

Dal does the double at AUAAs

BY MATT X. RICHARDSON

In Halifax, there isn't a single weather condition that lends itself to cross-country running better than rain, cold, and mud.

It was therefore quite fitting that the return of the AUAA cross-country championships was blessed with such conditions, as Dalhousie's runners toed the line for the end of the Atlantic conference season.

The top team from both the men's and the women's race would gain qualification to the CIAU championships in Waterloo, Ontario, two weeks later. The other teams would simply leave the track shivering and dirty — a situation that the women Tigers hadn't been in for 13 years. The men, on the other hand, had something to prove after losing their title to a strong Memorial team the year before.

The gun for the women's race at 12pm sharp saw Dal's runners take the lead only seconds later — in dominating style. Dalhousie's current and undefeated AUAA titleholder, Kristen Lewis, was at the front, taking Dal runner Kelly McKean with her as the first lap of the two-lap, five kilometre race progressed. Lewis showed her cardiovascular prowess, putting forth a tooth-grinding surge to lock up her second AUAA title in as many years, in a time of 18:53. Anne Barrington of Memorial won second place at the line with a photo finish in a time of 19:05. McKean

settled for third, and Dal's Sandy Smith was fourth, in a time of 19:10.

In the remainder of the field, Tonya Knopp from Memorial took the last top-five position (19:32), and two Dal runners, Juliet Thornton (19:39) and Amy Higgins (19:45), followed to secure the women's team title for Dal. Dal's Karen Martin (20:36) and Kelly Prendergast (20:49) finished in twelfth and thirteenth position respectively. Memorial was the second team overall and UNB finished third.

The much anticipated men's four-lap, ten kilometre race started at 12:45, with defending champions Memorial sensing that perhaps Dalhousie, with veteran athletes Dan Hennigar and Neil Manson returning from a one year hiatus, were too strong for them this year. Sure enough, Manson struck up a torrid pace, taking a 100-metre lead over Hennigar in the first lap alone, with Memorial's Trevor O'Brien even further back. Dal's Scott Simpson was only meters back as well and this strung out group of four almost certainly locked up the top positions from the outset of the race.

Manson, a third year medical student, was looking almost unstoppable nearing the end of the second lap. With an astonishing lead over Hennigar, his 28 year old training partner, it seemed Manson was in line for this year's individual title. But a smartly timed move by

Hennigar on the flat section saw that lead dwindle and Hennigar, with admirable pacing, was looking the fresher of the two. As well, O'Brien and Simpson were catching up to the two front-runners.

The crowd rushed towards the finish line area, all eyes towards the forested path from which the runners would emerge into the finishing straight.

Hennigar's tactics and experience paid off as he cruised easily to the line in a winning time of 32:11. However, Manson had been unseated from his second place position after taking a fall in the back section of the track, and O'Brien was next to emerge, crossing the line second in a close 32:16. Simpson, a second year student, had the fastest final lap to take third in 32:32, and a clearly exhausted-but-gutsy Manson came across fourth in 32:40. Universite de Moncton's Yves Gagnon was fifth, a full half-minute back.

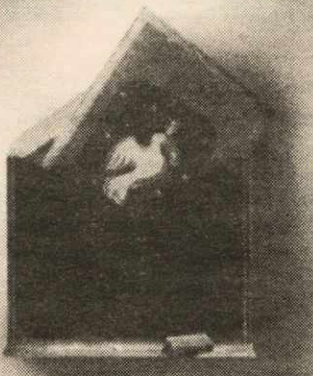
Rounding out Dal's performance were Jamie Blanchard (33:17), Trevor Boudreau (33:30), Brian Yorke in eleventh position (34:22) and Andrew Dunbrack in thirteenth position (34:49).

Dal locked up the team title with an overall lowest point total of 22. Memorial finished second with 59 points and U de Moncton took third with 89 points.

Dalhousie's runners take to the hills of Waterloo at the CIAU Championships on Nov. 14.

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TORONTO	—	15:25 ^{5,11} 23:15 ¹⁰	—	23:05	—	—	—
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¹Begins Nov 23 ²Ends Nov 15 ³Week of Nov 16 only ⁴Week of Nov 23 only

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