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Canada wins two gold medals at NACAC cross country running championships

March 12th 2006, CLERMONT, Florida - Megan Metcalfe of Edmonton and Kate Van Buskirk of Brampton, Ont., each won a gold medal this weekend at the 16-country NACAC (North and Central America and Caribbean) cross country running championships.

In the senior women's six kilometre race, Metcalfe took the lead on the third and final lap to win the gold in 21 minutes and 44.38 seconds in hot and steamy conditions. Maria Valencia of Mexico was second in 21:54.43 and Rebecca Donaghue of the U.S., third in 21:56.42.

"I felt really relaxed and comfortable through the first two laps," said Metcalfe, 24, the NCAA 5,000-metre champion last year. "The course was pretty slow with a lot of soft ground and uphill climbs. I was happy that I felt so good out there. I'm definitely on the right track for the world championships. It was a nice event and I'm glad I came."

Heather Hennigar of Halifax was 10th, Suzanne Binne-Huse of Winnipeg 11th, Kirsty Smith of Vancouver 15th while Shari Boyle of Toronto and Cari Kuzyk of Vancouver did not finish.

In the junior women's four kilometre event, Canada was 1-2 with Van Buskirk clocking 14:31.27 and Sheila Reid of Newmarket, Ont., earning the silver in 14:38.72

"I'm really pleased," said Van Buskirk, 18, last year's Canadian junior champion. "I didn't know what to expect heading in. But Sheila and I stayed up front almost the entire race and that was an advantage for us. It was great to get this kind of international experience."

Danelle Woods of Ottawa was ninth, Mandy McBean of Toronto 10th, Angela Shaw of Langley, B.C., 12th and Jennifer Biewald of Ottawa 18th.

In the junior men's six kilometre race, the top Canadian was Marcus Dillon of Oshawa, Ont., in fifth spot in 19:46.70. Cory Currie of Brantford, Ont., was seventh, Matthew Bruce of Oshawa eighth, Kyle Boorsma of Guelph, Ont., 14th, Michael Anderson of Ajax, Ont., 16th and Joseph Brunsting of Stirling, Ont., 24th.

In the senior men's eight kilometre event, Juan Barrios of Mexico successfully defended his title with the win in 25:16.04.

Steve Osadiuk of Nanaimo, B.C., was 12th in 26:48.80, Jeff Scull of Niagara, Ont., 18th, Calvin Staples of Kitchener, Ont., 22nd and Taylor Milne of Guelph, Ont., 28th.

In team competition, Canada was second to the U.S., in junior men and women and senior women and fifth in senior men.

Several of the Canadian entries are preparing for the world cross country running championship set for Fukuoka, Japan on April 1-2.

Athletics Canada is the national sport governing body for the sport of track and field including cross-country running and road running.

Results at the NACAC cross country running championships at Clermont, Florida:

MEN

Senior (eight kilometres): 1. Juan Luis Barrios, Mexico, 25 minutes and 16.04 seconds; 2. Alejandro Suarez, Mexico, 25:16.32; 3. Max King, U.S., 25:48.29; 12. Steve Osadiuk, Nanaimo, B.C., 26:48.80; 18. Jeff Scull, Niagara, Ont., 27:40.82; 22. Calvin Staples, Kitchener, Ont., 28:09.70; 28. Taylor Milne, Guelph, Ont., 28:50.60.

Senior team: 1. Mexico, one hour and 42 minutes and 59.79 seconds; 2. U.S., 1:45:22.00; 3. Guatemala, 1:47:31.05; 5. Canada, 1:51:29.92.

Junior (six kilometres): 1. Diego Borrego, Mexico, 19:24.19; 2. Aaron Hermes Arias, Mexico, 19:29.05; 3. Landon Peacock, U.S., 19:29.97; 5. Marcus Dillon, Oshawa, Ont., 19:46.70; 7. Cory Currie, Brantford, Ont., 20:08.80; 8. Matthew Bruce, Oshawa, 20:12.16; 14. Kyle Boorsma, Guelph, Ont., 21:15.45; 16. Michael Anderson, Ajax, Ont., 21:34.38; 24. Joseph Brunsting, Stirling, Ont., 22:25.00.

Junior team: 1. U.S., 1:19:33.02; 2. Canada, 1:21:23.11; 3. Puerto Rico, 1:27:27.51.

WOMEN

Senior (six kilometers): 1. Megan Metcalfe, Edmonton, 21:44.38; 2. Maria Elena Valencia, Mexico, 21:54.43; 3. Rebecca Donaghue, U.S., 21:56.42; 10. Heather Hennigar, Halifax, 23:24.04; 11.

Suzanne Binne-Huse, Winnipeg, 23:31.72; 15. Kirsty Smith, Vancouver, 24:25.16.

Senior team: 1. U.S., 1:28:31.51; 2. Canada, 1:33:05.30; 3. Jamaica, 1:41:28.76.

Junior (four kilometers): 1. Kate Van Buskirk, Brampton, Ont., 14:31.27; 2. Sheila Reid, Newmarket, Ont., 14:38.72; 3. Kauren Tarver, U.S., 14:40.57; 9. Danelle Woods, Ottawa, 15:17.83; 10. Mandy McBean, Toronto, 15:19.83; 12. Angela Shaw, Langley, B.C., 15:32.78; 18. Jennifer Biewald, Ottawa, 16:18.54.

Junior team: 1. U.S., 59:38.23; 2. Canada, 59:47.65; 3. Jamaica, 1:04:29.13.

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