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GRAND DAY FOR NOTRE DAME ROWING TEAM AT LEXUS SPRINTS

Four of the five Irish boats qualify for Grand Finals

OAK RIDGE, Tenn.— Racing in conditions that were similar to what they endure at home, the Notre Dame rowing team had a successful first day at the 2002 Lexus Central/Southern Sprints. The 2,000m-course at Melton Hill Lake in Oak Ridge, Tenn., featured bitter cold and strong winds with many of the teams wearing more layers than they are accustomed to. The Fighting Irish were comfortable in the climate and placed four of their five shells in the Grand Finals on Sunday.

Notre Dame got the day off to a good start as the Novice 8+ shell consisting of Maureen Gibbons (coxswain), Kristin Mizzi, Shannon Mohan, Meredith Thornburgh, Christy Donnelly, Rachel Polinski, Ann Mulligan, Devon Hegiman and Katie Chenoweth placed second in its heat in a time of 7:10.9. That performance was followed up with a first-place showing in the first of two repechages at a clip of 6:58.1, thus granting them a spot in the Grand Finals on Sunday.

In the 2nd Varsity 4+ race, ND again finished second this time in 7:50.8. The four was made up of Caitlin Rackish (cox.), Sarah Keefer, Katie O'Hara, Katie McCaulden and Andrea Amoni, and in their repechage the team captured first in 8:01.6, nearly seven seconds faster than the next boat. The Irish will face-off against Clemson, Kansas, Michigan, Ohio State and Tennessee on Sunday with the chance of obtaining a gold medal.

Notre Dame just missed qualifying for the Grand Final of the Varsity 4+ event as the team of Kathryn Long (cox.), Kolleen Myers, Maureen Carr, Elizabeth Specht and Meg Feely placed third in 7:45.1. Earlier in the day, that same fivesome crossed the finish line in 7:47.2 to capture third in its heat.

The Fighting Irish were back in the Grand Finals with the completion of the first semifinal of the 2nd Varsity 8+, as the tandem of Kacy McCaffrey, Kati Sedun, Kerri Murphy, Alice Bartek, Courtney Mercer, Jacqueline Hazen, Melissa Alberding, Kathleen Welsh and Danille Protasewich finished second in a time of 6:51.9. That was an eight-second improvement over its heat time of 7:00.0, which put ND in third.

The last semifinals of the day featured the Varsity 8+ crews and the University of Notre Dame lived up to its #15 ranking as the Cassie Markstahler-guided shell of Jayme Szefc, Michelle Olsgard, Ashlee Warren, Becky Lockett, Diane Price, Natalie Ladine, Kate Besson and Katherine Burnette placed second behind #3 Ohio State in 6:37.1. The Irish also finished second in its heat, as it completed the 2,000m-course in 6:43.3. Sunday's Grand Final will be a showdown of five ranked teams as #3 Ohio State, #5 Michigan, #10 Michigan State, #15 Notre Dame and #20 Duke are all scheduled to compete in the final race of the weekend.

Sunday's finals all begin at 9:00 a.m. starting with the C Final of the Varsity Four. ND will race at 10:15 a.m. (Grand Finals – Novice 8+), 10:45 a.m. (Grand Finals – 2nd Varsity 4+), 11:00 a.m. (Petite Finals – Varsity 4+), 11:45 (Grand Finals – 2nd Varsity 8+) and 12:15 (Grand Finals – Varsity 8+). The Irish will be awarded points depending on their outcome in each of the Grand Finals, looking to finish among the top three.

RESULTS – HEATS

Novice 8+ -- Heat1

1. Ohio State 6:58.7
2. **NOTRE DAME 7:10.9**
3. Michigan State 7:12.2
4. Clemson 7:30.0
5. Kansas State 7:40.1

6. Cincinnati 8:11.8

2nd Varsity 4+ -- Heat 1

1. Ohio State 7:34.7
2. Notre Dame 7:50.8
3. **TENNESSEE 7:53.7**
4. Kansas 8:01.5
5. Cincinnati 8:45.0

Varsity 4+ -- Heat 1

1. Michigan State 7:35.1
2. Minnesota 7:40.0
3. **NOTRE DAME 7:47.2**
4. Duke 7:58.6
5. Kansas State 8:01.0
6. Iowa 8:03.1
7. Miami 8:13.8

2nd Varsity 8+ -- Heat 1

1. Ohio State 6:47.4
2. **NOTRE DAME 6:51.9**
3. Iowa 6:58.6
4. Cincinnati 7:03.1
5. Kansas State 7:04.7

Varsity 8+ -- Heat 3

1. Michigan State 6:41.0
2. **NOTRE DAME 6:43.3**
3. Wisconsin 6:45.5
4. Clemson 6:48.5
5. Louisville 6:51.2
6. Cincinnati 7:00.8

RESULTS – REPECHAGES/SEMIFINALS (* = adv. to Grand Final; ^ = adv. to Petite Final; ~ = adv. to C Final)

Novice 8+ -- Repechage 1

1. **NOTRE DAME* 6:58.1**
2. Indiana* 7:02.2
3. Iowa^ 7:04.6
4. Duke^ 7:05.8
5. Kansas State^ 7:27.6

2nd Varsity 4+ -- Repechage 1

1. **NOTRE DAME* 8:01.6**
2. Clemson* 8:08.4
3. Iowa^ 8:11.6
4. Cincinnati^ 8:17.6

Varsity 4+ -- Repechage 2

1. Texas* 7:34.4
2. Ohio State* 7:38.8
3. **NOTRE DAME^ 7:45.1**
4. Miami^ 8:06.1
5. Clemson^ 8:06.9
6. Kansas State~ 8:07.0

2nd Varsity 8+ -- Semifinal 2

1.	Michigan*	6:54.1
2.	Michigan State*	6:54.4
3.	NOTRE DAME*	7:00.0
4.	Texas^	7:06.7
5.	Cincinnati^	7:18.1
6.	Miami^	7:44.9

Varsity 8+ -- Semifinal 1

1.	Ohio State*	6:31.9
2.	NOTRE DAME*	6:37.1
3.	Duke*	6:38.3
4.	Iowa^	6:38.9
5.	Wisconsin^	6:41.8
6.	Tennessee^	6:50.0

NOTRE DAME SCHEDULE FOR SUNDAY (ALL TIMES EDT)

10:15 a.m.	Grand Final – Novice 8+
10:45 a.m.	Grand Final – 2nd Varsity 4+
11:00 a.m.	Petite Final – Varsity 4+
11:45 a.m.	Grand Final – 2nd Varsity 8+
12:15 p.m.	Grand Final – Varsity 8+

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