



ND 2005-06

Preview

Junior Kurt Benninger, a two-time All-American on the track, will play a pivotal role as the top-10 Notre Dame men's cross country team competes for a national title in 2005.

Irish Men's Track & Field Team Looks to Load Up for Another BIG EAST Title Run

Notre Dame has won four conference titles in the past three years, including 2005 indoor crown

There are many constants in the world that folks can come to rely on. You can depend on the mail always being delivered six days a week, no matter the weather. You can also count on having to pay your taxes each year. And lately, you can be sure that the Notre Dame men's track and field team is going to be in the hunt for the BIG EAST Conference title every single season.

In fact, since becoming members of the BIG EAST in 1995-96, the Irish have finished among the top three in both the indoor and outdoor conference championships every year but one (a sixth-place finish in the 2001 outdoor meet). That's a sparkling 19 top-three finishes out of 20 opportunities, and it's highlighted by five BIG EAST titles, including the most recent trophy that was acquired at last year's BIG EAST Indoor Championships.

"We have strong people in every event," 31st-year head coach Joe Piane said. "We have a broad-based track team and that's pretty rare. If you look at a lot of teams, they're going to find a niche and that's the niche they work with. To win the BIG EAST meet, you need to cover all the bases.

"The two most important meets on our schedule are the BIG EAST meet and the NCAAs," Piane added. "Our goals are to be competitive, if not win the BIG EAST every year, which is going to become difficult with the new schools, especially Louisville. The other is to score at the NCAAs and to get as many All-Americans as we can."

Perhaps the biggest reason for Notre Dame's continued success in men's track and field has been its ability to adapt to change. As with all college teams, the Irish regularly go through turnover on their roster, whether through graduation, injury or other circumstances. However, Notre Dame has had a vital weapon at its disposal — experience in the coaching ranks. The Irish staff, led by Piane, has a combined total of more than 100 years of coaching expertise, including 82 seasons at Notre Dame.

That leadership also permeates through to the upperclassmen on the Notre Dame roster. While the sprints and throws will undergo a change in leadership after the graduation of several key seniors, the Irish distance group looks to build on a successful 2004 season. The group returns nearly all of its top contributors while adding several top talents.

At the forefront of this contingent, and looking to make noise on the national level, will be junior Kurt Benninger. A year ago, Benninger became only the third Notre Dame athlete to run a sub-four minute mile on the way to earning his first two indoor All-America honors (mile, distance medley relay). Also a two-time BIG EAST indoor champion, he broke the outdoor school record in the 5,000 meters with a blazing 13:33. Without question, Benninger has the talent and the desire to return to the NCAA Championships and improve on last year's performances.

The distance group will be fortified by fifth-year senior Sean O'Donnell, and seniors Tim Moore and Kaleb Van Ort. All three runners are capable of excelling at distances from 3,000 meters all the way up to 10,000 meters. In particular, Van Ort is coming off a season in which he qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Championships in the 10,000 meters and finished 13th. Junior Todd Ptacek and sophomore Jake Watson are the top two BIG EAST returnees in the 3,000-meter steeplechase and will be poised to improve their career bests and break the nine-

minute barrier. Junior Tom Chamney is returning to the program after spending a year training back home in his native Ireland, and he should be one of the conference's top 800-meter specialists, along with sophomore Adam Currie.

"I've never had a distance group this deep," Piane said. "We have about 14-18 kids who all can compete and do well on the conference and regional levels. Many of these guys have used last year's success on the track and are looking to build on that this time around. And with a solid cross country season to lead them onto the track, they can be a really strong cornerstone of our team this year."

In the throws, the Irish will be hurt by the loss of graduation of their longtime leader, Chip Roberts, who won the BIG EAST hammer throw title last year. However, a formidable crew exists to pick up the slack, led by a pair of all-BIG EAST honorees — junior Garek Koxlien and sophomore Kyle Annen. Koxlien showed great improvement from his freshman campaign, scoring BIG EAST points in both the indoor and outdoor meets, while earning all-conference laurels in the discus. Annen earned his all-league plaque as a third-place finisher behind

best in years," sprints and hurdles coach John Millar said. "There are a number of individuals who will be counted on to contribute in this area, and any combination of them quite possibly will form a 4x400 relay that can advance to the regionals."

In the hurdles, junior Geoff Bennett and sophomores Jose Genao and Austin Wechter all scored points for the Irish at last year's BIG EAST meet and will be counted on for bigger things this season. Freshman Patrick Needham, a regional champion in the 110-meter hurdles during his final prep season at Loyola (Ill.) Academy, also may be called upon to contribute this year.

"The graduation of Selim Nurudeen will certainly leave a difficult void for us to fill," Millar added. "However, we have a solid group returning with Jose and Geoff, and Patrick will provide us with some additional depth. In the 400-meter hurdles, Austin Wechter made considerable improvement last season and we're looking for that to continue this year.

The Irish jumping group should be one of the team's most improved areas this season. Junior Christopher Jacques provides a solid foundation in the high jump, while also standing as the defending conference cham-

pion in the indoor long jump. The high jump corps also gets a significant upgrade with the arrival of freshman Blair Majcina, a nationally-ranked Illinois prep standout with a personal best of 7-1.

"We need a breakout year in both the long jump and high jump from Chris," jumps coach Scott Winsor said. "He's worked extremely

"I've never had a distance group this deep. We have about 14-18 kids who all can compete and do well on the conference and regional levels. Many of these guys have used last year's success on the track and are looking to build on that this time around."

— Joe Piane
head track & field coach

Roberts in the hammer throw and, along with Koxlien, Annen qualified for the NCAA Mid-east Regional. Sophomore Mike Schubert will give the Irish a strong presence in both the indoor and outdoor shot puts.

"The 2005 season was a solid year for the men," throws coach B.J. Linnenbrink said. "We had numerous all-BIG EAST honors, a conference champion and multiple regional qualifiers. We will try to build on that standard for the coming season, returning all but one guy from last year. I look for Garek Koxlien to have an outstanding year and make a push to be the BIG EAST champion in the discus and take a giant step towards the NCAAs."

The sprint corps is another group that faces a significant loss heading into the 2005-06 season. Selim Nurudeen graduated after a stellar career that saw him acquire two All-America honors and 15 all-BIG EAST designations. Easing the post-Nurudeen transition will be the return of senior Ryan Postel. Sidelined by illness last track season, Postel enters the 2005-06 campaign as the school record holder in the indoor 400 meters and a contender to qualify for the national meet. Other top returning sprinters include junior Jordan Powell, and sophomores Michael Webber, Zachary Labrecque and Bob Kueny. Freshman Alvin Adjei could also be heard from, along with sophomores Terrail Lambert (an all-BIG EAST honoree in the 60-meter dash at last year's conference indoor meet) and Justin Hoskins, and freshman D.J. Hord.

"Having Ryan Postel back provides the foundation for a 400-meter group that has the potential to be one of the

hard over the summer and is in the best physical condition of his life. Chris himself would tell you his eyes are set on repeating as the BIG EAST long jump champion, along with earning major points in the high jump.

"Blair has set very high goals for himself as a freshman," Winsor continued. "He has a very competitive nature, he's looked very good this fall and is very fit. He will be a big key at the conference meet, and with some improvements, he will be an NCAA-caliber high jumper."

In the pole vault, juniors Justin Oppel and Dave Viken will be joined by freshmen Tray Morgan and Trey Mohr. The added depth to the vault group should help push the athletes to the 16-foot mark.

"Justin has great pole vault potential and the mindset to go with it," Winsor said. "He's been battling injuries his first two years, but if he can get and stay healthy, he has the ability to be a BIG EAST champion. Dave is another vital part to our effort and is someone who has been very consistent throughout his first two years. He's looking for that breakout vault and he's been very close to it for quite some time. Dave has had a great fall of training and we look for good things from him.

"Tray Morgan is just a great young man, who working extremely hard this fall," Winsor added. "If he stays healthy and keeps his attitude right where it's at, he'll be a big help to our team. As for Trey Mohr, he's looking to break into the pole vault scene this year and has already had a great fall, coming in fit. He will have to put on a little size and strength before he'll see any major results. With hard work and commitment, he should improve enough to make it to the BIG EAST."



Name	Ht.	Event	Class	Hometown	High School
Brett Adams	5-8	Distance	So.	Davenport, IA	Assumption
Alvin Adjei	6-0	Sprints	Fr.	Houston, TX	Langham Creek
Jamal Afridi	5-10	Distance	So.	Perrysburg, OH	Maumee Valley
Vinny Ambrico	5-11	Distance	Sr.	Altamonte Springs, FL	Choate Rosemary Hall
A.J. Andrassy	5-10	Distance	Sr.	Bay Village, OH	St. Ignatius
Kyle Annen	5-11	Throws	So.	Orofino, ID	Orofino
Robbie Barany	6-0	Distance	Fr.	Yakima, WA	Eisenhower
Geoff Bennett	5-11	Hurdles	Jr.	Houston, TX	St. Thomas
Kurt Benninger	5-11	Distance	Jr.	Chepstow, Ontario	Walkerton D.S.S.
Daniel Bradley	5-11	Distance	So.	South Bend, IN	St. Joseph's
Gonzalo Brenner	6-0	Multi	Fr.	Santiago, Chile	St. George's College
Billy Buzaid	6-1	Distance	Fr.	Verona, NJ	Seton Hall Prep
John Cavanaugh	5-10	Distance	So.	Granger, IN	St. Joseph's
Tom Chamney	6-2	Distance	Jr.	Tipperary, Ireland	St. Columba's
Daniel Clark	5-10	Distance	Fr.	Jackson, MI	Lumen Christi
Tom Connelly	6-0	Sprints	Fr.	Malvern, PA	Conestoga
Dan Curran	5-11	Distance	So.	Naperville, IL	Naperville North
Adam Currie	5-11	Distance	So.	Verdun, Quebec	Richelieu Valley
John Daly, Jr.	6-1	Distance	Fr.	Louisville, KY	St. Xavier
Colin Diamond	5-10	Distance	Fr.	Wheaton, IL	St. Francis
Zach Einterz	5-8	Distance	So.	Zionsville, IN	Community
Jose Genao	6-0	Sprints	So.	Port Jefferson Station, NY	Comsewogue
Benjamin Hess	5-11	Distance	Jr.	Lititz, PA	Warwick
Charlie Hilding	6-1	Sprints	Fr.	Oak Brook, IL	Montini Catholic
Christopher Jacques	6-0	Jumps	Jr.	Old Brookville, NY	Chaminade
Garet Koxlien	6-2	Throws	Jr.	Galesville, WI	Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau
Bob Kueny	6-3	Sprints	So.	Lebanon, MO	Lebanon
Daniel Kuzma	5-7	Distance	Fr.	McKees Rocks, PA	Central Catholic
Zachary Labrecque	6-1	Sprints	So.	Battle Creek, MI	Harper Creek
Tom Longo	5-9	Distance	Sr.	Northbrook, IL	Glenbrook
Brian Mahon	5-9	Pole Vault	Fr.	Granger, IN	Clay
Blair Majcina	6-1	Jumps	Fr.	Mokena, IL	Lincoln-Way East
Michael McDonald	6-3	Distance	Fr.	Granger, IN	St. Joseph's
Kevin McFadden	6-1	Distance	Fr.	New Tripoli, PA	Allentown Central Catholic
Jeff Mensch	6-2	Throws	Fr.	Del Mar, CA	Torrey Pines
James Millar	6-3	Distance	So.	Granger, IN	St. Joseph's
Kevin Moffitt	6-3	Throws	Jr.	Califon, NJ	Delbarton
Trey Mohr	5-9	Pole Vault	Fr.	Dallas, TX	Cistercian
Mark Moore	6-5	Distance	Fr.	Novi, MI	Novi
Tim Moore	6-1	Distance	Sr.	Novi, MI	Novi
Tray Morgan	6-2	Pole Vault	Fr.	Daphne, AL	McGill-Toolen Catholic
Patrick Needham	6-5	Sprints	Fr.	Chicago, IL	Loyola Academy
Andy O'Connor	6-0	Distance	Jr.	Lake Mary, FL	Homestead (IN)
Sean O'Donnell	6-3	Distance	Sr.	Kansas City, MO	Rockhurst
Justin Oppel	5-10	Pole Vault	Jr.	Amarillo, TX	Amarillo
Nathan Payne	5-10	Sprints	So.	South Bend, IN	St. Joseph's
Mike Popejoy	5-11	Distance	So.	Wheaton, IL	Warrenville South
Ryan Postel	6-3	Sprints	Sr.	Lexington, KY	Catholic
Jordan Powell	6-3	Sprints	Jr.	Springfield, IL	Calvary Academy
Todd Ptacek	6-1	Distance	Jr.	Benton Harbor, MI	Lake Michigan Catholic
Adam Record	6-0	Jumps	Jr.	Batesville, IN	Batesville
Ryan Regula	5-10	Sprints	Sr.	Johnstown, PA	Bishop McCort
Chris Rodriguez	5-10	Distance	Fr.	Kelso, WA	Kelso
Mike Schubert	6-5	Throws	So.	Naperville, IL	Benet Academy
Andy Scott	5-10	Distance	Fr.	Portland, OR	Jesuit
Patrick Smyth	5-9	Distance	Fr.	Salt Lake City, UT	Judge Memorial
Matt Van Antwerp	6-2	Distance	Sr.	Oak Ridge, NJ	Jefferson Township
Kaleb Van Ort	6-1	Distance	Sr.	Waterloo, IN	DeKalb
Kevin Veselik	6-2	Distance	Fr.	Clarendon Hills, IL	Benet Academy
Dave Viken	5-9	Pole Vault	Jr.	Arlington Heights, IL	Rolling Meadows
Jake Watson	6-0	Distance	So.	Stillwater, MN	Stillwater Area
Austin Weaver	5-8	Distance	Sr.	Brentwood, TN	Franklin Road Academy
Michael Webber	5-9	Sprints	So.	Salt Lake City, UT	Judge Memorial
Austin Wechter	5-10	Sprints	So.	Shelby, OH	Shelby
Phillip Whelan	6-1	Throws	Fr.	Louisville, KY	St. Xavier
Trey Williams	6-3	Sprints	Sr.	Charlotte, NC	Crown Point (IN)

Head Coach: Joe Piane (Loras '69 – 32nd season at Notre Dame; 31st season as head coach)

Assistant Coach (Sprints/Hurdles): John Millar (Western Ontario '78)

Assistant Coach (Jumps): Scott Winsor (Loras '87)

Assistant Coach (Throws): B.J. Linnenbrink (Florida State '02)



Cupboard Well-Stocked for Irish Women's Track & Field Team

Notre Dame is strong in all areas and poised to claim first BIG EAST title since 2002

The NFL's New England Patriots have won three of the past four Super Bowls without a great number of high-priced superstars or show-stopping talents. Rather, each member of the team merely shows up and does his job to the best of his ability, contributing to a total team effort that is truly championship-worthy. The 2005-06 Notre Dame women's track team will look to copy this recipe for success and return to the top of the awards podium at the BIG EAST Championships for the first time in four years.

Among the returning athletes with the most potential for individual success are junior sprinters Maryann Erigha and Okechi Ogbuokiri. Erigha set a school record in the 100 meters and qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Championships in two events. She will focus on the short sprints and hope to add to her 100-meter BIG EAST title from a year ago. At the same time, Ogbuokiri should be

one of the nation's top 400-meter runners after a season in which she won the BIG EAST indoor 400-meter title and qualified for the NCAA outdoor meet. Contributing

to the team's depth in the sprints will be sophomores Brienne Davis and Crysta Swayzer, both of whom will see time on the primary sprint relays, giving the Irish a solid nucleus upon which to return to the form that saw Notre Dame send six relay teams to the NCAA Championships in 2002 and 2003 (four in the 4x100, two in the 4x400).

"I'm excited about the potential of this year's group," sprints and hurdles coach John Millar said. "I saw big improvement last year in the sophomores from their freshman year and am anticipating similar results from this year's class."

"Maryann had an outstanding sophomore year, but she was hindered at the end of the year by injury," Millar continued. "I'm hoping she will be able to build on this because she has the potential to be an NCAA finalist both indoor and outdoors. Okechi also had a breakthrough year and we expect big things from her this year. After qualifying for the NCAA outdoor meet, she has the final as her goal this season."

Sophomore Dominique Manning was one of the country's top hurdlers coming out of high school, and she will look to build back up to that form after logging a pair of first-place finishes during her initial indoor season. Manning also garnered all-BIG EAST honors as a member of Notre Dame's 4x100-meter relay team that finished second at the league's outdoor meet. Fellow sophomore Antonia Bethel did not compete last year, but was a two-sport letterwinner in high school and set the Turlock (Calif.) High School record in the 300-meter hurdles. Freshman Alyissa Hasan is a multi-sport star out of Williamsville, N.Y., who has performed particularly well in the hurdles and long jump and could see immediate action in both events.

"I'm looking to see if Dominique Manning will be able to return to her high school performances where she was one of the top-ranked hurdlers in the country," Millar added. "Antonia will also give us some good depth in this event and we're looking forward to seeing what Alyissa brings to the table this year."

Notre Dame's jump group will feature some old and new faces. Senior Stacey Cowan and fifth-year senior Emily Loomis will be the high jump standouts among the leapers, with Cowan being a 2004 All-American and the recipient of six all-BIG EAST honors and Loomis also a former BIG EAST champion (2003, outdoor). Senior Laura Huarte, the 2004 BIG EAST outdoor pole vault champion is expected to contribute as well, while junior Cassie Gullickson is an experienced jumper with ability in the triple, long, and high jumps.

The Notre Dame jumpers also will get a significant boost from several incoming freshmen, in particular Mary Saxer, Lauren Biscardi and Kate Mattoon. Saxer holds the U.S. high school and junior record, as well as the under-17 world record in the pole vault after a 14-3 indoor effort last year (the first women's high school pole vaulter ever to clear 14 feet). She is also an excellent long jumper, with a personal best of more than 18

feet. Biscardi is a talented high jumper who won two national titles in 2004, is a four-time All-American (twice each in the indoor and outdoor seasons), and has cleared 5-10 - in her prep career. Mattoon was an All-American in the pole vault as a high school senior last year and has been ranked nationally for the past three years, with a personal best of 12.9.

"We have a great group of jumpers, with a strong mix of veterans and rookies," jumps coach Scott Winsor said. "The talent level from top to bottom is probably deeper than it's ever been for the jumps crew. Staying healthy is the key factor, along with leadership and guidance from our upperclassmen. This group's potential is tremendous, and their goals are nothing less than making the NCAAs, along with winning the BIG EAST title."

"Emily and Stacey are our two veteran leaders, both of whom have made it to the NCAAs and Stacey is an All-American," Winsor continued. "Both of them have a great spirit and desire to succeed, which makes them excellent leaders by example. Laura is also a very talented athlete, who just goes about her business and gets the job done. Cassie could be a major factor in both the triple jump and high jump at conference and we're looking for a breakout year from her to reach her potential."

"Mary's potential is unlimited," Winsor concluded. "She will be a major factor in both events at the BIG EAST, and barring injury, she will be a factor in the NCAA pole vault. Lauren should also be a major contributor at the conference meet, and she has great potential for the future. Kate has vaulted very well and has room for a tremendous amount of improvement. Like the others, she could be a great asset to this team's success."

The Irish throwers are capable of thriving on the shoulders of Meghan Horn alone. The senior has marks among the top all-time Notre Dame performances in several events, and has three all-BIG EAST honors to her credit. If she continues to show her usual improvement, Horn could be in for a big year in 2006. Helping out Horn will be freshman Anna Weber, a highly-regarded standout from Indianapolis who will see considerable action as a rookie.

"Meghan Horn is coming off her best year ever, and we want to continue to build on that success and try to get Meghan to the NCAA's," throws coach B.J. Linnenbrink said. "We also added one freshmen this year, Anna Weber, who was highly recruited coming out of high school. I look for her to make an immediate impact in the BIG EAST."

The Notre Dame women's distance group looks to be a force to be reckoned with, led by seniors Molly Huddle and Stephanie Madia. Huddle saw her 2004-05 track season spoiled by injury after a second-place finish in the indoor 5,000 meters, and should be ready to garner more NCAA honors in 2006. Madia had a junior season to remember, qualifying for both the indoor and outdoor NCAA meets and taking All-America honors in the outdoor 5,000 meters. With sophomore Sunni Olding also in the mix, the Irish should be very deep in the 3,000 and 5,000-meter distances.

Notre Dame's distance crew also features a strong 3,000-meter steeplechase runner in Katie DeRusso. The junior has continually improved since taking up the steeple in her rookie campaign, advancing to the NCAA Midwest Regional in that event last year, and she should place well in both the conference and regional competitions this season. Junior Brienne Schmidt and sophomore Jacqueline Carter are the returning middle distance specialists for Notre Dame this season. Schmidt was a member of last year's Irish distance medley relay squad that finished second at the BIG EAST indoor meet and earned all-conference honors. Carter almost picked up her own all-BIG EAST citation last season, winding up fifth in the 1,000-meter run at the league's indoor championship.

Freshmen Ramsey Kavan and Morgan Schulz will help the Irish in the distances. Kavan, a two-time Gatorade Track Athlete of the Year in South Dakota, sports a 4:48 mile personal best and Schulz starred at Colorado's Smoky Hill High School, one of the most prolific girls long distance programs in the nation over the past several years. Meanwhile, rookie Megan Flynn, a local product from Mishawaka Marian High School who was the Indiana state champion at 800 meters last year, will have an opportunity to make an early statement in the middle distances.

"Beyond our All-Americans in Molly, Stephanie and Sunni, we have a lot of kids who are capable of being big-time conference level athletes," women's distance coach Tim Connelly said. "We have to see if they can step up. Katie DeRusso scored points at the conference meet and did a nice job getting to the regional and running a PR there. Jackie Carter and Brienne Schmidt did well in the indoor conference meet, and now they have to take that next step and get to the regional level."

"Both Ramsey and Morgan give us some fresh blood in the distances and they'll get started early by competing with our cross country team," Connelly continued. "We've also got Megan Flynn coming in, who is someone who will definitely be able to help us on the track in the 800 and 1,000. I think we've got most of our bases covered from the 800 meters on up."

"I'm excited about the potential of this year's group. I saw big improvement last year in the sophomores from their freshman year and am anticipating similar results from this year's class."

— John Millar
sprints and hurdles coach





Name	Ht.	Event	Class	Hometown	High School
Rebecca Antas	5-6	Distance	So.	Wheaton, IL	North
Becca Bauman	5-8	Distance	Fr.	Grand Rapids, MI	Catholic Central
Stephanie Best	5-3	Throws	Jr.	Dallas, TX	Bishop Lynch
Antonia Bethel	5-11	Sprints	So.	Turlock, CA	Turlock
Lauren Biscardi	5-10	Jumps	Fr.	Wading River, NY	Shoreham Wading River
Elena Brandewie	5-7	Distance	Fr.	Valparaiso, IN	Andean
Jacqueline Carter	5-5	Distance	So.	Boise, ID	Bishop Kelly
Stacey Cowan	5-8	Jumps	Sr.	Ferndale, WA	Ferndale
Brienne Davis	5-6	Sprints	So.	Grand Prairie, TX	South Grand Prairie
Mary Debevec	5-8	Distance	So.	Media, PA	Cardinal O'Hara
Katie DeRusso	5-6	Distance	Jr.	Fairport, NY	Fairport
Maryann Erigha	5-7	Sprints	Jr.	Stone Mountain, GA	Chamblee
Megan Flynn	5-8	Distance	Fr.	South Bend, IN	Mishawaka Marian
Cassie Gullickson	5-7	Jumps	Jr.	Palm Beach Gardens, FL	Brentwood (TN)
Donn Harris	5-11	Distance	Fr.	Newburgh, NY	Newburgh Free Academy
Alyssa Hasan	5-9	Multi	Fr.	Williamsville, NY	Williamsville South
Rachel Heneghan	5-9	Distance	So.	Zionsville, IN	Zionsville
Meghan Horn	6-0	Throws	Sr.	Upper Sandusky, OH	Upper Sandusky
Laura Huarte	5-8	Pole Vault	Sr.	Shingle Springs, CA	St. Francis
Molly Huddle	5-4	Distance	Sr.	Elmira, NY	Notre Dame
Katie Jannazo	5-8	Jumps	So.	Ft. Walton Beach, FL	Choctawhatchee
Ramsey Kavan	5-8	Distance	Fr.	Yankton, SD	Yankton
Loryn King	5-6	Distance	Sr.	Arlington Heights, IL	St. Viator
Amy Kohlmeier	5-6	Distance	Jr.	Samia, Ontario	St. Patrick's
Jennifer Leong	5-4	Sprints	So.	Jericho, NY	Jericho
Erin Locke	5-9	Distance	So.	Wakeeney, KS	Trego Community
Emily Loomis	6-1	High Jump	Sr.	Fort Wayne, IN	Bishop Luers
Stephanie Madia	5-6	Distance	Sr.	Wexford, PA	North Allegheny
Domenique Manning	5-3	Hurdles	So.	Riverside, CA	John W. North
Jean Marinangeli	5-2	Distance	Sr.	Arlington Heights, IL	Buffalo Grove
Kate Mattoon	5-4	Pole Vault	Fr.	San Diego, CA	Rancho Bernardo
Ann Mazur	5-5	Distance	Jr.	Pittsburgh, PA	Seton-LaSalle
Meagan McGinley	5-5	Distance	So.	Doylestown, PA	Central Bucks West
Kahki Mealey	5-6	Distance	Fr.	Meadowbrook, PA	Gwynedd Mercy Academy
Okechi Ogbuokiri	5-10	Sprints	Jr.	Willingboro, NJ	Willingboro
Sunni Olding	5-9	Distance	So.	Minster, OH	Minster
Julie Opet	5-5	Distance	So.	Wayne, PA	Radnor
Allyson Parker	5-6	Distance	So.	Macungie, PA	Emmaus
Elizabeth Philipp	5-8	Distance	So.	Kingwood, TX	Kingwood
Heidi Rocha	5-2	Distance	Fr.	Palmdale, CA	Lancaster Paraclete
Mary Saxer	5-6	Jumps	Fr.	Lancaster, NY	Central
Brianne Schmidt	5-7	Distance	Jr.	Miles City, MT	Custer County District
Catherine Schmidt	5-7	Sprints	Sr.	Orange, CA	Mater Dei
Morgan Schulz	5-5	Distance	Fr.	Centennial, CO	Aurora Smoky Hill
Crysta Swayzer	5-6	Sprints	So.	Houston, TX	Westbury Senior
Christine Walls	5-9	Distance	Fr.	Arlington, VA	Bishop O'Connell
Jenny Walls	5-8	Distance	Sr.	Arlington, VA	Bishop Kelley (OK)
Emily Wauford	5-8	Distance	Fr.	Midlothian, VA	Maggie Walker Governor's School
Anna Weber	6-0	Throws	Fr.	Indianapolis, IN	Roncalli
Elizabeth Webster	5-4	Distance	Sr.	Dearborn, MI	Divine Child
Nicole Yergler	5-8	Sprints	Fr.	Coto de Caza, CA	Santa Margarita Catholic

Head Coach: Joe Piane (Loras '69 – 32nd season at Notre Dame; 31st season as head coach)

Assistant Coach (Distance): Tim Connelly (Notre Dame '83)

Assistant Coach (Sprints/Hurdles): John Millar (Western Ontario '78)

Assistant Coach (Jumps): Scott Winsor (Loras '87)

Assistant Coach (Throws): B.J. Linnenbrink (Florida State '02)



Irish Men's Cross Country Team Has Table Set For Possible Championship Feast

Notre Dame returns its top five runners with a focus on an NCAA Championship trophy

During the past 17 seasons, the Notre Dame men's cross country team established itself as a consistently strong performer at the NCAA Championships, making 14 trips to the national meet and registering 10 top-10 finishes in that time. After a one-year hiatus in 2003, the Irish returned to the NCAA Championships last season, entering the event ranked fifth in the nation. However, an 11th-place showing left veteran head coach Joe Piane and his charges dissatisfied and hungry to return

Notre Dame to its perch among the country's elite programs in 2005.

"We had a great season up until the NCAAs," Piane said. "We went from being totally unranked to being ranked fifth in the country. Then, we just ran poorly at the NCAAs. We've been trying to debate why that happened, but I guess we need to use that as a motivator for this year.

We ended up 11th and the fourth- and fifth-place teams were both teams we had beaten twice. It was a disappointing finish to say the least.

"We need to understand that no one is going to roll over for us," Piane continued. "We just didn't run with the right vigor and commitment and that's not going to happen this year. If you talk to those kids, they'll tell you the same thing. They're all really fired up. They've learned that they have to do every little thing that it takes, and if the weather is inclement they have to turn that into a positive. If the weather is great, then we're going to run great. They've also learned that they don't need to take a back seat to anybody."

While still feeling the sting from last year, Piane has reason to be excited about the prospects for the Irish this season, with a very experienced group of returning runners in the fold, highlighted by six of the team's seven NCAA Championship participants from a year ago. Among these harriers are the team's co-captains — senior Tim Moore and fifth-year senior Sean O'Donnell.

Moore served as a co-captain on last year's squad and has been the only Irish runner to compete at each of the last three NCAA Championships. The individual champion at



Seniors Tim Moore (434), Sean O'Donnell (436) and Kaleb Van Ort (438) each earned all-conference honors last season, helping Notre Dame win the BIG EAST Championship.

the 2004 National Catholic Championship, Moore finished 43rd in last year's NCAA meet after taking ninth at the Great Lakes Regional. Already boasting three all-BIG EAST honors, Moore will be looking to add a fourth to his resume this season, along with his first All-America citation.

Meanwhile, Notre Dame retains another experienced leader in O'Donnell, who was a co-captain and all-BIG EAST selection for the Irish last year. He brings consistency and stability to the Irish top seven, as evidenced by his ninth-place finish at the '04 BIG EAST meet and 19th-place showing at last year's Great Lakes Regional. An accomplished student as well, O'Donnell was named to the 2005 ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America Third Team, posting a 3.854 grade-point average as he earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering back in May.

While Moore and O'Donnell lend veteran savvy to the Irish roster, Notre Dame's most exciting harrier could be junior Kurt Benninger. A two-time All-American during the 2004-05 indoor track season, Benninger prefaced those honors by evolving into a top threat on the cross country course, logging four top-10 finishes in the five meets he ran, while also being the first Irish runner across the line at the NCAA Championship. On the track, he went on to become just the third Notre Dame runner

ever to run a sub-four minute mile while garnering All-America citations in the mile and distance medley relay. Early in the outdoor track season, Benninger also broke the school record in the 5,000 meters by five seconds before seeing his year truncated by an injury.

Another possible frontrunner for Notre Dame this season is senior Kaleb Van Ort. A two-time all-BIG EAST choice, Van Ort also finished eighth at the Great Lakes Regional a year ago. After qualifying for the 2005 NCAA Outdoor Track Championships in the 10,000 meters, Van Ort figures to be the fourth Irish runner gunning for cross country All-America honors this fall.

Rounding out the probable top five for Notre Dame is senior Vinny Ambrico. Prior to last season, Ambrico had been known primarily as a strong middle distance runner for the track team. However, in 2004, he improved enough to be Notre Dame's main fifth runner, a development that would be critical in clinching a one-point Irish victory at the BIG EAST meet. Heading into this

fall, Ambrico is out to continue his improvement and tighten up the spread between the top five Irish runners.

"It's kind of an eclectic group," Piane observed. "You have Tim Moore, who was a Foot Locker national champion in high school and was at a pretty high level when he came in. Kaleb Van Ort was a pretty good runner out of Indiana who has made himself into a national class runner. You take Kurt Benninger, who was very good as a miler and half-miler in high school, but has evolved into a terrific distance guy. He's one of the best 5,000-meter runners in Canada now. Then you take Sean O'Donnell, who is a coach's dream, who was a 4:27 high school miler. He has turned himself from an average high school runner into a guy that has become awfully good. It's not a group that came from the same background — they weren't all high school studs. Some of those kids have really evolved into greatness."

Other prospective contributors for Notre Dame in 2005 will be seniors A.J. Andrassy and Austin Weaver, junior Todd Ptacek, and sophomores Dan Curran, Brett Adams, and Jake Watson. Andrassy competed with the Irish at the 2004 NCAA Championship and brings valuable big-meet experience to fill out the team, while Weaver is a two-time monogram winner.

Ptacek was prepared to join the varsity squad last season before a hamstring injury





sidelined him for the remainder of the campaign. He bounced back with an excellent track season featuring a 4:05 mile and 9:05 steeplechase, and he appears ready to assert himself in the Irish rotation. Curran earned a monogram during his rookie season at Notre Dame and should compete among the top 10 Irish runners this season.

Though Piame may not need to rely heavily on his incoming freshmen to ensure a strong team, there are several incoming athletes that will add quality depth to the Irish roster. Robbie Barany earned All-America honors with an eighth-place finish at the 2004 Foot Locker Cross Country Championship, capping off a stellar high school career in Yakima, Wash., at Eisenhower High School, one of the country's elite prep cross country programs. Another freshman, Patrick Smyth, also figures to be in the mix after an outstanding career at Judge Memorial High School in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"I've never had a team this deep," said Piame, who is in his 31st season at Notre Dame. "We're probably 14-18 kids deep. We will take a big hit this year, but that just means that the Robbie Baranys and the Patrick Smyths will have a golden opportunity. They could really step in this season, but as deep as we are, they'll struggle to be in the top seven. I look at guys like Jake Watson and Todd Ptacek as being in front of those kids right now."

While big things are expected for Notre Dame this season, it already will be a milestone campaign for another reason. On Sept. 30, the Irish will play host to the 50th annual Notre Dame Invitational, which has evolved into one of the nation's oldest intercollegiate cross country races. The Notre Dame Invitational, which was created in 1956 by legendary Irish coach (and Canadian Track Hall of Famer) Alex Wilson, is widely considered one of the most competitive regular season meets in the country.

"The Notre Dame Invitational has grown into a very good national meet," Piame commented. "It's a good opportunity to run against teams outside your region, so we attract teams from all over the country. Last year, people said they thought it was the best non-pre-national or regional meet in the country. I don't know if it was, but hopefully, it will be very similar to that this year. It's a source of pride and when we have a home meet, I don't feel like a cross country coach, I feel like a host."

Notre Dame also will serve as the host site for the 26th National Catholic Championship on Sept. 16, continuing to build an impressive tradition for the meet Piame founded in 1980. Besides their two home events, the Irish will open their season at the Valparaiso Invitational on Sept. 9 and are slated to compete in the Pre-National meet Oct. 15 in Terre Haute, Ind., on the same Lavern Gibson Course that will play host to the NCAA Championships at season's end. Notre Dame will aim to defend its BIG EAST title Oct. 28 at Van Cortland Park in Bronx, N.Y., before turning its focus to the Great Lakes Regional in Bloomington, Ind., on Nov. 12. A visit to the IC4A Championships back in the

2005-06 Men's Cross Country Roster

Name	Ht.	Class	Hometown	High School
Brett Adams	5-8	So.	Davenport, IA	Assumption
Jamal Afridi	5-10	So.	Perrysburg, OH	Maumee Valley
Vinny Ambrico	5-11	Sr.	Alamonte Springs, FL	Choate Rosemary Hall
A.J. Andrassy	5-10	Sr.	Bay Village, OH	St. Ignatius
Robbie Barany	5-11	Fr.	Yakima, WA	Eisenhower
Kurt Benninger	5-11	Jr.	Chepstow, Ontario	Walkerton D.S.S.
Daniel Bradley	5-11	So.	South Bend, IN	St. Joseph's
Billy Buzaid	6-1	Fr.	Verona, NJ	Seton Hall Prep
John Cavanaugh	5-10	So.	Granger, IN	St. Joseph's
Tom Chamney	6-2	Jr.	Tipperary, Ireland	St. Columba's
Daniel Clark	5-10	Fr.	Jackson, MI	Lumen Christi
Dan Curran	5-11	So.	Naperville, IL	North
Adam Currie	5-11	So.	Verdun, Quebec	Richelieu Valley
John Daly, Jr.	6-1	Fr.	Louisville, KY	St. Xavier
Colin Diamond	5-10	Fr.	Wheaton, IL	St. Francis
Zach Einterz	5-8	So.	Zionsville, IN	Community
Benjamin Hess	5-11	Jr.	Lititz, PA	Warwick
Daniel Kuzma	5-7	Fr.	McKees Rocks, PA	Central Catholic
Thomas Longo	5-9	Sr.	Northbrook, IL	Glenbrook
Michael McDonald	6-3	Fr.	Granger, IN	St. Joseph's
Kevin McFadden	6-1	Fr.	New Tripoli, PA	Allentown Central Catholic
James Millar	6-3	So.	Granger, IN	St. Joseph's
Mark Moore	6-5	Fr.	Novi, MI	Novi
Tim Moore	6-1	Sr.	Novi, MI	Novi
Andy O'Connor	6-0	Jr.	Fort Wayne, IN	Homestead
Sean O'Donnell	6-3	Sr.	Kansas City, MO	Rockhurst
Mike Popejoy	5-11	So.	Wheaton, IL	Warrenville South
Todd Ptacek	6-1	Jr.	Benton Harbor, MI	Lake Michigan Catholic
Chris Rodriguez	5-10	Fr.	Kelso, WA	Kelso
Andy Scott	5-10	Fr.	Portland, OR	Jesuit
Patrick Smyth	5-9	Fr.	Salt Lake City, UT	Judge Memorial
Kaleb Van Ort	6-1	Sr.	Waterloo, IN	DeKalb
Kevin Veselik	6-2	Fr.	Clarendon Hills, IL	Benet Academy
Jake Watson	6-0	So.	Stillwater, MN	Stillwater Area
Austin Weaver	5-8	Sr.	Brentwood, TN	Franklin Road Academy

Head Coach: Joe Piame (Loras '69 - 32nd season at Notre Dame; 31st season as head coach)

Bronx on Nov. 19 will serve as a tune-up for the NCAA meet two days later.

"Our first goal is getting to the NCAA meet and I'll be disappointed if we don't do that," Piame said. "I expect us to be in the top 10 and frankly, we have a chance to be on the podium as one of the top four teams. As each goal is attained, it gets a little more difficult. I also think we have a legitimate shot at contending for the BIG EAST title. We won it last year and we return six or seven so we should have a good shot."

"Our guys hold themselves accountable," Piame continued. "I think if we had run exceptionally well at NCAAAs last year, then that might have been a problem, but they know that on any given day, a team can screw up. The NCAA meet is not to see who runs the best, but instead it's a meet to see who screws up the least. There are two examples from last season

— one would be us and the other would be Wisconsin. Wisconsin went into that meet last year highly touted, and everyone basically conceded them the win. Then, Colorado came out and kept moving up and did a great job. Right now, when you look on the Internet, people are making predictions and we're not a factor. I love it."

Numerous ingredients are needed to create a successful team, and it would appear those pieces — talent, experience, depth and an insatiable work ethic — and have been put in place for Notre Dame in 2005. As such, the Irish are poised to add the latest entry in a historical ledger of excellence and bring the program its second national championship.



Irish Women's Cross Country Team Looking to Aim Higher in 2005

Notre Dame welcomes back three All-Americans for a run at the NCAA title

Fresh off its second top-four NCAA finish in three years, Notre Dame welcomes back three All-Americans who have a national title in their sights.

The past three years have been special for the Notre Dame women's cross country program. Three top-10 finishes, including two trips to the awards podium as a top-four squad, would make a good decade for just about any team. However, the Irish are not your average cross country program and the 2005 squad will not be content with a drop-off at the national meet.

While longtime head coach Tim Connelly loses two of the most decorated athletes in school history in three-time cross country All-American Lauren King and 2004 cross country All-America pick Kerry Meagher, the cupboard is hardly bare in terms of returning talent.

"When you run well at the end of the year, that gives you confidence in what you've been doing, so now you go back this year and trust that we are going to be ready when it counts," Connelly said. "Nobody's expectations are higher than my team, and that's the important thing. They're confident, and when you believe in what you doing, that more than anything is probably the key to our success. It's not that we're doing anything different than anybody else in terms of training. We have some really talented kids, but we also have kids that everybody else has who



The Notre Dame women's cross country team has its eyes set on an even bigger prize after last year's fourth-place finish at the NCAA Championship.

believe in each other and what they're doing. That's how you have success.

"The goal every year is to get to the national meet and be in a position to run as well as you can on that day," Connelly continued. "That's what we did last year — we went there and found a way to run really well. I think our kids' expectations are that we want to improve on what we did last year and I think that's a realistic possibility. But the goal every year is to walk away from that situation knowing that we did everything we could do to run well today. The focus last year was just to be as good as we could be, and we knew that we could beat a lot of people, even if we weren't all 100 percent."

Leading the way for the Irish will be senior Molly Huddle. A seven-time All-American (including twice in cross country), Huddle battled through an injury-plagued 2004 season, still managing to contribute to the team's fourth-place NCAA finish. A three-time all-BIG EAST selection, Huddle also placed seventh in the

5,000 meters at the 2004 U.S. Olympic Trials and twice won the NCAA Midwest Regional title in that same event (2003, 2004). Once she has completely recovered from her injuries, Huddle will be poised to make her final season at Notre Dame a memorable one and return to her post as one of the top runners in the nation.

"The key with Molly is to not do too much too soon," Connelly noted. "If we do that, she is talented enough to run with the best, and obviously, the goal and the hope is that she'll be at the level she was at a year ago when she was seventh at the Olympic Trials. I don't see any reason why she can't get back to that."

Another outstanding top returnee is senior Stephanie Madia. Between cross country and track, Madia had a breakthrough year in 2004-05 with two All-America honors and a number of top performances. In addition to being the first Irish runner to cross the finish line at the national meet (23rd place), Madia also earned all-BIG EAST honors at the league meet. She



capped her year by qualifying for both the NCAA indoor and outdoor track meets, garnering All-America honors with a fifth-place finish in the outdoor 5,000 meters.

"Part of the reason why Stephanie was so successful last year was that she knew she had to step up," Connelly said. "Molly wasn't going to be able to get it done and Stephanie looked at the situation and said 'I'm going to get it done.' She's been a great leader ever since she's been here. Last year, she finally had all the pieces together where she could do it on the track, too. What I expect of her isn't any more than she expects of herself. She expects to improve.

The third All-America cornerstone for Notre Dame this season is sophomore Sunni Olding. In just her first year with the Irish, Olding secured a spot among the team's top five runners, winding up third on the team and 32nd overall at the NCAA Championship. Also a sixth-place finisher at the Great Lakes Regional, Olding forms one-third of an extremely fast lead-off trio for the Irish.

A host of athletes will compete to round out Notre Dame's top seven, beginning with seniors Jean Marinangeli, Elizabeth Webster, and Loryn King. Marinangeli and Webster have been mainstays among the team's top 10 runners during the past two seasons, with Marinangeli having participated in the past two national meets. King's career has been stunted at times by injury since her outstanding freshman campaign, but she has the talent to emerge has a solid contributor for this year's squad.

While juniors Katie DeRusso and Amy Kohlmeier each have the ability to carve out regular spots in the Notre Dame lineup, two incoming freshmen may provide Connelly with the biggest potential addition to the team's top seven. Ramsey Kavan and Morgan Schulz join the Irish after highly successful prep campaigns in South Dakota and Colorado, respectively. Kavan, a two-time Gatorade South Dakota Track Athlete of the Year, owns sixth- and third-place finishes in the past two Foot Locker Cross Country Championships, while Schulz took 11th at the prestigious national prep race in 2003. Both athletes will hope to duplicate the success that Olding had in her rookie season at Notre Dame.

"Sunni is one of those kids that has the potential to be a great one," Connelly said. "I also think we have freshmen com-

2005-06 Women's Cross Country Roster				
Name	Ht.	Class	Hometown	High School
Rebecca Antas	5-6	So.	Wheaton, IL	North
Becca Bauman	5-8	Fr.	Grand Rapids, MI	Catholic Central
Elena Brandewie	5-7	Fr.	Valparaiso, IN	Andream
Jacqueline Carter	5-5	So.	Boise, ID	Bishop Kelly
Mary Debevec	5-8	So.	Media, PA	Cardinal O'Hara
Katie DeRusso	5-6	Jr.	Fairport, NY	Fairport
Megan Flynn	5-8	Fr.	South Bend, IN	Mishawaka Marian
Domn Harris	5-11	Fr.	Newburgh, NY	Newburgh Free Academy
Rachel Heneghan	5-9	So.	Zionsville, IL	Zionsville
Molly Huddle	5-4	Sr.	Elmira, NY	Notre Dame
Ramsey Kavan	5-8	Fr.	Yankton, SD	Yankton
Loryn King	5-6	Sr.	Arlington Heights, IL	St. Viator
Amy Kohlmeier	5-6	Jr.	Sarnia, Ontario	St. Patrick's
Erin Locke	5-9	So.	Wekeeneey, KS	Trego Community
Stephanie Madia	5-6	Sr.	Wexford, PA	North Allegheny
Jean Marinangeli	5-2	Sr.	Arlington Heights, IL	Buffalo Grove
Ann Mazur	5-5	Jr.	Pittsburgh, PA	Seton-LaSalle
Meagan McGinley	5-5	So.	Doylestown, PA	Central Bucks West
Kahki Mealey	5-6	Fr.	Meadowbrook, PA	Gwynedd Mercy Academy
Sunni Olding	5-9	So.	Minster, OH	Minster
Julie Opet	5-5	So.	Wayne, PA	Radnor
Allyson Parker	5-6	So.	Macungie, PA	Emmaus
Elizabeth Philipp	5-8	So.	Kingwood, TX	Kingwood
Heidi Rocha	5-2	Fr.	Palmdale, CA	Lancaster Paraclete
Brianne Schmidt	5-7	Jr.	Miles City, MT	Custer County District
Morgan Schulz	5-5	Fr.	Centennial, CO	Aurora Smoky Hill
Christine Walls	5-9	Fr.	Arlington, VA	Bishop O'Connell
Jenny Walls	5-8	Sr.	Arlington, VA	Bishop Kelley (OK)
Emily Wauford	5-8	Fr.	Midlothian, VA	Maggie Walker Governor's School
Elizabeth Webster	5-4	Sr.	Dearborn, MI	Divine Child

Head Coach: Tim Connelly (Notre Dame '83 — 18th season at Notre Dame)

ing in who have that potential as well. Those kids coming in here expect to run at that level right away, and that's one of the things that I'm looking for. I think we have a nice blend. We have some older kids that are ready to make that next step like Katie DeRusso and Amy Kohlmeier. Katie wasn't quite ready physically or emotionally, and Amy has had all kinds of bad luck. She was getting on a roll during the indoor track season and then developed a staph infection in her foot.

"There are people here besides those incoming freshmen that can run at a pretty high level," Connelly added. "Jean Marinangeli has been our sixth or seventh runner for the past couple of years and has the ability to make that step, so we're not just strictly relying on freshmen. We've got enough good people here that can step in and help us get it done. I just point them in

a direction and they motivate each other."

The past three years have seen Notre Dame blaze trails on the women's cross country circuit that have never been seen in the program's history. Now, the challenge will be to sustain and build upon the foundation that has been laid with those three consecutive NCAA top-10 finishes. With the amount of talent, both young and old, on the Irish roster in 2005, it's apparent that the future is exceptionally bright for Notre Dame and it may not be long before championship gold finds its way back to the Golden Dome.



You bet you lose!

Don't bet on it.

NCAA Sports Wagering Contact: 317.917.6222 24-Hour Confidential National Gambling Helpline: 1.800.522.4700



SPORTS
DECEMBER

Dejected and embarrassed, he stated 'I didn't realize it could lead to this,' as he addressed the media about his sports-wagering problem.

University Athlete Busted for Betting

Player out one year, could be permanent ineligible

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is conducting an investigation of the institution. The could lead to penalties for the institution. The indictments issued today went far beyond the collegiate body's investigation, charging the two former athletes with conspiring to fix games. One of those charged appeared today at a press conference. He would say only that he was cooperating with the investigation and that his involvement in the

charges have been filed against two student-athletes, alleging the two in point shaving and illegal gambling incidents that occurred in the late 1990s. The student-athlete—was charged with point shaving and illegal gambling activities. Authorities said he was a bootmaker for the student-athletes and placed bets associated with the indictments leading to the investigation. The investigation at the university.

The two were charged with their outcome. Both were paid to play in a conference. He would say only that he was cooperating with the investigation and that his involvement in the

Both were paid to play in a conference. He would say only that he was cooperating with the investigation and that his involvement in the