

Similarities Abound for Gopher Teams at Big 10 Cross Country Championships

Patrick Mader, October, 2016

The Gopher teams matched each other in many ways at today's Big 10 Championships at the Les Bolstad Golf Course on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota: both teams placed 4th, each team had three runners place in the top 20, the teams were predominantly composed of Minnesota athletes, and none of the runners were seniors.

On the women's team, Madeline Strandemo (Fargo, ND) led the way with an 8th place finish over the 6 K course in 21:10.2, followed by twins Megan (11th) and Bethany Hasz (20th) of Alexandria. Other team runners included Abby Kargol, Bailey Ness and Emily Betz (both of East Ridge in Woodbury), and Patty O'Brien (North St. Paul). It appeared as though the runners moved steadily through the pack and up in rank as they ran the challenging rolling hills.

Charlie Lawrence (Foley) edged into the top 10 with a 9th place finish with a time of 24:54.9 on the 8-kilometer course. Matthew Thomas Welch (Proctor) and red-shirt freshman Connor Olson (Wayzata) also cracked 25 minutes with their 13th and 14th-place runs. Evan Ferlic (Mounds Park Academy) was fourth on the team and Derek Wiebke (Kasson-Mantorville) were on the board as the fourth and fifth runners. Connor ran a tough race and hung with the lead pack throughout much of the race while Matt had a powerful finish. Obsa Ali, consistently a top Gopher runner, had been ill during the week and was not a factor in the race.

Another Wayzata runner, Jaret Carpenter, placed 16th overall as a Purdue Boilermaker and Kevin Docherty (Cretin-Derham Hall and brother of Gopher All-American Laura Docherty) ran for Iowa.