JUSTIN-pr (30 seconds)

AMANDA- 45 seconds off MFC

The Michigan Running Club embarked on a 36-hour excursion to Chicago to attend the Loyola Lakefront Invitational! The meet featured both varsity and club teams, creating a competition with over 40 teams in each of the men’s and women’s races, and over 500 runners in each race!

The weather was beautiful. Mid-50s, pretty cloudy, cool breeze, overlooking the city and the lake… MRun couldn’t have asked for more!

**ATHLETES OF THE MEET:**

**Amanda Balk:** Amanda ran a phenomenal race, placing 5th for the MRun women’s team. She improved her race time by about 45 seconds from her 5k last week at MFC. Way to go Amanda!

**Justin Waraniak:** Justin paced himself very well resulting in a great personal best in the 8k, by about 30 seconds. He led the MRun men most of the race and was the team’s 2nd finisher. Way to go Justin!

The men competed first, racing in the 8 km run. This meet was critical for the national rankings, as several of the best club teams in the nation were in attendance. The team’s NIRCA pre-season rankings, as well as their place at the invitational and last year’s national place are shown. Overall, the rankings seem to hold pretty well!

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Team | NIRCA Rank | Place at Loyola | Last Year’s Place |
| Virginia | 1st | DNR | 3rd |
| Iowa State | 2nd | 12th | 5th |
| Illinois | 3rd | 13th | 4th |
| Wisconsin | 4th | 19th | 2nd |
| MRun | 5th | 21st | 1st |
| Indiana | 7th | 18th | 9th |

On the field, the men overall ran very well. Leading the team in 122nd place was once again Garrett Cullen, in a time of 26:52. Right behind him, but leading the MRun pack for almost the entire race, was Justin Waraniak, finishing in a time of 26:57. The next pack of Wolverines came in within 10 seconds: Thomas Noel (27:19), Will Kane (27:22), and Josh Partridge (27:27). Both Josh and Will set personal best times. Sixth for MRun was Robert Glew, and rounding out the top 7 was Jimmy Adams. Jimmy was leading MRun and top 15 in the race, opening in a sub-5 minute mile. Unfortunately fatigue kicked in the second half of the race, but this stellar athlete shows great promise for leading MRun to a great race at nationals.

Other highlights on the men’s side include Thomas Yeh’s 28:26 finish, after eating over 1 lb of pasta at dinner the previous night in just 11 minutes, 3 seconds, yet another set MRun record. Last year, the pasta impeded with his performance, but clearly this wasn’t the case. To earn his title he defeated competition Matt Harkreader and Zakir Duremeric to accomplish this!

The women, running a 5k race, did not have the luxury of viewing the other top-ranked teams across the nation at the invitational. Still they proved to be a dominant force, leading the club team to a 19th place finish, ahead of all but one club team. Leading MRun in 64th place was Christina Capriccioso, with a speedy time of 18:52. She was a great addition to the previously dominant team that raced at the Fall Classic invite! Finishing second was Mollie Pozolo, finishing in a time of 19:13. Rounding out the top 7 for the wolverines were Yasmine White (20:04), Annabelle Schuelke (20:29), Amanda Balk (20:31), Lindsay Doherty (21:50), and Katie Grassa (20:53). Annabelle Schuelke achieved her career fastest time ever. All of these women are returning to the team next fall, and as ranked 5th this year, this bears even more promise to what our women will do in the future!