

2008 Wyoming Cross Country

University of Wyoming Cross Country
November 24, 2008 ... 5/5/5

Recap of Today:

The combination of cold weather and rolling hills were too much for Mark Korir from Eldoret, Kenya to overcome and become the first three-time All-American in University of Wyoming cross country history today in Terre Haute, Ind., at the NCAA Championships.

At the second mile of the 6.2 mile (10k) course, Korir was cruising along with the lead group. When they entered a decline at the Indiana State University course Korir's back started to tighten up on him. That's when the lead pack began to pull away from not only Korir but the rest of the field.

It was a two-man race from the get-go with sophomore Samuel Chelanga from Liberty and senior Galen Rupp from the University of Oregon. Chelanga sprinted out from the start and Rupp had to play catch up, he caught him about half way through the race and ran with him the rest of the way. Neither of them made their move to pull away until the last 400-meters. They came down the home stretch and that's when Rupp led for the first time in the 10k race. He crossed the line with a time of 29:03, five seconds in front of Chelanga.

With the top-40 individuals crossing the line automatically named All-American, Korir was left off that list for the first time in his career with his 71st-place finish and time of 30:38.

Korir the two-time All-American and reigning Conference Champion was also named to the Mountain West Conference 10th Anniversary Cross Country Team, ended his cross country career with a sour taste in his mouth.

"Mark has had an incredible career here at UW and he will be sorely missed on the cross country course," said head coach Randy Cole. "It just wasn't his day with his back locking up on him but he still gave everything he had and I am very proud of him for that.

Cross Country Recap:

As the season came to a close following the NCAA Mountain Regional meet in Fort Collins, Colo., UW head coach Randy Cole ended the season in good spirits for the Cowgirls.

"All-in-all we had significant a break through both in our training and our race performances throughout the season," said Cole. "We finished the season strong and as a team had our best performances from top to bottom."

The Cowgirls finished ninth out of 18 teams and named two to the All-Mountain Region team in junior Emily Higgins and sophomore Alysha Davis both for the first time in their careers. Higgins was one spot shy of qualifying for the NCAA Championships and running for All-American honors.

"We have really got a good core of young ladies coming back for next season and they have great camaraderie within themselves," said Cole. "The future is very exciting and they should continue to improve throughout the indoor and outdoor track and field seasons.

"We also say farewell to our lone senior on the team in Nikki Peterson, she has had a great attitude throughout her entirely injury plagued career. She is a great student of the game and will hopefully become healthy before the indoor and

2008 NCAA Championships

<u>Name</u>	<u>Men</u> <u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>
1. Mark Korir	71st	30:38

outdoor seasons."

As for the Cowboys, the 2008 NCAA Championships coming to a close for senior Mark Korir. Unfortunately he came down with a tight back to end his cross country career a little short of becoming the first three-time All-American in cross country history. Fortunately he was named Mountain West Conference Athlete of the Year, he was crowned the MWC Champion for the first time in his career, named to the All-Mountain Region team for the third time in his career and was named the MWC Athlete of the Week four times this season.

Along with Korir, freshman Ryan Griesbach took some hardware home from the MWC Championships for himself earning the MWC Freshman of the Year award for his 41st-place finish tops among true-freshman.

"The men really came together nicely towards the end of the year with strong performances at conference and at the regional meet," said Cole. "They showed a glimpse of what they are capable of and what we expect to see next season and throughout the track and field season.

"There were three seniors on this team that are going to be missed not only on the course but off as well. Michael Huntington really had a breakthrough season and it was nice to see him wrap up at conference on a good note. Brett Schuler was a very consistent runner for us and will continue to be during the track and field seasons. As for Mark, what can you say about him that hasn't already been said, he will be sorely missed," finished Cole.

