Tech Takes Fourth In State Runoff

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Virginia Tech's cross country team started out like a house on fire, but couldn't continue the fast pace as they unofficially finished fourth in the state cross country meet held at Mount Trashmore in Virginia Beach this past weekend.

"We had trouble with the early pace," noted coach Russ Whitenack. "We ran better towards the end of the meet, but we still need some speed work. Our guys were running 4:35 miles, which is a little too fast."

One reason for the Hokies running such a fast pace early could have been the course they regularly train on. The Tech course is one that requires strength, rather than speed.

"Mount Trashmore is basically a flat course, which makes speed more of an important factor," said Whitenack. "Our course has different terrain and traditionally requires a great deal of strength. Some of the people who did well on the Trashmore course wouldn't do well on ours."

The winner of the 10,000 meter event was Hillary Tuitte from the University of Virginia. The Cavaliers also took the team first, followed by William and Mary, VMI, Tech, Richmond, Madison, Virginia State, Hampton, Norfolk State, and Eastern Menonite.

The standings are unofficial and won't be made official for a few more days yet. These standings were calculated using 12 runners, and only the first seven officially count.

"We're allowed to run 12, as long as it's understood that only the first seven count," explained Whitenack. "We've all mailed the results into Norfolk State where the official stats are being totalled. Some of the teams will move up after they've done that, and I believe since we were only one point out of third place, we're going to move past VMI."

The Tech runners placed close together, but the problem for the Hokies was that they didn't place together high enough as Mike Reed placed 14th, Robbie Wright finished 19th, Guy Crane was 20th, Gene Crane came in 21st, and Jim Elmlinger came in 23rd.

"We had a good meet, but it wasn't an outstanding meet," said Whitenack. "We still don't have that type of runner who will finish in the top five."

The Hokies will now take the next two weeks off before resuming their schedule.