



Glendale regains women's cross country state supremacy; ARC's Seawell breaks Woodward Park community college course record

FRESNO – “Fantastic!” That would be an understatement in describing the finish of the 2011 California Community College Women's Cross Country Championships at Woodward Park on Nov. 19. With about 75 yards to go, Cuesta College freshman Devon Kelsey appeared to be holding off Glendale's sophomore Karen Rosas. However, with about 15 yards to go, the Southern California champion, found a little extra kick to pass and won the 3.1 mile race timing 18:00 to Kelsey's 18:01. In doing so, Rosas led the Lady Vaqueros to a phenomenal 30-115 team victory over runner-up Orange Coast College.

This was the second largest victory margin in the 35-year history of CCC women's cross country championships. Only OCC's huge 62-161 victory over Riverside in 2005 has surpassed Glendale's domination of a pleasant, sunny day in Fresno.

It was such a success that GC duplicated what Southwestern accomplished in 2010 and had four runners finish in the top 14 to gain All-America status. The other GC sophomore runners besides Rosas were Alyssa Selve, third (18:20), Angela Martinez, sixth (18:39) and Laura Pluemer, seventh (18:42). GC freshman Nohemi Martinez, who completed the team scoring, just missed by finishing 15th in the individual standings at 19:01. For the purpose of team scoring, she was listed at 13th place. Only 61 seconds separated Glendale's top five runners.

This was the third women's state championship for Glendale's head coach Eddie Lopez as he guided the Lady Vaqueros to titles in 2007 and 2009. GC has established a pattern over the past six years having finished as runners-up in 2006, 2008 and 2010. When there were two divisions, Glendale won small school state titles in 1977, 1979 and 1980 for an overall total of six state women's cross country championships.

In the men's race, sophomore Garrett Seawell of American River College, wearing a white cap, set a new course record for community college runners covering the four miles of Woodward Park in 19:54. It broke the mark of 19:56 set by Oscar Ogwaro of East Los Angeles College in 2006. Besides winning the team title 49-91 over San Bernardino Valley, thus breaking the Wolverines' string of five consecutive championships, three other ARC striders ran to All-America status. Wyatt Landrum was third (20:10), Matt Airola, seventh (20:19) and Will Melton (20:32) was 13th. Steve White (20:51) finished 25th and secured the second ARC state championship in school history for head coach Rick Anderson. The Beavers previous win came in 2005 and ARC has garnered five runner-up trophies, two under Anderson's guidance in 2010 and 2003. His top five runners in the 2011 winning finale were separated by only 57 seconds.

With a mile to go, Seawell was about five strides behind the frontrunner, Cerritos' Daniel Herrera, the Southern California champion and the CCC Sports Information Association's "October Male Athlete of the Month." However, the last mile was not Herrera's best and he finished sixth at 20:18. It was his first 2011 cross country defeat against community college competition. Only a freshman, Herrera appears to have an excellent future in distance running.

Rosas' victory was only the tenth time in the women's 35-year history that a member of the winning team combined to also win the individual title. Seawell's victory marked the 19th time since 1964 that an individual winner led a men's team to the state championship.

It was no surprise Glendale's women's team proved why they were the favorites. Conversely, ARC surprised many with its team victory, Seawell's individual victory and the new men's course record. In essence, a very impressive day for two community colleges with impressive cross country histories.

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