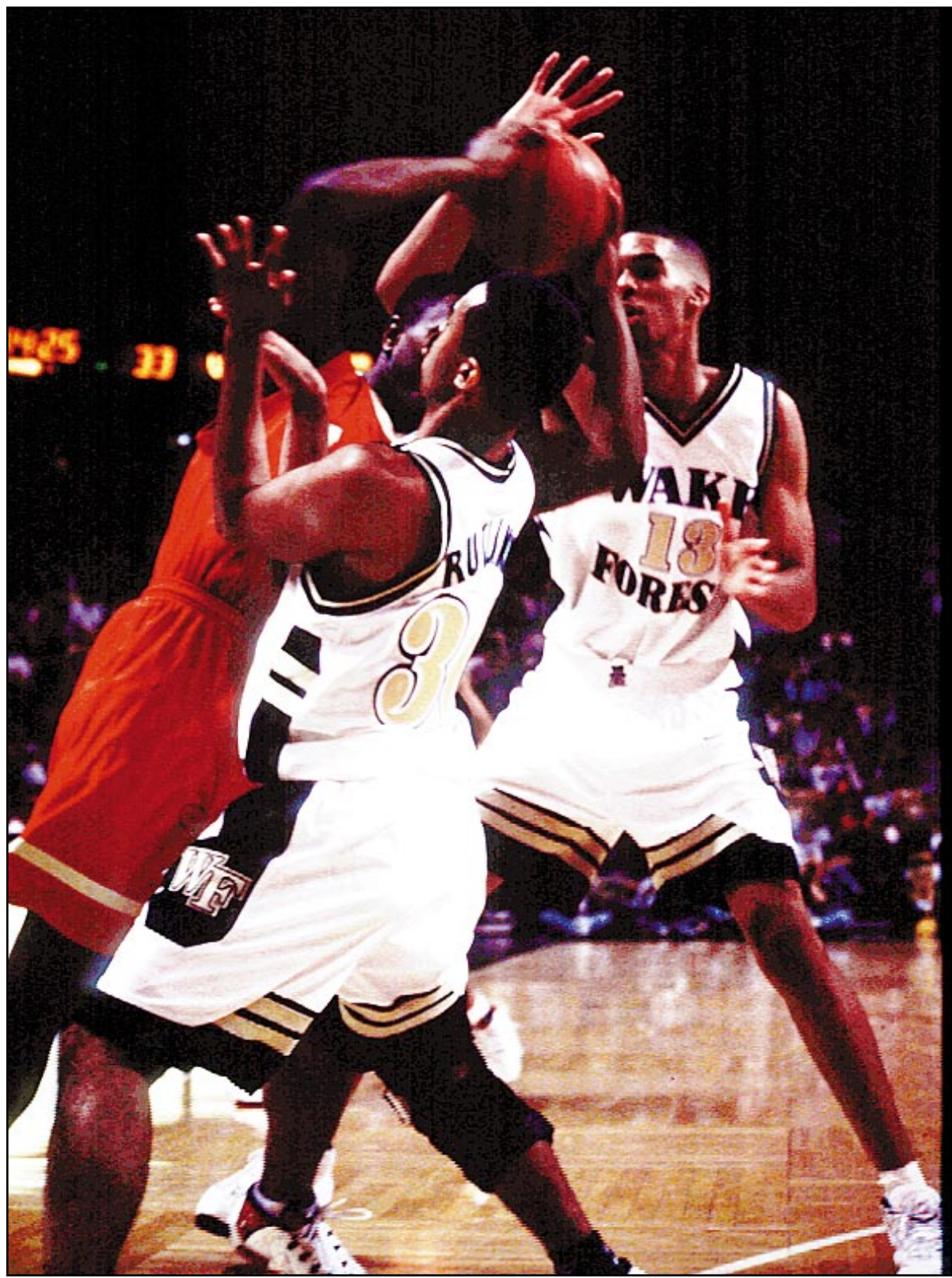
Braswell's ability to break down the Bulldog defense quickly freed up the remainder of the Deacon offensive attack, and enabled the favored team to run their inside-out offense to perfection. Senior Tim Duncan added six first half points, while junior Steven Goolsby, who continues to work his way back from recent arthroscopic knee surgery, connected for five points before the break.

"We're going in realizing (Duncan) is going to get double-teamed, and knowing we're going to get open shots," Braswell said. "I'm trying to be more aggressive with the ball."

Although the Deacons had the game largely under control for much of the first frame, several errors and stints of sloppy play late in the first half allowed Mississippi State back in the game. Leading 32-12 with under four minutes remaining, the Deacons promptly handed the ball over to the Bulldogs enough times to allow the underdogs to piece together a 9-0 run to end the half.

The late sloppy spell notwithstanding, the Deacons dominated their opponents thoroughly in the game's first 20 minutes. Odom's squad hit on 42 percent of their shots in the first half, and held the Bulldogs to a 32 percent showing from the floor. The Deacons also outrebounded their opponents 18-13 in the first half, and turned the ball over five times to the Bulldogs' nine miscues.

If the Deacons allowed their opponent a glimmer of hope before halftime, however, the Bulldogs experienced no such room for optimism after the break. The Deacons returned from the locker room firing on all cylinders, led by Duncan's 13 second-half points.



Carlton Ward

Junior Tony Rutland and freshman Loren Woods battle for the ball with a VMI opponent Nov. 24. The Deacon defense has not allowed an opponent to shoot over 40 percent from the floor this season.

The Deacon pivotman finished the night with 19 points (on seven-for-13 shooting), 17 rebounds and four blocks, and thoroughly confounded the Bulldogs' attempts to establish a consistent offensive attack.

On the night, Mississippi State hit on only 29.5 percent of their field goal attempts.

"We're 5-0. You have to say I'm proud," Odom said. "But in all honesty I think we can be better than we are."

## Women's hoops edges Campbell in home court debut, 76-74

BY ERIN KOREY  
PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

In front of a feisty Campbell audience and a slightly more sedate Deacon crowd, the women's basketball team (3-2) opened their first home regular season game with a too-close-for-comfort win over Campbell (2-2), 76-74 Tuesday night.

The game was characterized by spurts of momentum and a lack of consistent defense. Handicapped by the loss of starting senior RaeAnn Mulholland to a fractured tibia, the Deacons were forced to rely on their offense in place of a weak defense.

Campbell came off strong and outscored the Deacons 9-2 in the first two minutes of the game. From there, the Deacons came back with a basket and foul shot from senior center Tracy Connor and a three-pointer from junior guard Heidi Coleman.

Donning a new haircut, senior guard Stacey Hawes not only dropped the ponytail, but two of four three-pointers, to tie the game up with 13:50 left in the first half.

The lead changed five times in the first half alone, indicating the bursts of offensive toughness the Deacons exerted.

Head Coach Karen Freeman attributes the lead changes to the offense playing well and the defense slipping at times during the game.

"I am pleased with our offensive play, but our defense is truly the weakest aspect of our game," Freeman said. "We are eighth in the ACC in defensive scoring. This shows that our defense has a significant problem. Our goal is to keep teams to under 65 points in a game. We just aren't doing this," she said.

The Demon Deacons shot 50 percent from the field in the first half, a showing which ranked as one of the team's highest shooting percentages this year.

The second half showed the Deacons taking charge of the game and holding the lead throughout the half. The team led by as much as 12 points after a layup from sophomore forward Jenn Miklic.

Miklic stepped up in place of Mulholland, by scoring 11 of her 14 points in the second half and bringing down eight rebounds for the team high.

As the second half progressed, the Deacons' lead diminished to two points with 2:27 left in the game.

The Deacons battled it out to the buzzer, narrowly winning by two points. Up by one with 1:25 left, the game remained scoreless until Coleman stole the ball with 10 seconds left and then sunk a final foul shot to seal the victory.

The team was plagued by turnovers, giving Campbell a chance to capitalize off of the Deacon errors.

"We were out-rebounded by a shorter and more aggressive team," Freeman said.

Connor led the team with 19 points, although she only scored six points in the second half.

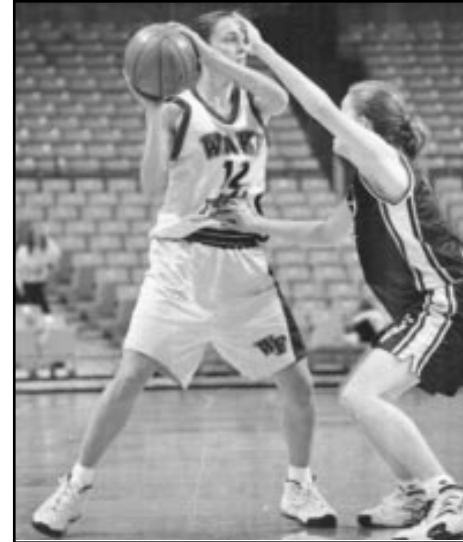
The team was able to shoot 70 percent from the free throw line, an aspect of the game that Freeman had mentioned as a weak spot earlier in the season.

Mulholland could be out anywhere from seven-21 days, until probably around Christmas time, according to Freeman.

Senior Demon Deacon forward Lindsay Seawright moved from small forward to power forward, leaving an open spot which Miklic is trying to fill.

"Mulholland is our second highest scorer and rebounder," Freeman said. "With her out, we are hurting in depth."

The Deacons return to action Saturday in their ACC debut at Virginia.



LeeAnn Hodges

Sophomore Jen Miklic earlier this season.

## Deacons dismantle Spiders to avoid perennial nail-biter game

BY MICKEY KRAYNYAK  
SPORTS EDITOR

RICHMOND, Va. - The Demon Deacon men's hoops team gamely handled the biggest challenge of their young season to date Sunday, torching the host Richmond Spiders with an impressive first-half shooting performance and efficiently putting the finishing touches on their 80-55 win.

Head Coach Dave Odom was pleased with the performance, which came on the heels of the Deacons' lackadaisical win over Davidson at home two days earlier.

"This was a stand-up day for us, no

question about it," Odom said. "We obviously played better than I had a right to expect in the first half."

The victory moved the Deacons' record to 4-0 on the season, and effectively reversed what in recent seasons had become a tendency in close games toward an unsettlingly close game.

"I can't remember too many Wake Forest teams that have come into the Robins Center and played that well," Odom said.

As has been their penchant for most of the fledgling season, the Deacons did their best to put the game against the Spiders out of reach before half-

time. Again, junior Jerry Braswell occupied center stage in the contest's early going, supplying the majority of the visiting team's points as the Deacons mounted their early run.

Braswell tossed in four of the Deacons' first nine baskets, and had tallied 10 points by the time Richmond called a timeout with 13:14 remaining in the first half. The shooting guard finished the evening as the Deacons' leading scorer with 16 points on six-for-12 shooting.

The Demon Deacons had already stormed out to a 22-10 lead on their hosts, and showed little sign of slackening the intensity of their onslaught

after the teams returned to the floor.

Though the Spiders substituted in an entirely new set of arachnids during the timeout, sending five fresh players into the game, the home team was unable to reverse the trend of Deacon domination when the squads returned to the floor.

Deacon freshman Loren Woods promptly teamed with frontcourt mate senior Tim Duncan to shift the focus of the visiting team's attack away from Braswell's blistering perimeter touch and toward the paint. The results were similarly effective: the big men poured in four quick points apiece as the Deacons ran their lead to 32-15

with just over seven minutes remaining in the first half.

The Deacons' height advantage combined to suffocate the Spiders during the waning moments of the half. Having accumulated a multitude of fouls in their doomed attempt to solve the towering Deacon frontcourt, the Spiders were forced to watch their guests convert several one-and-one opportunities down the stretch in the first stanza.

The Deacons closed the half with a 12-5 run to move their lead to 44-22, and notched eight of their points during the run from the charity stripe.

The Deacons shot an impressive 14-24 (58.3 percent) from the floor in the first half.

The visitors went to the locker room having held the smaller Spiders to an eight-for-29 showing from the floor in the first half, including a one-for-eight performance from behind three-point line as the home team tried, and failed, to shift the emphasis of their offense away from the frontcourt height mismatch.

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