

TRACK AND FIELD

USC looks to set more NCAA qualifying times this weekend

BY MANESHKA ELIATAMBY
THE GAMECOCK

After two successful meets last weekend, the Gamecock track-and-field athletes prepare for another weekend of competition.

This weekend, the athletes will be scattered nationwide as a select group will be competing at the Barnett Bank Invitational in Gainesville, Fla., while the Gamecock elite will participate in the Millrose Games at Madison Square Garden in New York on Friday. On Sunday, the same athletes from the Millrose Games will travel to Boston to compete in the New Balance Invitational.

Throughout the season, several Gamecock athletes have qualified for both the SEC Championships, scheduled to be held in Columbia, and the NCAA Championships. Ten athletes in action last weekend had either NCAA automatic qualifying times or provisional times, and one school record was established by the men's 4x400-meter relay team.

Among the athletes to qualify for the NCAA Indoor Championships was senior Jackie Madison. Madison finished third in the 60-meter hurdles at the Arkansas Invitational last weekend and became one of USC's eight athletes to achieve a NCAA provisional qualifying time.

"I was very happy with my timing (8.30), which was my personal best in

the 60," Madison said. Madison, who is scheduled to participate at the Millrose Games and the New Balance Invitational this weekend, said the meet in Boston will be attended by many of the country's top athletes. She feels it would be a great way to gain experience for the rest of the season.

Gamecock Demetria Washington continued her impressive streak last weekend as well, running the fastest 200-meter time in the country this year.

The Gamecocks, who have been in competition every weekend since the new year started, are spending the rest of this week in training, concentrating on endurance rather than speed. Head coach Curtis Frye doesn't want his athletes to be worn out for the rest of the competitions that lie ahead this season.

"I don't want them to reach their peak at this point in the season," Frye said. "They still have a long way to go, and if they reach their peak now, they won't perform well at important meets such as the SECs and the NAAs."

Two of this weekend's competitions will be televised. NBC will broadcast the 94th annual Millrose Games at 2 p.m. Saturday. ESPN will show the New Balance Invitational some time during the next two weeks.

The sports desk can be reached at gamecocksports@hotmail.com

Carolina's best in action

This weekend, USC will send its top track and field athletes to compete in two prestigious meets: the Millrose Games and the New Balance Invitational. Both meets will be nationally televised.

■ Gamecocks in the Millrose Games (Feb. 2, New York City)

Miki Barber - 400m
Lisa Barber, Demetria Washington, Jackie Madison, Tacita Bass - 4x400m relay
Ellakisha Williamson - 60m hurdles

■ Gamecocks in the New Balance Invitational (Feb. 4, Boston)

Lisa Barber - 60m
Miki Barber - 400m
Jackie Madison - 60m hurdles
Demetria Washington - 400m
Ellakisha Williamson - 60m hurdles

SOFTBALL

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losing to the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Carolina stayed alive with a 7-4 win over Illinois State before falling a second time to Nebraska in their final game of the year.

"On an individual basis, we could have stepped it up, but on a whole, we pulled it together in the end," Matthews said.

As for Compton, she felt the season was disappointing because of their record and said the team should have won more of the doubleheaders they split.

"We needed to be more consistent offensively and we also needed to improve upon our defensive side as well," she said.

The team gets a chance to improve on last year's mark as the season gets underway Saturday against North Carolina.

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Gamecock SPORTS CHALLENGE

Readers: Now you have a chance to enter the Gamecock Sports Challenge. Take a look at next week's games and submit your picks to gamecocksports@hotmail.com. You can also bring your picks to RH 333. We will choose one person's picks at random each week. If you can beat all four other panel members, you'll win a free Gamecock T-shirt!

NEXT WEEK'S PICKS (FEB. 5-11)

- Iowa St. at Kansas
- Georgia at USC
- St. John's at Notre Dame
- UCLA at Southern Cal
- USC at Vanderbilt
- Florida at Kentucky
- Virginia at Georgia Tech
- Maryland at UNC
- Georgia at Alabama
- Michigan St. at Illinois

Picks must be submitted by 1 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 4



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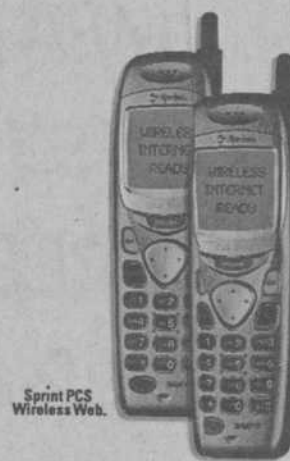
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