

Charamba hauls in trio of bronze medals on final day of NCAA Outdoor Championships
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ALLENDALE, Mich. - On the final day of the 2022 NCAA Outdoor Championships, Makanakaishe Charamba earned three bronze medals in three different events to close out his freshman season.

The day opened with a bang for the convocation, as the men's 4x100 meter relay group of PJ Lotharp, Makanakaishe Charamba, Siphosethu Boya, and Devon Moore took home the bronze medal, finishing third with another school record time in the event. The quartet recorded a time of 39.63 seconds, beating the old record time they set in the preliminary round on Thursday, May 26, by 0.12 seconds. The group has now broken the school record in five straight races.

With the third-place finish, Charamba earns his first career All-American honor, while Lotharp and Boya earn their first All-American honors at Carson-Newman. Lotahrp earned All-American honors last season with the Lenoir-Rhyne men's 4x100 meter relay group. Devon Moore earns a school record eleventh career All-American honor.

The group are the first C-N relay group in program history to earn All-American honors.

In the 100-meter run finals, Charamba took home his second bronze medal of the day, finishing third with a time of 10.52 seconds. His teammate Boya finished sixth with a time of 10.56 seconds. The pair earn their first individual All-American honors at Carson-Newman. With the top-eight finishes, C-N has had an All-American represented in the men's 100-meter run in four straight outdoor seasons.

Charamba ends his first season in Mossy Creek with eight top-five finishes in the 100-meter run, while Boya recorded five top-10 finishes in the event.

Charamba closed out his freshman campaign with his third bronze medal at the championships, finishing third in the 200-meter run. His time of 20.44 seconds is just 0.03 seconds away from tying his school record set in the prelims on Friday, May 27.

Charamba ends the year with seven top-three finishes in the outdoor 200-meter run.

"It was a good day," says needs "Maka showed a lot of strength for a freshman. Sipho gutted out a top-eight finish despite a quad injury. Both of those guys once again went out and broke a school record. When you go out and run two-three races in a day and finish at that high of a level, you've done a great job. All of our guys put in their maximum effort and every single one of them are coming back as All-Americans. Our entire staff worked hard and made this a special trip that we will remember for a really long time."

The Carson-Newman men's team ended the outdoor championships with 26 total points, finishing 12th. The convocation finish the season with eight first team All-Americans and one second team All-American.

Six women's track & field/cross country athletes named to CoSIDA Academic All-District Team

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INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. - For the second straight season, multiple Carson-Newman women's track & field and cross country athletes were selected to the CoSIDA Academic All-District Team, announced on Thursday, May 26.

Morgan Bailey, Marlee Baker, Klara Naude, Susan Nelson, Abby Owens and Rachel Strayer all represent the convocation in District Three, representing the SAC, Conference Carolinas and Peach Belt. Carson-Newman holds sixty percent of the Academic All-District team, the most representatives from any school in the region.

Of the six athletes honored, five of them hold a 4.0 GPA.

Morgan Bailey makes the list for the second straight season. The Mount Juliet, Tenn. native holds a 4.0 GPA while double majoring in Religion and Exercise Science. During the indoor season, Bailey set new personal bests in both the 60-meter and 400-meter runs. As a member of the 4x400 meter relay team, she led the Eagles to a third-place medal at the ETSU Invitational.

In the outdoor season, Bailey set personal bests in the 100-meter and 200-meter runs, along with the 400-meter hurdles. The junior recorded eleven top-10 finishes during the 2021-22 track & field season.

The lone Academic All-American from last season for Carson-Newman, Marlee Baker makes the All-District team, earning a 4.0 GPA while studying Psychology. Baker recorded ten top-10 finishes in the pole vault this season, including a fourth-place finish at the Tiger Paw Classic. Baker finished fifth at the SAC Outdoor Championships in the event with a clearance of 2.80 meters.

Klara Naude graduated from Carson-Newman this past semester, graduating with a 4.0 GPA while majoring in Exercise Science. The South Africa native returned to the cross country and track & field teams this year after missing the 2020-21 season due to Covid restrictions in her native country.

Naude finished 15th in the 5K at the Tusculum Open with a time of 24:13.6, her first cross country race in over two years. In her track & field return, Naude set a personal best in the 400-meter run at the Lee Invitational with a time of 1:05.46.

Susan Nelson makes the list earning a 4.0 GPA while majoring in Exercise Science. Nelson was part of a successful women's jump squad, recording six top-10 finishes in the long jump, including a third-place finish at the Electric City Invitational in Anderson with a mark of 5.27 meters.

Abby Owens dominated off the field as well as on it this season for the Eagles, earning a 4.0 GPA while double majoring in Mathematics and Philosophy. Owens recorded eight top-10

finishes in the pole vault this season, recording event championships at the Lee Invitational and Electric City Invitational.

She ended the indoor season with a second-place finish at the SAC Indoor Championships with a clearance of 3.10 meters. At the SAC Outdoor Championships, Owens won her second straight gold medal with a clearance of 3.45 meters.

Rachel Strayer ends her career in Mossy Creek as one of the most prolific distance runners in program history. The senior graduated from Carson-Newman with a 3.97 GPA and earning a degree in Exercise Science.

In her return to the cross-country course, Strayer earned All-Region honors for the third straight season, recording four top-20 finishes, including a third-place finish at the Tusculum Open in the 5K with a time of 20:09.07. The senior led the Eagles at every single race the convocation competed in during the 2021 season.

On the track, Strayer broke two school records to end her career. The Murfreesboro, Tenn. native beat out Aubrey beat Morris' time set in 2009 of 18:25.00 by a whopping 42.05 seconds in the race at Western Kentucky. Strayer's time also beats her former outdoor personal best of 18:45.21 by 1:03.04.

In her final race of the season, Strayer finished 14th in the 10,00-meter run with a time of 39:10.96. Strayer beat the record set back in 2019 by Bekah White by 1:19.24 seconds. She leaves with three school records in cross country and three in track & field.

The 2021-22 Academic All-District® Women's Track & Field / Cross Country Team, selected by CoSIDA, recognizes the nation's top student-athletes for their combined performances in the competition realm and in the classroom. The CoSIDA Academic All-America® program separately recognizes honorees in four divisions — NCAA Division I, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III and NAIA.

First-team Academic All-District® honorees advance to the CoSIDA Academic All-America® ballot. First-, second- and third-team Academic All-America® honorees will be announced in mid-June.

Instant replay: Main takeaways from NIU's 22-21 win at Georgia Tech

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ATLANTA - The Northern Illinois football team scored a late touchdown and two-point conversion to come back and knock off Georgia Tech, 22-21, on Saturday.

Here are five takeaways from Saturday night's contest at Bobby Dodd Stadium, the first win at a Power Five school in three years for NIU.

Rocky start, solid finish

Rocky Lombardi struggled early in the game, going just 5-for-8 for 48 yards passing in the first half. The transfer from Michigan State ended strong, leading a game-winning, 75-yard drive and two-point conversion for the Huskies with 0:30 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

On the final drive, Lombardi connected with Messiah Travis on the first play to get the Huskies into Georgia Tech territory.

Lombardi then showed off his mental awareness and leadership by rushing out of bounds. He connected with Ratkovich to score a TD before hitting Tyrice Richie for the game-winning two-point conversion.

"I caught it," Richie said, as the play was reviewed before being upheld as a catch. "I told my teammates and coach I caught it. I take pride in catching the ball. I know I'm going to get hit a lot, but I'm going to catch the ball."

Leading the charge

After going three-and-out on their first two drives and a missed Georgia Tech field goal, NIU was able to strike first with a 35-yard run by Harrison Waylee to put the Huskies up 7-0 in the first quarter.

It is the first time the Huskies held a lead against a Power Five conference team since leading Utah 7-0 in the first quarter on Sept. 9, 2019. The Utes took a 21-17 lead at the half and pulled away to win that game 35-17.

It is the first time NIU has held a halftime lead on a Power Five team since Sept. 8, 2018, when the Huskies lead the Utes in DeKalb after thirty minutes 3-0. The Utes went on to win that game as well by a score of 17-6.

And it was the first win against a Power Five since a 7-6 win at BYU on October 27, 2018.

Under pressure

Both team's QBs were under pressure early and often. Rocky Lombardi took a hard hit on the second play of the game for the NIU offense, altering the trajectory of his pass. On Georgia Tech's first drive, Jeff Sims took an early sack from a pack of Huskies, led by Devonte O'Malley. On an early fourth down attempt, Sims was pressured by Nick Rattin just enough to force an incomplete pass.

In Jordan Yates' first play at quarterback for the Yellowjackets after Sims was knocked out unsuccessfully trying to recover a fumble, he narrowly avoided a sack in the endzone.

Later in the drive, Yates had a wide-open receiver but missed him as three Huskies chased him out of the pocket. NIU finished the first half with three sacks.

Lafayette carted off

With under 2 minutes left in the first half Huskie safety Devin Lafayette was injured after taking a block from a Georgia Tech offensive lineman on a rollout pass. Lafayette had to be taken out of the game in an ambulance to a local hospital. Lafayette had been a force on defense for the Huskies before his injury, recording four total tackles, the second-most in the first half.

His status was unknown after the game.

Run Waylee, run

Harrison Waylee put the Huskies on his back, accounting for over 100 yards and a TD. It is the third straight game that Waylee has had at least 100 yards rushing dating back to last season. Waylee finished with 27 carries for a career-best 144 yards, and was one of only three Huskies to run the ball Saturday. Clint Ratkovich had seven carries for 13 yards, and Lombardi carried five times for 23 yards.

CONFERENCE CHAMPS! Eagles pull away in the second half to win eleventh SAC regular season championship

Originally published Oct. 31, 2021, to cneagles.com

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. - On a rainy Homecoming weekend, the Carson-Newman Eagles used a pair of second half goals from Tim Vercelli and Harry Whitehead to knock off #11 Limestone 2-0 to earn their eleventh SAC regular season championship on Saturday, Oct. 30.

"We knew Limestone was going to be a tough team with a lot of good players," says head men's soccer coach Stephen Lyons. "The conditions were tough for both sides and we played some good football despite the surface. We got opportunities and pounced on them and the guys on the bench and even the guys that didn't even get to play kept the energy up all night."

After recording six shots in the first half of the contest, the Eagles finally broke through in the 49th minute to go up 1-0 early thanks to a goal by Vercelli off an assist by Yannick Kranz. The assist is Kranz's sixth of the season, good enough for a tie for fourth most in the SAC. The goal was Vercelli's first goal since September 18th when he also recorded the game-winner against Wingate.

"Tim had another big goal against Wingate," says Lyons. "So, we know when he gets open, he's dangerous in the final third. He offers us a lot on both sides of the ball and his work rate is really good."

"Early on we were on point, and it was one of our strengths," says Vercelli. "Like last game we scored quick in the second half and wanted to open the game and from there on we had a perfect game on both sides. We took the conditions very well and knew what was ahead of us. A very good opponent and it was perfect fighting weather, and we took the fight and earned the win."

Carson-Newman extended their lead in the 71st minute when Thaylan Silva found Whitehead off a corner kick with a perfect pass to connect with the junior from Oxford, England to swell the Eagle lead to 2-0. The assist is Silva's nineteenth of his career and moves him into a tie with Robert Hill for fourth most all-time in school history. The assist also gives Silva his 26th point of the season, good enough for fifth most in the conference.

"Even when Thay doesn't get goals, he's able to create space for the players," says Lyons. "He'll create assists for other players as well. His movement and his ability to drive other players and commit them to the task is very good and he pushes others."

Limestone earned their best chance of the night in the 77th minute after Kranz fouled Jacob Hancock in the box, setting up a penalty kick opportunity for the Saints. Bram Kaarsgaren used all his six-foot seven-inch frame to stop the speeding shot to keep the Saints off the scoreboard and preserve the shutout.

"Bram's save was a huge moment," says Lyons. "That could've been a momentum shifter, but he was strong in net for us."

For the second match in a row, Kaarsgaren recorded six saves. His 51 saves this season are the fifth most in the SAC. Kaarsgaren is now recording a save percentage of .797, first in the SAC.

Limestone recorded just one more shot in the final thirteen minutes of action, and when the horn sounded the Eagles claimed the 2-0 victory and their 11th SAC regular season championship in program history, the most of any South Atlantic Conference team.

The win secures Carson-Newman's first back-to-back regular season championship since the 2008-2010 teams won three straight titles. Carson-Newman secures their third straight one-seed in the SAC Tournament, meaning the Eagles will host a SAC Quarterfinal match on the banks of Mossy Creek on Saturday, Nov. 6.

Multiple records were surpassed by the Eagles in the win over the nationally ranked Saints. The win is the first win over a ranked team for Carson-Newman since knocking off #15 Coker in overtime on Oct. 12, 2019. It is also the second-highest ranked team that the Eagles have defeated under the guidance of Stephen Lyons. Carson-Newman knocked off #5 Lenoir-Rhyne on September 20, 2017

A week after setting the all-time program record for minutes played, Greg Evans tied Vince Vargas for third-most games started in school history with his 69th start in the Orange and Blue. Evans extended his minutes played record to an astounding 6104 minutes on the pitch.

Kaarsgaren also moved up the ladder in goalie records. The Dutchman passed Tyler Baldock for third-most games started in goal in school history with his 39th start. The win is also Kaarsgaren's tenth of the season in net for the Eagles, breaking a tie with himself in 2019 and Twan Verwelj in 2018 for ninth most in a single season.

The Eagles wrap up the regular season with a trip to Hickory, N.C. on Wednesday, Nov. 3 to take on the Lenoir-Rhyne Bears. A win would give Carson-Newman their most wins in the regular season since winning fourteen contests during the 2015 regular season. Carson-Newman finished the 2015 campaign with a 15-3-2 record.

"We want to keep up the winning momentum," says Lyons. "Lenoir-Rhyne is a very good team and are high in the conference rankings. We're going to celebrate tonight but recover and get back at on the pitch on Monday."

Coverage begins at 7:30 P.M. on the Bears Sports Network. Links to a live video stream and stats can be found at cneagles.com. Fans can also follow along on the new home of Carson-Newman athletics on Twitter for updates at [@CN_Eagles](https://twitter.com/CN_Eagles).