

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STAMPEDE

Joplin, MO

Sat., Sept. 19, 2009

We want our runners to experience the cross country “big meet” atmosphere several times each season, both in terms of the level of competition and the size of the meet, and the Missouri Southern Stampede gives us that opportunity. It continues to be one of the biggest and best early season meets in the Midwest, and this year there were 44 teams entered, including several nationally ranked NCAA I, II, III, NAIA, and junior college teams. The great course, competition, and weather resulted in a bunch of personal best times and good performances by our teams.

Our women’s team placed 19th in the field of 41 full teams, with 6 of the 8 who ran Saturday getting all time personal best 5K cross country times. Amy Pierson, NAIA Indoor T&F All-American last season, has become a national class country runner as well this fall, and she kept it going with another outstanding race to finish 17th in the field of 359 runners. She was the 1st NAIA finisher, and her 18:14 was a 22 second personal best time. Syndee Nelson was our #2 for the 3rd straight meet, and she ran a PR 19:59 in 101st. Jennifer Hendrixson and Arely Smith finished close together in 141st and 154th, with Arely running a personal best time and Jennifer just 8 seconds off her PR. Our next 3, Mychala Money (21:01/193rd), Larrissa Vasquez (21:15/213th), and Erica Dunigan (21:15/214th) also finished close together, with Mychala and Larrissa running personal best times. Kash Shuck (21:50/254th) gave us yet another personal best time with her best race to date. We were pleased to finish in the top half in a big, quality field, and to finish 6th out of the 16 NAIA teams in the race. Alyssa Carter and Jordan Unruh are on their way back from injury/illness, but still not ready to compete.

The 2009 season has started very well for our men’s team, and we kept it going with another strong performance in this meet. We placed 12th out of 35 full teams and 4th out of 16 NAIA teams. Andrew Topham led our team and competed very well once again, and his 25:10 in 35th place, out of 359 runners, was a big improvement over last year in this meet. Freshman Frank Adelman continued the outstanding start to his career here with a 49th place finish in 25:30. Zack Conroy (26:23/91st), Carrington Crum (26:27/114th), Jimmy Bryant (26:51/150th), and Tanner McNinch (31:18/299th) all had big improvements over past years at this meet, and Clint Kessler came through again with a quality freshman time of 26:47 in 143rd. Conner Drendel and Kyle Luttgarm did not run due to injuries.