

Irish Will Display Full Strength At Notre Dame Invitational

2001 Schedule

SEPTEMBER

7	Sat.	Valparaiso Invitational Valparaiso, Ind.	M-1st W-2nd
21	Fri.	National Catholic Notre Dame, Ind.	M-1st W-2nd
29	Sat.	Central Collegiates Kalamazoo, MI	M-1st W-4th

OCTOBER

5	Fri.	Notre Dame Invitational Notre Dame, Ind.	4:15 pm
13	Sat.	Pre-National Meet Greenville, SC	TBA
26	Fri.	BIG EAST Championships Van Cortland Park, NY	TBA

NOVEMBER

10	Sat.	NCAA Great Lakes Region Terre Haute, Ind.	TBA
19	Mon.	NCAA Championships Greenville, SC	TBA

All home meets run at the N.D. Golf Course
All times local to site

2001 MONDO

Men's Cross Country Poll

Oct. 2, 2001

Rank	Team	Region	Points	Prev.
1.	Colorado (14)	MT	398	1
2.	Stanford (1)	W	379	2
3.	Arkansas (1)	SC	363	3
4.	Wisconsin	GL	348	6
5.	NOTRE DAME	GL	340	4
6.	Portland	W	302	13
7.	Providence	NE	282	5
8.	NC State	SE	281	8
9.	Villanova	NE	278	7
10.	N. Arizona	MT	274	9
11.	Colorado State	MT	229	NR
12.	Michigan	GL	227	14
13.	Duke	SE	211	NR
14.	Wake Forest	SE	193	23
15.	Arizona State	MT	154	22
16.	Michigan State	GL	126	NR
17.	Brigham Young	W	115	15
18.	Oregon	W	104	16
19.	E. Michigan	GL	92	24
20.	Weber State	MA	89	18
21.	Alabama	S	62	21
22.	Georgetown	NE	59	10
23.	Iona	W	53	17
24.	William & Mary	W	51	11
25.	Nebraska	MW	50	NR

Irish enter Notre Dame Invitational this weekend at full strength: It is the halfway point of the 2001 cross country season and the Notre Dame men's and women's teams are ready to put their best foot forward at this weekend's Notre Dame Invitational. Run at the Notre Dame Golf Course on the west side of campus, this weekend's race is not just the last home meet of the season for both Irish teams. This Friday's meet marks the last non-championship level race of the season and the last opportunity for the top Irish runners to develop their team chemistry.

It will be the first time the Irish women's team will be at full strength this season. Junior **Jen Handley** has developed into the team leader after winning the 2001 National Catholic Invitational (on the same course as the Notre Dame Invitational) two weeks ago. Right behind Handley at the National Catholic was sophomore **Megan Johnson**, Notre Dame's top finisher in the Invitational last season. Johnson and Handley will be running just their second races of the season and will be anxious to show the field just how talented the Irish women's cross country roster is.

Handley and Johnson will not be alone at the head of the pack when the Irish run this weekend. Freshman **Christi Arnerich** and junior **Jennifer Fibuch** should be among the leaders of the Notre Dame contingent as well. Arnerich was Notre Dame's top finisher at the Valparaiso Invitational earlier this season and placed 19th in the National Catholic. Fibuch posted an 11th-place finish at the National Catholic - the third-best finish on the team.

The Irish women also will have freshman **Lauren King** in the blue division race this weekend. King, who finished 26th at the World Junior Cross Country Championships last year, has not competed yet this season due to a prolonged high school track and field schedule that ran late into the summer.

The men's team is coming off an impressive showing at the Central Collegiates last weekend. The Irish "B" team domi-

nated the field, placing all of its runners in the top 15 to earn the team title. It was a chance for many of the Notre Dame harriers to earn a spot as one of the top eight runners entering the championship season. The performance last weekend by all of the Irish runners might make that decision a difficult one for men's head coach **Joe Piane**. A solid performance by any Notre Dame runner in the gold or blue division race on Friday could propel him into the top eight of the fifth-ranked team in the nation.

The men's team also features two returning Notre Dame Invitational Champions in this Friday's race - senior **Ryan Shay**, the '99 champ, and classmate **Luke Watson**, who out ran a highly-competitive field to claim the individual title in 2000. Shay and Watson, along with sophomore **Todd Mobley**, finished shoulder-to-shoulder two weeks ago as Shay captured his fourth National Catholic Invitational title.

The veteran leadership does not end with the top three Irish runners. Seniors **Marc Striowski** and **Pat Conway** give Notre Dame one of the top-five groups in the nation. Sophomores **Mario Bird** and **Brian Kerwin** also have been very impressive this season.

Notre Dame Invitational overview: Traditionally one of the top meets in the Midwest, the Notre Dame Invitational is a perfect tune up for any cross country team that plans to run the Pre-National meet in Greenville, SC, on Oct. 13. The ND Invite features five races, beginning with the women's gold division at 2 p.m.

The men's gold division will run at 2:45 p.m., followed by an open race at 3:30 p.m. The meet continues with the women's blue division race at 4:15 p.m. and wraps up with the men's blue division race at 5 p.m.

Among the top teams in attendance will be Indiana, Utah State, Michigan, Edinboro College and Hillsdale College. Results will be available on the official Notre Dame athletic website: www.und.com.