

# UW Men's Nordic Ski Team Wins National Championship

March 13, 2006 -- This is one bet assistant University of Wyoming Nordic ski team coach Rachel Watson is glad to lose.

Four years ago, Watson told this season's UW men's team members that if they ever won a national title, she would let them shear her long locks. The Cowboys wouldn't let her forget that promise after they captured first place in the United States Collegiate Ski and Snowboard Association (USCSSA) Championships in Sugarloaf, Maine, Saturday.

By that evening, the UW assistant coach was sporting an outdated mullet haircut, which nearly matched the men who cut their hair earlier in the team's traditional Mohawk style.

"The men have been working for this win for four years and they finally have it," says UW coach Christi Boggs, technology coordinator at the UW College of Education. "We couldn't be more proud of our athletes because they conducted themselves as true champions the entire week."

After winning two previous races earlier in the week, the UW men coasted in the final event, the 3x5 kilometer relay race finishing behind Cornell University. Cornell needed two other teams to place higher than the Cowboys to win the overall national title, but UW used its depth to secure the team's first-ever national title -- by the narrowest of margins.

UW finished the week with a team-low 62 points, just one point better than Cornell. Clarkson College (Potsdam, N.Y.) finished third with 100 points, followed by St. Olaf College (Northfield, Minn.) with 108 and the United States Military Academy had 213.

The UW women's team, which has won the USCSSA championships two of the past three seasons, finished in second place for the second consecutive season. St. Olaf won the women's national title with 52 points, 10 better than the UW Cowgirls. Clarkson College placed third with 103 points, Cornell had 125 and the U.S. Military Academy 192.

"The women had an amazing run considering that most of them were in their first-ever national competition," Boggs says.

The UW women also finished second in the final 3x5 relay race behind St. Olaf.

UW women skiers receiving individual combined All-American status were Kari Boroff, Daniel; Erin Hammer, Lander, sisters Liz and Katie Turner, Chugiak, Alaska, and Aubree Haffee, Pinedale.

Receiving honors for the men's team were Justin Daraie, Casper, and Riley Hopeman, Joe Howdyshell and Josh Peterson, all of Lander.

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