



SPORTS

Track and Field Tigers devour competition at AUAA

Dalhousie co-captain Baker AUAA's Athlete of the Meet, Manuel Rookie of the Year

BY CARMEN TAM

The Dalhousie men's and women's track and field teams destroyed their competition at the AUAA Championships held once again at the Université de Moncton in New Brunswick. The Tiger teams captured 11 out of 14 track titles, all six relays, and produced 14 conference champions in individual events.

The women's squad won the AUAA team title with 141 points, led by co-captain Terri Baker who competed in seven events, winning two of them. The St. Mary's Huskies were second with 78 points and the Moncton Aigles Bleus lagged with 28 points. The Dal men's team captured their team title by compiling 146 points over SMU (114) and Moncton (37).

TRACK EVENTS

60M

Angela Ripley won the women's 60m for Dal in a time of 7.99 seconds, her personal best, over SMU's Joanne Donnelly's time of 8.20. Rookie Lauren Maher placed fourth at 8.37 for the Tigers.

Dal's Nick Soh placed second in the men's 60m sprint final at a time of 7.15 behind SMU's Jason Hilchie who crossed the line first in 7.00 flat. Dal's Paul English, who won his semi-final heat, did not compete in the final after sustaining a season-ending injury in the race.



Photo by Dan Hennigar

AUAA athlete of the Meet, Terri Baker prepares for the shot put final.

60M HURDLES

Baker defended her 60m hurdle title in a winning time of 10.46. Dal's Nicole Pike who had never competed in this event came in second at 11.73 over seasoned SMU competitors, a definite highlight of the meet.

Dal's Tito Sealy gave a valiant effort in the men's 60m hurdle final, competing with an ankle injury to take second place at 10.76, behind SMU's Jason Bunton (10.15).

300M

Baker eclipsed the field in the 300m final in 42.64 over Moncton's Amy Caissie who came in at 43.02. Baker,

who shaved 1.45 seconds from her semi-final win, successfully defended her title. Maher had placed second in her semi-final heat and did not qualify for the final.

her title in the 3000m final in a time of 10:39.31 over teammate Kelly McKean.

Dartmouth's Tim Lindsay won the 3000m on the men's side in 9:08.58,

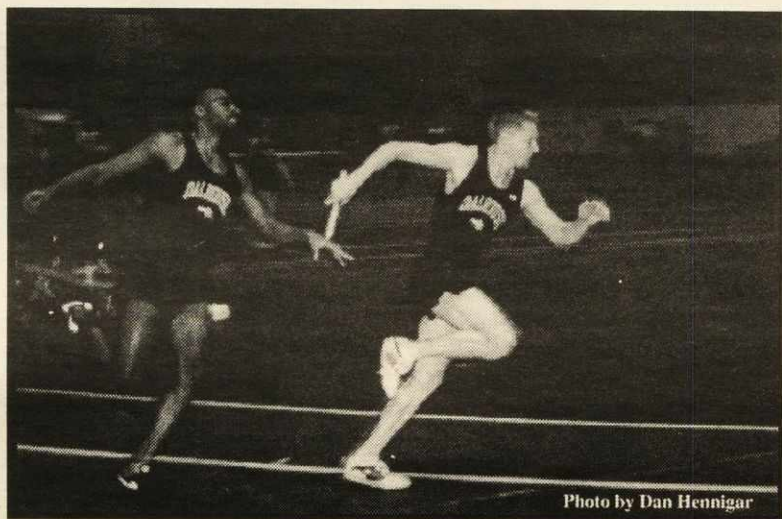


Photo by Dan Hennigar

Mike Manuel hands the baton to Scott Fowler in the 4x200m relay.

Rookie Mike Manuel shone for Dal in the men's 300m final with a winning time of 36.68. Soh overcame a tough lane one draw to come in second at 37.68. Dave Pelletier of Moncton settled for third place with a time of 37.72.

600M

Last year's AUAA MVP, Richard Menzies poured it on in the last 30m to overtake Tiger teammate Scott Fowler in the last stride in the 600m final to take his second AUAA title in this event in 1:25.10. Fowler settled for second spot with a time of 1:25.30 and the Huskies Pelletier was third at 1:27.20.

The women's 600m final was won by Caissie with a time of 1:38.30. Dal's Kelly Prendergast and Amy Higgins's times of 1:40.94 and 1:44.67, respectively, was good for second and third place.

1000M

The Tigers grabbed top spots in the 1000m finals with Higgins winning at 3:14.31 followed by Juliet Thorton in second place at 3:16.28.

On the men's side, Matt Richardson placed first with 2:37.42 for Dal in a field of six competitors. Dal's Jason Paris was second at 2:41.28 while Chad Decker of Moncton collected third at 2:46.41.

1500M

Dal's Kristen Lewis and co-captain Jessica Fraser took top honours in the 1500m final with Lewis finishing first in convincing style with a time of 4:55.01 and Fraser at 4:59.11. Collen Doiron from SMU was third at a distant 5:30.77.

Dal sophomore Jamie Blanchard outran and outclassed the field with a winning time of 4:12.50 in the men's final over second-place Andrew Pepper of SMU at 4:20.22. Blanchard stayed with the pack until the 800m where he broke ahead and stayed there. Blanchard with an injury, Dal rookie John Menzies showed a lot of class surging into third place from last position, finishing with a time of 4:21.52.

3000M

Fraser, a five-year veteran, defended

1.88 seconds ahead of Tiger teammate Mark Gardner by putting forth a strong bell lap. Gardner, a first-year competitor who has improved considerably this term, led for most of the race but was unable to respond to Lindsay's challenge. The next opponent, Pepper crossed the finish line at 9:21.77.

RELAYS

4x200M RELAY

Dalhousie dominated the relays taking all six events. The women's team of Ripley, Prendergast, Maher and anchor Baker captured the 4x200m a full ten seconds over SMU at a time of 1:55.34.

Despite losing English in the 4x200m, the Dal team kept their focus and replaced English with Fowler. Fowler was joined by Soh, Manuel and Richardson who showed their depth by winning their final with a time of 1:35.98 over SMU's time of 1:37.59.

4x400M RELAY

SMU dropped their baton in a sloppy exchange in the final leg of the women's 4x400m, but regardless, would not have been able to overtake Dal's winning time of 4:20.41 run by Ripley, Higgins, Prendergast and Baker.

Dal's team of Manuel, Fowler, Blanchard and Richardson conquered SMU by winning the men's relay in 3:38.77 over the Huskies' time of 3:48.40.

4x800M RELAY

A mix up of lines by the officials resulted in some confusion in the women's 4x800m relay which Dal ran in a time of 9:35.12 by Prendergast, Higgins, Fraser and Baker.

The men's team won the 4x800m final which included Fowler, Blanchard, Paris and Richardson at a time of 8:45.58 over SMU's 8:55.09.

Richardson, who anchored all three men's relays, said, "The AUAA conference is weak. Dal has national class athletes who are suffering from a lack of facilities and competition, the least we could do was win the AUAA title."

FIELD EVENTS

HIGH JUMP

Sasho MacKenzie seized his first AUAA high jump title for Dal with a jump of 1.84m. MacKenzie, who is also a member of the volleyball team, trained for six weeks leading up to the AUAA finals. Dal's Brendan O'Neil was third at 1.70m.

Maher was second in the women's final with 1.40m and Prendergast collected third place with 1.35m. The event was won by Moncton's Micheline Allain who finished at 1.52m.

TRIPLE JUMP

Baker placed second in the women's triple jump final with a score of 9.04m while teammate Pike finished fourth at 7.79m. The event was won by SMU's Donnelly (10.13m).

MacKenzie also placed second for Dal in the men's final with an effort of 12.36m, just behind SMU's Dave Kemeka's winning jump of 12.41m. Dal's Peter Bienkowski was fifth at 11.41m.

LONG JUMP

Bienkowski bounced back in the long jump where he successfully defended his title with a winning performance of 6.63m. MacKenzie captured third place with 6.08m.



Photo by Dan Hennigar

Sasho MacKenzie shows off his winning form in the High Jump finals.

Maher obtained second place for Dal in the women's long jump at 4.49m and Baker took third with 4.14m. The event was won by SMU's Donnelly who finished at 4.59m. Maher finished her meet by establishing four PBs and 15 points for Dal.

SHOT PUT

Dal's Tracey Acker finished second in the shot put final with 8.85m while teammate Baker placed sixth. Moncton's Chantal Bourque won the event with 10.38m.

Manuel's effort of 12.45m was good for second place in the men's final. The event was won by Moncton's Chris Reade who had 13.06m and O'Neil placed fourth for Dal at 11.27m.

POLE VAULT

O'Neil remains undefeated in AUAA pole vault competition, capturing the title at 2.70m for the Tigers over SMU's Brad Corbett's 2.55m.

At the AUAA awards banquet, Baker, who competed in five events and two relays, was recognised as the female Athlete of the Meet. Outstanding performances in the 300m, 4x200m and 4x400m relays from Manuel were rewarded with AUAA male Rookie of

the Year honours. Manuel was passed over for AUAA MVP recognition that went to SMU's Jason Hilchie. SMU's Donnelly was named the AUAA female Rookie of the Year for strong showing in the field events. Longtime head coach for the Tigers Al Yarr was named AUAA Coach of the Year. Yarr was aided by assistant coaches Peter Lord (jump coach), Dan Hennigar, Louis Brill, Rob McKechney and sprint coach Steve LeBlanc.

The AUAA track and field league should be more competitive next year as UNB and Memorial's intention of fielding full teams for the 1999 season was announced at the banquet.

"There will be more competition next year [and] it will give us more of a challenge," notes Fraser.

"Coming into AUAA's, there were several 'last minute' logistical problems due to the date of the meet being changed. The athletes didn't seem to let it phase them at all. We had several injuries going into the meet but, thanks to our excellent trainers, we 'held it together,'" said former Tiger LeBlanc.

"I can say that I am always amazed at the depth we continually have in all events. As a coach, it makes it difficult when picking individual events and relay teams, but, as coach [Al Yarr] said, 'what a nice predicament to be in'."

Four Tigers, Manuel (300m), Fraser (3000m), Blanchard (1500m) and Bienkowski (long jump) qualified for individual events at the CIAU Championships hosted by the University of Windsor this weekend. The women's 4x400m relay squad along with the men's 4x200m, 4x400m and 4x800m relay teams will also be competing. The men's 4x800m team is currently ranked third in the country and will be in the hunt for gold while the 4x400m (7th) and 4x200m (10th) will also look to move up.

"The relay teams haven't really been challenged [in the AUAA] and it will be exciting to see what they can do against other universities," says Fraser.

"We will be going after the medals in the relay events primarily, however we could potentially be sending some serious contenders in a couple of individual events as well," adds LeBlanc. "The women's 4x400m team could definitely come together to provide one of the most surprising performances of the year."

"It was a good meet overall, we competed well as a team," said Manuel. "Some people had to step in for others that were injured and I think that shows a lot of character. For Nationals, we plan to run our best and be competitive."