

BIG TEN MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY
 SQUADS OPEN 2006 CAMPAIGNS THIS WEEKEND

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Over half of the conference's men's cross country teams will open their 2006 schedules this weekend, with Illinois and Purdue competing in Champaign, Ill., at the Illini Open on Friday. Indiana and Michigan will both host events on Friday as well, while Michigan State travels to Mount Pleasant, Mich., for the Jeff Drenth Memorial. Iowa will travel to Western Illinois on Saturday and Minnesota opens its season at the St. Thomas Early Bird Meet in St. Paul, Minn.

Last year, Wisconsin captured its seventh-straight Big Ten title as well as the NCAA Championship team and individual (Simon Bairu) crowns.

Six Big Ten women's cross country programs will be in action this weekend as three schools will run on their home turf. Indiana hosts the IU Community 5K on Friday, while Purdue will join Illinois at the Illini Open in Champaign. Michigan State will travel to Mount Pleasant, Mich., for the Jeff Drenth Memorial on Friday. Northwestern opens its season at home with the Wildcat Open and Iowa will travel to Western Illinois on Saturday.

In 2005, three Big Ten squads finished in the top 10 at the NCAA Championships for the first time since 1994. Illinois (212) finished fifth, Michigan (250) was sixth, and Minnesota (361) was ninth. Three-time defending Big Ten Champion Michigan captured another conference title, while Illinois junior Cassie Hunt won the individual gold.

THIS WEEK IN THE BIG TEN

FRIDAY, SEPT. 1

Men
 Illinois, Purdue @ Illini Open
 Champaign, Ill. 5:30 p.m.
 Indiana @ IU Community 5K
 Bloomington, Ind. 6 p.m.
 Michigan @ Michigan Open
 Ann Arbor, Mich. 3 p.m.
 Michigan State @ Jeff Drenth Memorial
 Mt. Pleasant, Mich. TBA

Women
 Illinois, Purdue @ Illini Open
 Champaign, Ill. 5 p.m.
 Indiana @ IU Community 5k
 Bloomington, Ind. 6 p.m.
 Michigan State @ Jeff Drenth Memorial
 Mt. Pleasant, Mich. TBA

SATURDAY, SEPT. 2

Men
 Iowa @ Western Illinois
 Macomb, Ill. TBA
 Minnesota @ St. Thomas Early Bird Meet
 St. Paul, Minn. 9:30 a.m.

Women
 Iowa @ Western Illinois
 Macomb, Ill. TBA
 Northwestern @ Wildcat Open
 Evanston, Ill. TBA

MEN'S MONDO TOP 30 POLL

**MONDO Men's Cross Country
 National Top 30 Poll
 will be released
 the week of Sept. 11**

WOMEN'S FINISHLYNX TOP 30 POLL

**FinishLynx Women's Cross
 Country National Top 30 Poll
 will be released
 the week of Sept. 11**

MEN'S RUNNER OF THE WEEK

*Big Ten Men's Runner of the Week
 will begin next
 Tuesday, Sept. 5*

WOMEN'S RUNNER OF THE WEEK

*Big Ten Women's Runner of the Week
 will begin next
 Tuesday, Sept. 5*

2006 MEN'S RUNNER OF THE WEEK

2006 WOMEN'S RUNNER OF THE WEEK