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(S.D.)- SDSMT XC Men & Women Earn Academic All-America Honors



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 02/14/2014 11:11 AM

(New Orleans, LA)- For the second consecutive season, the South Dakota School of Mines men's and women's cross country teams have earned NCAA Div. II All-Academic Team honors from the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA). The Hardrockers were among 141 college programs to receive the prestigious award.

"Receiving this honor says a lot about our student-athletes," said Hardrocker cross country heads coach Jerry Schafer. "It recognizes our athletes for not only excelling in competition but also in the classroom."

To meet the criteria for All-Academic Team honors, teams must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 and have scored at an NCAA Div. II regional meet. The Hardrocker men's and women's squad traveled to Canyon, Texas, for the NCAA Div. II South Central Region Cross Country Championships. Both the 'Rocker and men and women placed as a team in their respective races.

"The SD Mines men had a GPA of 3.39 while the Lady Hardrockers' GPA was 3.24," Schafer said. "Considering the rigors that our institution has to offer compiled with the challenges of being a distance runner, those

marks are quite an accomplishment."

The Grand Valley State (Mich.) women and the men of Adams State (Colo.) were named the USTFCCCA Div. II Scholar Teams of the year.

GVSU and Adams State earned the honor as the highest-finishing team at a NCAA Div. II region meet. In winning their third national women's cross country title in the past four years, the Lakers of Grand Valley State collectively earned a 3.32 cumulative GPA behind five individual All-Academic selections. Adams State earned a cumulative 3.27 GPA on its way to its fifth national title in the past six seasons.

In total 141 unique programs were recognized, including 89 programs that had both their women's and men's teams earn the honor.

The Newman (Kan.) men reported the highest team GPA at 3.80, while the King College (Tenn.) women topped their gender with a 3.78.

The PSAC led all women's conference with 15 teams earning All-Academic honors, followed by the NSIC with 14 and the Northeast-10 with 13. Men's conferences were also headlined by the PSAC with nine teams earning the honor, followed by the NSIC, the GLIAC and the RMAC with eight each.