

Successful rival coach looks to establish cross country, track program at Wesleyan

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Texas Wesleyan students will be able to compete in cross country and track beginning next fall.

The men's and women's cross country and track teams will be coached by Natnael Amare, who came from Texas Wesleyan's rival, Northwood University.

However, Amare is not concerned with school rivalry issues.

"Luckily with cross country and track, there isn't much rivalry like there is in other sports," he said.

Texas Wesleyan has never competed in cross country or track, so rivalry is minimal with Northwood University in the sports.

"We recognize Northwood's cross country and track programs as the best in the conference, but we want to beat everyone, not just Northwood," Athletic Director Kevin Millikan said. "We strive to be number one through hard work and great coaching. Amare will lead us there."

Amare left Northwood University after six successful seasons. He led Northwood to

six Red River Athletic Conference Championships in men's cross country, six RRAC Championships in women's cross country, six runner-up finishes in women's track and three runner-up finishes in men's track.

"We hired Amare for his excellence and ability to create a competitive and winning atmosphere," Millikan said. "He was selected from eight to 10 applicants for his superior work ethic and familiarity with the NAIA."

An alumnus of Northwood University, Amare was a 20-time All-RRAC selection and eight-time RRAC individual champion in cross country and track. He became Northwood's first National Champion in 2000 after he won the marathon at the NAIA National Outdoor Track meet with a time of two hours, 33 minutes, 36 seconds. In 2003, he represented Eritrea, Africa, at the IAAF World Championships in Lausanne, Switzerland.

"One of his best assets is that he is not only a great athlete, but a great coach as well," Millikan said. "His personality and work ethic will be great for our department. He will

represent Texas Wesleyan and our new programs very well."

Recruiting has started for the programs as Amare is looking for student-athletes who are willing to work hard and are in school for the right reasons.

"I am committed to my student-athletes and their success," Amare said. "I want to win the conference championships and take the teams to nationals."

Amare said new programs bring along challenges, but he is prepared to face them.

"I am going to strive to make sure the new programs reach the same level as the other athletic programs at Wesleyan," he said. "I hope to host the conference championship this year."

Amare also wants to host high school meets to attract students to Wesleyan as he believes it is good for future students to see the campus.

Cross country will start next fall with men running an 8k and women a 5k. Indoor track will begin spring 2011, followed by outdoor track from March to May.

Competitions and training will take place at Trinity Park and Gateway Park in Fort



Courtesy of the athletic department

Natnael Amare

Worth. Training days will consist of the women's team training first, followed immediately by the men's team. Cross country training will begin at the end of May this semester.

"Students are really excited to have a cross country and track program on campus," Amare said. "Everyone who wants to be on the teams will have a chance."

Sophomore Diana Lopez is very interested in the new programs.

"I am looking forward to being able to compete in track," she said. "I am excited to get started and win championships."

Along with recruiting, Amare is currently working on hiring an assistant coach and will have one in place by summer.

For more information about the Texas Wesleyan cross country or track team, contact Natnael Amare at namare@txwes.edu.

Bobby Bragan Wesleyan grieves loss of long-time supporter, friend

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"Mr. Baseball," Bobby Bragan, died Jan. 21 at the age of 92.

Born in Birmingham, Ala., on Oct. 30, 1917, Bragan has long been considered Fort Worth's ambassador of baseball, joining the Fort Worth Cats' organization in the 1940s.

Bragan represented Philadelphia Phillies from 1940-42 and Brooklyn Dodgers from 1943-48 as a player. The infield-catcher missed the 1945 and '46 seasons to serve in the U.S. military. In the '47 season he made his only World Series appearance, after which he became a player-manager for the Cats, leading them to two Texas League regular-season and one playoff championship.

Bragan later worked as a major league manager for Pittsburgh Pirates, Cleveland Indians, and Milwaukee/Atlanta Braves before becoming the president of the Texas League in 1969.

"I first met Mr. Bragan in 1969," University President Dr. Harold Jeffcoat said. "He was the Texas League president, and I played for the San Francisco Giants' minor league team in Amarillo. I made the All-Star team and received my MVP medal from him."

Thirty-one years later they would meet again.

"In 2000, he was the host of the Wesley Sunday Bible class at the First Methodist Church," said Jeffcoat. "My wife and I became good friends with Bobby and Betty Bragan."

Having moved to Fort Worth upon retirement, Bragan also founded the Bobby Bragan Youth Foundation in 1992. The foundation's purpose is to encourage middle school students to become better scholars and community advocates. So far, hundreds of deserving eighth-graders from the Metroplex have received college scholarships from the Bobby Bragan Youth Foundation.

Bragan was also a supporter of Wesleyan. Renovations of the Polytechnic United Methodist Church were made possible through his donation, and students, faculty and staff can visit the Betty and Bobby Bragan Fellowship Hall in the church.

"Bobby Bragan did not only support the community in general," said Jeffcoat. "He was a substantial supporter of the youth and Texas Wesleyan in particular, and we will always appreciate what he has done for us."

Both Betty and Bobby Bragan received honorary doctorates in the field of humanities from Texas Wesleyan in 2004.

Sources include Fort Worth Star-Telegram and Texas Wesleyan archives.

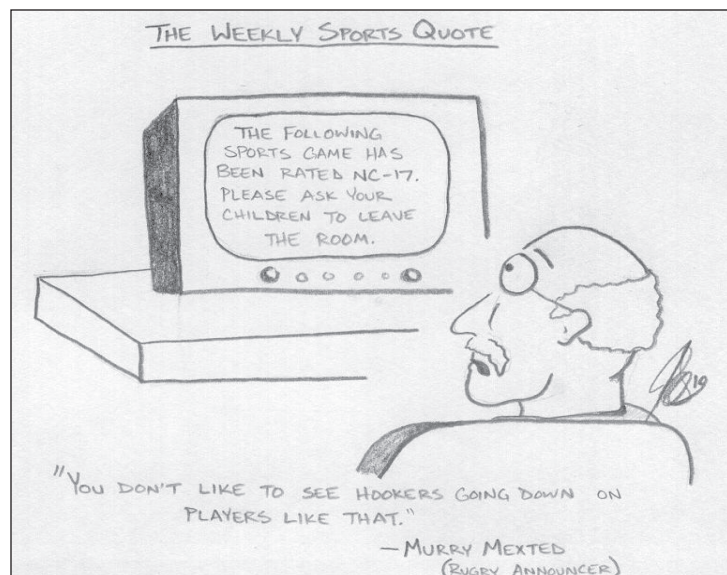


Courtesy of the special collections of the West Library

Bobby Bragan

Wesleyan week-in-sports

- The Lady Rams Basketball team (10-5, 6-1 RRAC) earned a close, 64-60, conference win against Jarvis Christian College Jan. 23. Kristi Alexander led the Rams with 12 points.
- The Rams Basketball team (14-4, 7-0 RRAC) beat Jarvis Christian College (92-74) in conference action Jan. 23. Jeremy Smith led the Rams with 19 points.



Upcoming Sports

	Game	Time/Place
Thursday	Women's Basketball vs. Huston-Tillotson University	5:30 p.m. Sid W. Rich.
	Men's Basketball vs. Huston-Tillotson University	7:30 p.m. Sid W. Rich.
Saturday	Women's Basketball vs. Our Lady of the Lake University	2 p.m. San Antonio
	Men's Basketball vs. Our Lady of the Lake University	4 p.m. San Antonio
Tuesday	Baseball vs. Southwestern Univ.	2 p.m. LaGrave Field

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