



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 13, 2006

Seattle Pacific Takes A Run At Nationals Falcons Seeking 1st Top-5 NCAA Finish Since '86 in Florida

Finishing in style. They have come a long way, and now must go farther still. Seattle Pacific University sends its women's cross country team 2500 miles across the country to the NCAA Division II Championships Saturday morning (Nov. 11) in Pensacola, Fla. Ranked No. 6 in the nation, the young Falcons are among 24 teams vying for the crown on a 6000-meter course at the Escambia County Equestrian Center.

Best in a generation? So far this autumn, the SPU women have accomplished feats reminiscent of 20 years ago, when the Falcons last finished among the top three nationally. They won the Great Northwest Athletic Conference, came within four points of the West Region championship and their top scorer claimed the individual prize. This is the first national qualification since 1999 and the last top-five placement was 1986, when Seattle Pacific was third.

Fountain of youth. Coach **Doris Heritage** has got a squad on the upswing. Without a single senior and her top seven featuring three freshmen and two sophomores, Heritage is bound to back in the hunt again and again. Any because they're young, and because they're outside the top five in the rankings, there is relatively little pressure, in theory. Rather, the pressure is on the likes of Grand Valley State, the No. 1-ranked team and last year's runnerup; Western State (Co.), the No. 2 team and a five-time champion; and Adams State, the three-time defending champion, currently ranked third.

The wild West. After some close calls which kept them from making nationals the last two years, the Falcons made it rather easily by taking second to Cal State L.A., 67-70, at the West Regional Nov. 4. Four teams qualified, including UC San Diego and Chico State. Despite being beaten by a fellow Div. II team for the first time, SPU moved up two spots in the rankings, and it was the best regional finish since winning the West in 1996.

No more two-timing. The top harrier in the West only began training with her team last week. **Jessica Pixler** (Fr., Sammamish, Wa./Eastlake) began November as a reserve defender on the SPU soccer team, suiting-up for a first-round playoff win in La Jolla, Ca. On the following morning she joined the cross country team at the Sacramento airport, and on the following day she won the West by over 10 seconds. Pixler is now undefeated in four races. Most of her training prior to the regional was done on her own, with running before or after her soccer practices and games.

Last time out. Pixler became Seattle Pacific's first regional champion since Bente Moe in 1985, and Moe went on to win the NCAA title as well (and four more on the track as well). Pixler may lack Moe's experience (an Olympic marathoner for Norway), but possesses more footspeed and the same desire to compete. She held back initially in the regional, then went to the front and coasted to first in 20:56.

Last time out. Beyond Pixler, the Falcons once again exhibited quality depth. The top five all finished among the top 22, including **Jane Larson** (Fr., Fall City, Wa./Cedar Park Christian) in 14th place (21:54), **Karin Rohde** (Jr., Bellingham, Wa./Mt. Baker) in 16th (22:00) and **Suzie Strickler** (So., Richland, Wa.) in 17th (22:02). **Megan Wrightman** (Jr., Bend,

2006 CROSS COUNTRY

SPU Quick Facts

Coach—Doris Heritage, 29th year
Assistants—Erika Daligcon, Lane Seeley

This Week's Meet

Sat., Nov. 18, 7:15 a.m. PST
NCAA Championships
Escambia Cty. Equestrian Ctr, Pensacola, Fl.

Season Highlights To Date

- Seattle Pacific successfully defended its GNAC women's championship and finished second in the West Region
- Jessica Pixler won the GNAC and regional individual titles and also her two other starts
- The Falcon women are going to nationals for the first time since 1999
- Pixler and Jane Larson made the all-region teams

Women's National Rankings

1. Grand Valley State (Mi.)
 2. Western State (Co.)
 3. Adams State (Co.)
 4. Harding (Ar.)
 5. Cal State L.A.
 6. Seattle Pacific
- also
10. UC San Diego
 11. Chico State
 19. Alaska Anchorage

Women's West Region Rankings

1. Cal State L.A.
2. Seattle Pacific
3. Chico State
4. Alaska Anchorage
5. UC San Diego

Men's West Region Rankings

1. Chico State
 2. Cal Poly Pomona
 3. Alaska Anchorage
- also
9. Seattle Pacific

Or.) was 22nd in 22:15 and **Mary Moriarty** (So., Seattle, Wa./Ballard), who had been one of the team's top two scorers in the first five meets, was 23rd in 22:16. By finishing among the top 15, both Pixler and Larson made the all-region team. **Kate Harline** (Fr., Orem, Ut.) rounds out Heritage's squad for nationals. Harline was 29th (22:39) in the regional and has twice been the No. 5 scorer in meets.

Trail mix. Heritage was unanimously voted the GNAC women's coach of the year last week. It's the second time that she has won the women's award, and in 2004 she was the men's coach of the year...The cross country meet is part of the inaugural Fall Sports Festival, which includes championships for lacrosse, soccer (m/w) and volleyball...Opening ceremonies are Wednesday...Adams State has won a total of seven titles, all since 1992, and was second eight times. The last winner from the West was Cal Poly Pomona in '83...Rohde (steeplechase) and Moriarty (3000) got a taste of national meet experience last spring on the track...Seattle Pacific has finished among the top nine in 10 of their previous trips to a national meet, placing as high as second at the '79 and '80 AIAW and third in the '83 and '86 NCAAs...Besides Moe, Joan Corbin of SPU won a national title in 1979 at the AIAW Championships. Moe was second in '86 and '87...The last All-American was Heather Wallace in 1999, and the last top-10 finisher was Charlotte Jensen (6th) in 1990...The national meet course will be on a trail through a forest and around three small lakes on the equestrian grounds. It was the same course used by host West Florida for a preview meet Sept. 30...The travel party departs Tuesday night on a redeye flight, arriving in Pensacola early Wednesday morning. Forecasts for Saturday call for sun and a high of 66.

2006 Men's Cross Country Roster

Name	Yr	Hometown (High School)	2006 Race Finishes (Team/Overall)						
			Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7
Jeff Ayers	So	Edmonds, Wa. (King's)	10/32	9/234	8/53	9/106	10/67	dnc	
Bjorn Bostrom	Sr	La Conner, Wa. (Bellingham)	1/9	1/48	dnc	1/14	1/9	2/44	
Brian Cronrath	Jr	Battle Ground, Wa. (Battle Grnd)	dnc	4/87	1/10	2/24	2/14	1/38	
Scott Felch	Fr	Snohomish, Wa. (Marysville-Pil.)	9/31	7/184	6/41	7/82	9/61	dnc	
Michael Gavareski	Sr	Bellingham, Wa. (Bellingham)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Doug Gibson	Sr	Yakima, Wa. (Riverside Christian)	2/11	DNF	3/22	5/37	5/27	5/62	
Andrew Henning	Fr	Mountlake Terrace, Wa. (M. Terr.)	dnc	10/239	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Dan Larimer	Sr	Libby, Mt. (Libby)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Carlo Lozano	Jr	Seattle, Wa. (Blanchet)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	7/45	7/94	
Chad Meis	Fr	Renton, Wa. (Seattle Christian)	3/13	5/102	4/24	4/31	3/18	4/58	
Ryan Phillips	Sr	West Linn, Or. (West Linn)	6/22	6/152	5/30	6/50	6/42	6/82	
James Rosser	Sr	Seattle, Wa. (Highline)	4/15	3/79	2/13	3/26	4/22	3/48	
Scott Seamster	Jr	Seattle, Wa. (Blanchet/BCC)	8/30	8/185	dnc	8/88	8/58	dnc	
Eddie Strickler	Sr	Richland, Wa. (Richland)	5/16	2/63	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Mike Zetterberg	So	Tacoma, Wa. (Curtis)	7/29	dnc	7/43	dnc	dnc	dnc	

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			Wk 1	Wk 2	Wk 3	Wk 4	Wk 5	Wk 6	Wk 7
Lisa Anderberg	Fr	Edmonds, Wa. (Kamiak)	5/12	9/74	9/21	10/52	9/25	dnc	
Kim Beaman	So	Emily, Mn. (Crosby Ironton)	4/11	10/80	7/14	6/33	8/19	dnc	
Hanane Benanaya	Jr	Casablanca, Mor. (Mohammedia)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Kysa Cronrath	Fr	Odessa, Wa. (Odessa))	dnc	13/134	13/32	11/54	dnc	dnc	
Kate Harline	Fr	Orem, Ut. (Orem)	dnc	7/59	5/9	5/20	6/12	7/29	
Katie Hart	So	Pasadena, Ca. (L.A. Baptist)	4/38*	16/164	14/42	13/78	dnc	dnc	
Corina James	So	Madera, Ca. (Madera)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Nikki Jensen	Sr	Portland, Or. (St. Mary's Acad.)	7/19	8/69	8/19	9/43	dnc	dnc	
Katelyn Krepel	Fr	Talkeetna, Ak. (Susitna Valley)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Jane Larson	Fr	Fall City, Wa. (Cedar P. Christian)	2/7*	4/16	3/4	3/11	4/9	2/14	
Jennifer Marsh	Sr	Kirkland, Wa. (Juanita)	dnc	14/149	12/30	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Samantha McGhee	Fr	Kelso, Wa. (Kelso)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Mary Moriarty	So	Seattle, Wa. (Ballard)	1/5*	2/10	1/2	1/7	2/6	6/23	
Victoria Perkins	Sr	Kent, Wa. (Kentwood)	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Heidi Peterson	So	Edmonds, Wa. (King's)	9/32	15/161	15/45	12/61	dnc	dnc	
Jessica Pixler	Fr	Sammamish, Wa. (Eastlake)	1/1	1/1	dnc	dnc	1/1	1/1	
Karin Rohde	Jr	Bellingham, Wa. (Mount Baker)	3/8*	3/13	2/3	2/10	3/7	3/16	
Kaitlin Rohde	Jr	Bellingham, Wa. (Mount Baker)	6/18	11/101	10/25	8/41	10/33	dnc	
Janelle Stevens	Sr	Soquel, Ca. (Soquel)	8/26	12/125	11/27	dnc	dnc	dnc	
Suzie Strickler	So	Richland, Wa. (Richland)	2/5	5/36	4/8	4/16	5/11	4/17	
Megan Wrightman	Jr	Bend, Or. (Bend)	3/7	6/42	6/11	7/34	7/15	5/22	

NCAA West Regional Forebay Aquatic Center/Oroville, Ca.

Men's team results: 1-Chico State 32, 2-Cal Poly Pomona 116, 3-Alaska Anchorage 119, 4-Western Washington 121, 5-UC San Diego 161, 6-BYU Hawaii 165, 7-Hawaii Pacific 238, 8-Western Oregon 242, 9-Cal State Stanislaus and Seattle Pacific 250 (6 others)

Individual winner (10k): Todd Iacovelli, HPU, 31:58

SPU finishers: 38-Cronrath, 34:08; 44-Bostrom, 34:18; 48-Rosser, 34:36; 58-Meis, 34:54; 62-Gibson, 35:11; 82-Phillips, 36:18; 94-Lozano, 37:18

Women's team results: 1-Cal State L.A. 67, 2-Seattle Pacific 70, 3-UC San Diego 76, 4-Chico State 77, 5-Alaska Anchorage 109, 6-Central Washington 171, 7-Cal State Stanislaus 225, 8-Cal Poly Pomona 250, 9-Western Oregon 254, 10-San Francisco State 280 (8 others)

Individual winner (6k): Jessica Pixler, SPU, 20:46

Other SPU finishers: 14-Larson, 21:54; 16-Kar. Rohde, 22:00; 17-Strickler, 22:02; 22-Wrightman, 22:15; 23-Moriarty, 22:16; 29-Harline, 22:39