

MIDWESTERN STATE REPEATS AS CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

AUSTIN, Texas – The Midwestern State University Cycling Team won the South Central Collegiate Cycling Championship for the fifth year in a row on Sunday.

The final event in the year-long competition was hosted by the University of Texas in Austin on Saturday and Sunday. MSU riders won all events during the weekend in both the men's and women's Category A.

Winning the conference title earns MSU a return trip to the collegiate national championships, which begin a week from Friday in Lawrence, Kan.

In addition to winning the team title over second-place University of Texas and third-place Texas A&M, the Mustangs dominated the top spots in both the Mens A and Womens A categories.

Brian Wyrick, a fourth-year student from Quitman, Texas, won the season-long Category A mens title as well as both the road race and the criterium at this weekend's competition. Teammate Adam Biwan, a junior from Sheboygan, Wis., finished second in the season-long competition.

MSU riders also finished fourth, fifth and eighth in the men's competition. Dominic Van Nielen, a senior from Kingwood, Texas, was fourth; Jarred Gilker, a freshman from Fort Smith, Ark., fifth; and Todd Campbell of the Kansas City area, eighth.

Midwestern State's women also dominated Category A. Ivana Miucic, a graduate student from Serbia, captured the season title. She was followed by two other Mustangs: Laura Whittle, a junior from Belleville, Ill., was second; Sheri Jordan of Fort Worth, Texas, third.

"I'm really proud of the results that our riders achieved in a conference that has become significantly more competitive in the last year," said MSU Cycling Coach Gary Achterberg. "We've got a number of athletes, particularly on the men's side, who are capping off successful collegiate cycling careers – and it's great for them to be able to add one more conference championship to their achievements."

Competition in Austin over the weekend included a road race and a team time trial – in which teams of four riders from each school covered a 20-kilometer (12.2-mile) course together against the clock – on Saturday. Riders on Sunday raced in criteriums on a one-mile closed course on the streets circling the football stadium on the University of Texas campus.

MSU swept the top four spots in the women's road race. Jennifer Purcell, a third-year rider from Milwaukee, won the event. Purcell has medaled at the collegiate national championships the last two years but has struggled with tendonitis in a knee for much of this season. Whittle was second in the road race, Jordan was third and Miucic, fourth.

In addition to Wyrick's win in the men's road race, MSU's Biwan finished fourth.

In the team time trials Saturday afternoon, MSU's men and women won their respective races by large margins. Both team time trial squads are the same teams that the Mustangs will field at the national championships.

In Sunday's criteriums, Wyrick and Chris Case, a University of Texas rider, got into an early breakaway that stayed away with help from teammates who worked to slow down the field. The two gained a lap on the course by about the mid-point of the 70-minute criterium. Wyrick got off the front of the field again later in the race to ensure his win over Case. Biwan finished fourth.

In the women's criterium, Miucic won. Tiffany Stewart, who is from El Paso, was fourth.

The final event on the collegiate calendar is the national championships at the University of Kansas. MSU will field a men's and women's team time trial team as well as full squads of four riders in the men's and women's road race and three riders in the men's and women's criterium.

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