**NCAA Championships**

**Friday press conference quotes**

**Sean McGorty, Stanford senior:**

**Q:** How do you feel about the course and the race?

**A:** Terre Haute is a great place to have a race, and I’m super excited for my last cross country race. We have a great group of guys this year and it’s been by far the most fun season I’ve ever had. I’m excited to continue that tomorrow and have a great race.

**Q:** How will the runners deal with the wind?

**A:** (Villanova’s Patrick) Tiernan’s pretty tall, so if we can all tuck in behind him the whole race, that might work out. At least for our team, we’ll have our plan given to us by our coach and we’ll do our best to execute that. The weather is something we can’t control. All we can control is the effort that we give. That’s what we’ll focus on. If we can let the weather affect us as little as possible, whether it’s muddy in the past or windy, I think we’ll be OK.

**Q:** How has your season gone personally?

**A:** It probably wasn’t the season I thought it would be, but it was the most fun I’ve had in cross country. There’s really nothing like cross country. There’s no other time when you’re running for your team. The team goals are taking precedence over individual goals. While it hasn’t been the individual season I might have wanted, that really hasn’t been on mind. It’s been a great season for our team.

It’s been the best culture I think we’ve ever had and I couldn’t be more excited about that and being able to toe the line with six other guys tomorrow and know that everyone is going to do their job and execute their race. Really, the individual aspect doesn’t play a part. I have one of the best teammates in the NCAA (Grant Fisher) who could easily be up here on this podium. I’m just looking forward to that and doing my job for the team.

**Chris Miltenberg, Stanford’s Franklin P. Johnson Director of Track and Field:**

**Q:** How do you feel about the course and the race?

**A:** We’re excited to be back here. This morning, we went over the course and it looked like the best condition we’ve ever seen it in. We’re excited to have two teams enter into the mix. Our team culture is in a really exciting place. This being my fifth year, we’re excited to see the momentum that we’ve built and where it’s headed.

**Q:** Is there a key individual for your team?

**A:** It really is about all seven of our guys. If I had to pick one, I would pick Garrett Sweatt, who is our lone fifth-year on the team. He’s just the epitome of solid, all the time. He’ll be a guy that our younger guys can just follow. We had a similar situation two years ago with Michael Atchoo, who pulled the rest of our team through in the middle and we won our first trophy. If I had to pick one guy, I’d pick Garrett.

And on our women’s team, we’re banking on the freshman spirit. We have three freshmen running in our top five. They’re freshmen, but they’re big-time freshmen. If they can keep doing what they do, we can be pretty good as well.

**Q:** Describe the development of your program.

**A:** It’s been an evolution. Sean, Jack Keelan, and Sam Wharton were my first recruiting class. We told those guys the first day of freshman year that they would have to drive the change we wanted to make. What we’re really building toward is having a group of guys who can line up tomorrow, all seven of them, where they’re not all at the same level, but they can all bank on being able to put the best possible effort forward. That is what we’ve been really working towards. When you have that in a team, then nobody ever starts thinking about themselves and when it gets really hard at 7K and you’re maybe not having a perfect day, you’re not thinking about your perfect day. You’re thinking about how you can keep running for these other six guys. That’s really what we’ve been working toward these last couple of years.

**Q:** Can you describe the progress of your freshmen on the women’s team?

**A:** The real credit there goes to Elizabeth DeBole, who coaches our women. A lot of it was that they’ve run at a really high level before they got to us, so while they are freshmen, their experience is pretty vast and at a really high level. They wanted to be good right away. They wanted to compete. The idea of being patient was something we had to reinforce every single day. With them, rather than bringing them along, it was holding them back, and being patient with them. They’ve made an awesome impact on our entire team culture too.

**Q:** Is there anything better than racing at the NCAA Championships?

**A:** What is more fun than this? I think this event is unique. What makes cross country great is, we always say cross country is the ultimate test of team culture, especially tomorrow because there’s no way you can have seven people have a great day tomorrow. The question is, who can put in really solid days when they’re not having great days. And we always say, that’s reflective of team culture. That’s what makes tomorrow exciting, it’s about team running. Cross country is the last chance, no matter how good you get, to really be part of a team.