

SPORTS

Expectations are realized

Cross country women travel to Florida

By ERIC NELSON

To Bob McGuire, the fact that his women's cross country team will be in Tallahassee, Fla. this weekend comes as no real surprise — in fact, he expected it.

"To be honest, that's been our goal all season long," said McGuire. "I've been trying to impress on them that not only should we plan on being there but that we should set out to win. And I think we can do it."

Thus unfolds the story of Cal State's 1979 women's cross country team, a team that seemingly has what it takes to do just what McGuire suggests, win.

The Pioneers boast an outstanding group of runners, led by All-American hopeful Michelle Aubuchon, but the key issue according to McGuire, is their ability to work together to produce a champion.

This year's success didn't just happen, however. McGuire, through hard work and tedious recruiting, has built what he considers one of his finest teams.

"There's no doubt we have a great deal of talent here but the biggest factor is that they're

never satisfied," said McGuire. "That's one of the things I look for in recruiting a runner. Ability, of course, plays a major role, but I have to know a person from inside, too.

"I want runners who are very serious, people willing to pay the price for success, and I try to paint as accurate a picture of Cal State as I can. Not only of our program, but the atmosphere of the campus as well. Above all, I want my runners to be satisfied with the environment they compete in. If they aren't, then I feel they might be better off somewhere else."

McGuire has obviously done a very good job of keeping his runners happy. In fact, they're already looking forward to next year, a year in which McGuire figures to be even stronger.

"Sometimes it takes a year for athletes to adjust to a new situation," he said. "And then, sometimes it doesn't. We've had degrees of both this year but we've got such depth on the squad that we could really be tough next year.

One of the Pioneers' advan-

tages in Tallahassee will be the fact that for the first time, schools are divided into divisions, meaning Cal State won't have to worry about Division I schools with the advantage of scholarships.

"Had we all been grouped together as in the past, I feel we would have finished somewhere around fifth," commented McGuire. "Obviously they have a great advantage in being able to give scholarships but the fact is that a lot of Division I schools just don't use their scholarships wisely.

"They'll say almost anything to entice an athlete into coming to their school. Once enrolled, however, the athlete often discovers that he or she has been deceived a little. Sometimes more than a little, in fact.

"This leads to a very high attrition rate. We don't have that here at Hayward and the fact that we have several returnees each year does a great deal to build that 'winning attitude' that is so necessary."

On to the team for the moment. The Pioneers will send a group of



It is no surprise that the women's cross country team has done so well this season. Coach Bob McGuire impressed upon his runners that they were out to win. It is obvious the women took this seriously as they face top national teams this weekend.

seven runners to Tallahassee. Leading the group will be Michelle Aubuchon, the No. 1 runner for Cal State all year long. She has claimed three second place finishes this season and will be a key factor.

Connie Hester, a sophomore who placed third in the region 8 meet, will run in the number two spot, followed by Stefani Stoutt, the Pioneer's third runner this season. She, along with Aubuchon, competed in last year's AIAW Nationals and McGuire credits her as being a steadying influence on the team.

Franie Castro, who finished third in the Golden State championships and the Pioneers' second-place finisher most of the year, will hold another key position. If uninjured, she could be a determining factor.

Following Castro will be Karey Robinson, a junior from San

several occasions for the Pioneers while Felix' late-season surge qualified her for the Nationals.

Coach McGuire stressed the importance of the remainder of the squad, saying, "All of the team members played a very positive role in getting us where we are now. Though they won't be competing in the Nationals, I'm sure they'll be there in spirit."

Those members include Mary Rieboldt, the school record-holder in the 1500 meter run and Linda Robinson, a runner McGuire considered among his best when the season began. Robinson battled and finally lost a bout with a virus and consequently missed much of the season.

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Following Castro will be Karey Robinson, a junior from San Joaquin Delta College. She also has been troubled by injuries this season but has run well in spite of them.

Rounding out the group are two freshmen; Denise Bigelow from San Lorenzo High School and Shane Felix, the DVAL champion of a year ago from Antioch High School. Bigelow finished fifth on

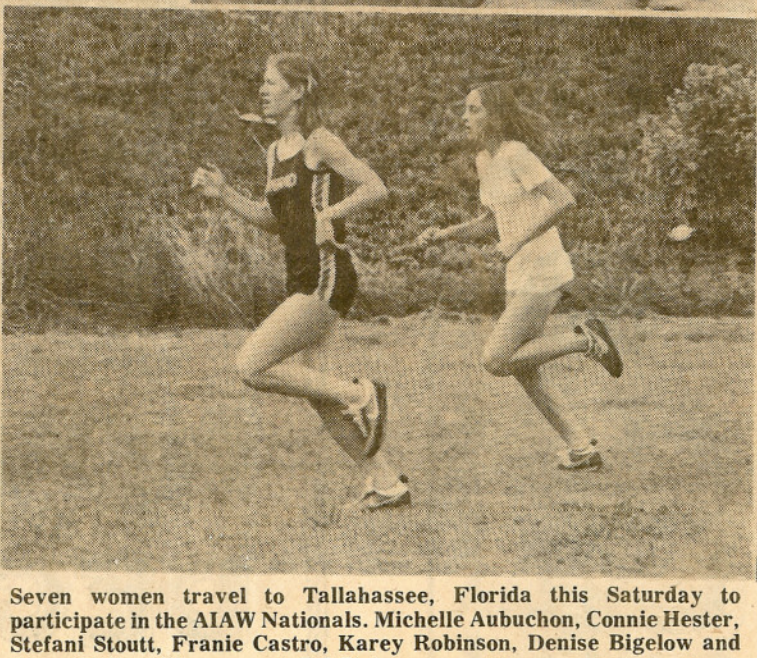
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"Right there is the key," said McGuire. "When I see improvement such as I have in these runners, I know they're serious about competing. And they will get better still. Just watch."

With enthusiasm like that, it's hard not to feel like a champion, but it still remains for the Pioneers to defeat some highly rated squads. Whether or not they will remain to be seen, but the 1979 Pioneers are winners — no doubt about it.



Seven women travel to Tallahassee, Florida this Saturday to participate in the AIAW Nationals. Michelle Aubuchon, Connie Hester, Stefani Stoutt, Franie Castro, Karey Robinson, Denise Bigelow and Shane Felix will represent Cal State. Photos by Denise Pierson