



Hannah Steffan



Tabbitha Ashford

Linet Kibet



Felix Rodriguez



Spencer Stephens

PATRIOTS MAKE RUN FOR GLORY CROSS COUNTRY & TRACK

The DBU Patriot Cross Country and Track and Field Programs had a successful year under Head Coach Jacob Phillips at the conference, regional, and national level. They entered 2008-2009 with hopes of seeing the same success they had achieved in winning the 2007-2008 Heartland Conference Cross Country Championship.

The Men's Cross Country Team began the year beating NCAA Division I rival TCU at the Baylor University Twilight Cross Country Invite, led by Junior Felix Rodriguez's fifth place finish and Senior Matt Hansen and Sophomore Kurt Lindsey's top 20 finishes.

The Lady Patriots started the year ranked 24th in the NCAA Division II National Rankings, and rose as high as 19th in the country as the women captured the team championship at the East Central University Invite and then took 5th place at the NCAA Division II Pre-National Championship Meet in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania.

Leading the women was Junior Hannah Steffan. She was the top non-Division I finisher at the Baylor University Twilight Cross Country Invite, won the Individual Championship at the East Central University Invite, and then claimed the Heartland Conference Individual Championship. Freshman Linet Kibet finished second in conference and received Freshman of the Year honors. Lacey Morrison, Tabbitha Ashford, Skylor Alford, and Rachel Oncken were all named All-Conference. The Lady Patriots won their second consecutive Conference Championship.

Leading the men to a second place conference finish was Junior Felix Rodriguez, who won the Individual Championship at the East Central University Invite and placed 16th at the Pre-National meet. He finished as the Conference Runner-Up, receiving All-Conference honors for the third time. Freshman John Millsap, Sophomore Kurt Lindsey, and Freshman Zach Morgan were also named All-Conference.



Members of the 2008-09 DBU Cross Country and Track Teams pose at the waterfall on the DBU campus.

The women finished fourth at the Regional Championship, just missing the National Championship by a mere six points. Leading the women that day were Sophomore Tabbitha Ashford and Freshman Linet Kibet. Ashford and Kibet earned All-Region honors with their 12th and 15th place finishes. The Patriots' fourth place finish was the highest in the program's history.

One week later, the Patriots trekked to Cedarville, Ohio for the NCCAA National Cross Country Championships. Hannah Steffan raced to a National Runner-Up finish leading three Lady Patriots to All-American honors with Linet Kibet finishing 12th and Tabbitha Ashford finishing 15th. The team finished as National Runner-Up, again setting the mark for the highest finish in school history.

The men turned in an inspired performance with Felix Rodriguez placing fifth overall, earning his second NCCAA All-American honor as he led the men to a sixth place overall finish.

"What a year for DBU Cross Country," said Head Coach Jacob Phillips, "We improved at every level this year and showed exactly how tough we are. The girls had a huge disappointment at the NCAA Regional Championship, but came back with a National Runner-Up finish, and the boys lost two of their top guys to injury and still finished second at Conference and sixth at Nationals. What a great year for this program!"

Despite a tough schedule, the Patriot Track and Field Team hoped to achieve similar success in 2008-2009.

Highlighting the year for the Patriots was a National Championship in the Women's Distance Medley Relay at the NCCAA Indoor National Track and Field Championship. The squad of Juniors Lacey Morrison, Ashley Alford, Hannah Steffan, and Freshman Skylor Alford broke the DBU school record, as well as the Cedarville University facility record.

Junior Ashley Alford also placed third in the Women's 800 meters to earn All-American honors at the NCCAA Championship. Fellow Junior standout Hannah Steffan scored points by performing well in the Women's Distance Medley Relay, the Mile, and the 3000 meters.

Earning All-American honors for the men's team was Sophomore Kurt Lindsey, who narrowly edged out teammate John Millsap for third place in the 5000 meters.

Having a stellar outdoor track season was Hannah Steffan, who just about rewrote the DBU record books with new school marks in the 800 meters, 1500 meters, 3000 meters, and 5000 meters. Steffan ended the 2009 season ranked eighth in the country in the 5000 meters with her time of 16:56 which she achieved at the Penn Relays. In recognition for her remarkable cross country and track and field achievements, Steffan was also presented with the DBU Patriot Award at the 2008-2009 Athletic Banquet.

The Patriots will now look ahead to 2009-2010 with great anticipation. Returning over 90 percent of their roster, the women hope to improve upon their national ranking of 22nd achieved in 2008-2009, and the men try to add to the success they achieved as Conference Champions in 2007-2008. It should indeed be a very exciting season for the both teams as they press on toward fulfilling their high expectations.

Leading the Patriots this year will be Seniors Hannah Steffan, Ashley Alford, and Lacey Morrison, Juniors Kurt Lindsey, Tabbitha Ashford, and Rachel Oncken, Sophomores John Millsap and Zach Morgan, and transfer graduate student Laura Mucho.

The Patriot Cross Country team recently kicked off the 2008-2009 season at the Baylor University Twilight Cross Country Invite.