

UWO earns Program of the Year Award

by Kennan Timm - Friday, June 05, 2009

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The United States Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association has announced the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh as its first winner of the NCAA Division III Al Carius Men's Program of the Year Award.

UW Oshkosh earned the top prize after winning a pair of NCAA Division III track and field titles and placing ninth nationally in cross country.

The Titans won their first national indoor track and field title on March 14, tying Program of the Year runner-up UW-La Crosse, and then captured their first national outdoor track and field title on May 23.

UW-Oshkosh also placed ninth at the NCAA Division III Cross Country Championship on Nov. 22 to finish with a final Program of the Year score of 11.5 points.

UW-La Crosse was just behind UW-Oshkosh in the standings with 12.5 points. UW-Stevens Point finished third in the competition with 38.5 points, while Whitworth University (Wash.) ranked fourth with 40.5 and North Central College (Ill.) fifth with 41.

The Al Carius Program of the Year Award is presented to the most outstanding NCAA Division III men's cross country and track and field program. The award, named after North Central College's legendary coach, honors the institution that achieved the most success while competing at national meets in the sports of cross country, indoor track and field and outdoor track and field.

In order to be eligible for the award, teams must qualify for each of the three NCAA Division III championship meets. Scoring is based on each team's finish, with one point going to first place. The lowest combined score for all three championships determine the award winner.

UW Oshkosh finished fourth in the race for the Deb Vercauteren Women's Program of the Year Award. Wartburg College (Iowa) won the award named after UW Oshkosh's successful head coach, while UW-La Crosse placed second and UW-Eau Claire third.

The UW Oshkosh women placed second at the NCAA Division III Outdoor Track and Field Championship on May 23, third at the NCAA Division III Indoor Track and Field Championship on March 14 and 18th at the NCAA Division III Cross Country Championship on Nov. 22.