

1986

After a much-improved season the year before, the 1986 Lady Hornets were starting to focus on team success. Led by senior Amy Potter at the season-opening Wichita State University Gold Classic, ESU placed five runners in the top 10 to win the competition. Potter had put in the off-season work to improve dramatically and she wasted no time in displaying her improved skills. Potter's time of 18:26 was two minutes faster than the time she ran on the same course a year earlier. The Lady Hornets finished 2nd behind K-State and were also edged out the following week by six points by Kansas University at the KU Invitational. Potter again led the women, running 18:27, followed by Susan Stine, Gloria Bates, and

1986 Women's XC Team: National Runner-Up

The 1986 Lady Hornets finished 2nd in the NAIA National meet in Kenosha, Wisconsin. ESU won the conference and district meets, placing five runners in the top eight in both meets.



Trudy Searcy. Searcy ran at Barton County Community College and transferred to ESU, not intending to compete at ESU. However, when Coach Stanbrough found out she was on campus, he quickly visited the young runner and persuaded her to walk on and continue her career. She later set the ESU school record at 10,000 meters and became an All-American.

The 1986 Emporia Invitational was a display of ESU dominance, with the Lady Hornets racking up a perfect score of 15 points led by Stine, Potter, and Searcy. One of the toughest competitions of the 1986 season occurred at the Swede Invitational at Bethany. The Air Force Academy out of

Colorado Springs edged out Emporia 60 to 68. Sophomore Stine led the Hornets, her 3rd place time of 17:53 cutting almost a minute off her previous best time.

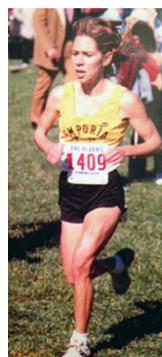
Stine continued her winning ways at the Pittsburg State Invite. The sophomore from Pleasanton ran 17:30 to PR again. Teammates Potter (17:50) and Bates (17:51) also got PRs as the Hornets placed five runners in the top 10 to win by 47 points.

The Lady Hornets were rolling and full of confidence as they returned to Pittsburg State for the CSIC championships. Stine (17:43) led a 2-3-4-5 Emporia finish to a low score of 21 points over the 3-mile course. Potter, (3rd in 17:55), Bates (4th in 18:09), Dutton (5th in 18:22), and Searcy (7th in 18:26) gave ESU five in the top seven for a dominating victory.

The women entered the District 10 meet looking to get a win and a berth to the national meet. Placing five runners in the top eight in another dominating performance, they finished

Susan Stine: All-American

Susan Stine was a four-time All-American for the Hornets from 1985-1990. She led the E-State women's cross country team to a runner-up finish at the 1986 NAIA National Cross Country Championships. She was a five-time District 10 champion in track and cross country, leading her teams to four District 10 titles. Stine also set school records at 5000 meters and the 2-mile run.



with only 19 points, far ahead of defending champion Fort Hays' total of 68 points. Senior Potter led a 1-2-3 sweep, winning the 5K race in 18:03, Stine was 2nd in 18:12 and Bates was 3rd in 18:44, Dutton was 6th at 19:04, and Searcy was 8th at 19:12. All five ESU runners were under the course record.

The Lady Hornets capped an impressive season by finishing 2nd to host Wisconsin-Parkside at the 1986 NAIA National Cross Country Championships in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Parkside finished with 121 points and ESU totaled 151 points. Thirty-five teams and 289 individuals finished the competition. ESU's leading runners again were Stine and Potter, who both earned All-American honors. This was the only season in women's school history that ESU has had more than one cross country All-American. Stine, the CSIC champion, finished 14th in 18:15 while Potter, the District 10 champion, was 16th in 18:17. Bates finished 40th in 18:45. It was a dramatic improvement for the three who ran at nationals the year before. Stine moved up 44 places and ran over two minutes faster. Potter moved up an amazing 116 places and ran 3 minutes faster, Bates moved up 83 spots and ran over 2 minutes faster. Searcy had a tremendous race, finishing 48th in 18:48. Dutton had fought a stress fracture the first half of the season but battled back to finish 74th in 19:15. Jean Kolarik was 179th in 20:33 and Peggy Teichgraber 214th in 21:00 completed the team results.

Amy Potter: All-American

Amy Potter competed for the Hornets from 1985-1987. Her 16th place finish at the 1986 NAIA National Cross Country Championships helped the Lady Hornets to a NAIA runner-up finish. Potter won the 1986 District 10 cross country title.



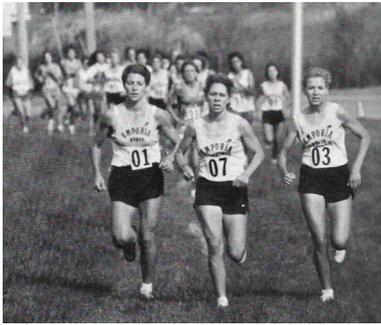
1987

The Lady Hornets entered the 1987 season fresh off a 2nd place finish in the national meet. Despite losing cross country All-American Potter and outdoor track All-American Trudy Searcy to graduation, five letter winners returned, so there was considerable excitement for the 1987 season. Susan Stine returned for her junior year and was joined by Mary Griebel, a junior transfer from Fort Hays, and Cindy Blakeley, a senior transfer who was 36th in the 1986 NAIA National Cross Country Championships. Blakeley had started her career at the University of Kansas, then transferred to Ottawa University.

The promising season started at the Wichita Gold Classic with a 2nd place team finish with newcomer Blakeley immediately making an impact by leading the Hornets over the 3-mile course with a 6th place finish in 18:09. Griebel finished 8th in 18:08 and Stine, battling an injury, placed 14th in 18:56. The Hornets competed as the only non-NCAA school in the seven-team Jayhawk Invitational cross country meet at Rim Rock Farm. The Lady Hornets, paced by Blakeley's win, totaled just 38 points to best Kansas University with 54 points on their home course. The meet was especially satisfying for Blakeley. She competed on the 5000-meter course as a freshman for the University of Kansas, before transferring to Ottawa University, and then to ESU. The Lawrence Journal World newspaper did a preview on the meet and never mentioned the Lady Hornets as a contender, only have to have ESU emerge victorious, shocking the NCAA DI schools. Blakeley threw in a powerful surge with slightly more than a mile remaining to take the lead and cruise to a 15 second victory 18:11 over the 5K course. Griebel finished

Lady Hornets Shock Jayhawks

The Lawrence Journal World newspaper did a preview on the 1987 Jayhawk Cross Country Invitational meet and never mentioned the Lady Hornets as a team contender. After all, there were seven teams competing and ESU was the only non-NCAA school. However, the Lady Hornets paced by Cindy Blakeley's win totaled just 38 points to best Kansas University with 54 points on their home course. The win was especially satisfying for Blakeley, as she ran for KU as a freshman before late transferring to Emporia State.



From left to right: Blakeley, Stine, and Griebel lead the Emporia Invitational

Blakeley, and Tyrrell led the way with a 10th place finish. ESU continued an impressive season by placing five runners in the top 11 to again beat the University of Kansas at the Pittsburg State Invitational. The Lady Hornets, competing without an injured Stine, totaled 30 points to the Jayhawks 40. Blakeley led ESU with a 2nd place finish 18:04, Griebel was 5th in 18:34, and Tyrrell 7th in 19:04. Blakeley also won the Southwestern Invitational as the Hornets finished 2nd in holding some runners out.

The Lady Hornets had proven themselves worthy of being a national contender over the course of the 1987 season. The District 10 championships posed a challenge for the Hornets. Although they had no returners back to defend their championship from the previous year, the Hornets were still the overwhelming favorite to win the meet. Stine was fighting injuries and was held out of the meet, Potter and Dutton had graduated, Bates got married, and Searcy transferred to pursue a career in physical therapy. However, the Hornets had a dominating runner in Blakeley.

3rd in 18:42 and Stine followed in 4th in 18:50. Michelle Tyrrell, a freshman from Osawatomie, finished 10th in 19:19.

Fresh off the victory over KU, the Hornets moved up to the number one ranking in the NAIA Cross Country National Rankings. The Hornets demonstrated why they were ranked so highly at the ESU Invitational by placing the top 5 scoring runners among the top 10 for an impressive 20-point total. Blakeley and teammates Stine and Griebel ran together through the first mile of the 5000-meter course. Blakeley began to pull away in the second mile, opening a 30-yard lead over her teammates and went on to win in 18:56 with Stine 2nd in 19:19. Griebel finished 4th in 19:37. Tyrrell add a 7th place and Jennifer Strader a 10th to round out the scoring.

The Hornets continued to crush the fields with five among the top 10 again in the 20-team field at the Swede Invitational in Lindsborg. Blakeley, bothered by illness, still managed a 2nd place finish in 17:23 over the 3-mile course. Stine followed in 4th (17:44), and Griebel in 5th (17:57), as ESU totaled just 25 points with a whopping 59-point victory over Fort Hays. The Hornets traveled to the SW Missouri Invitational and placed 3rd in the 6-team field. The Hornets did not run

Cindy Blakeley: All-American

Cindy Blakeley earned All-American honors in cross country in 1987, finishing 9th in the NAIA national meet. She was the national runner-up in the 1988 indoor mile, setting a new ESU record. Blakeley went on to have a long career competing as an active runner, winning numerous national masters awards.



Blakeley had finished the previous year's district meet in 4th place behind three Lady Hornets when she ran for Ottawa. In a competitive, supporting team environment at ESU, Blakeley prospered to finish 1st or 2nd in 6 meets. The Lady Hornets ran the 1987 conference meet on their familiar home campus course. For the first two miles, Blakeley ran even with Kearney State's outstanding runner Donna Spickelmeier, who had finished 5th in the NAIA National Cross Country meet the previous year. The two built a lead of approximately 100 yards on the rest of the field. After climbing Highland Hill, they entered a wooded area out of the view of the spectators. When the two emerged some 45 seconds later, Blakeley had a 25-yard lead and later explained, "As soon as I got over the top of the big hill, I didn't slow down. I just kept accelerating into the little hills. A lot of people don't pay much attention to those little hills. But when you've run the course enough times, you know you have to."

Griebel fell early but recovered to finish 5th, Tyrrell was 8th, Strader 11th, and Kolarik 16th. Despite the conference win, the women realized they still had work to do to qualify for nationals. It would take a top-two team finish to qualify. The Hornets totaled 35 points to edge host Pittsburg State with 40 points. Blakeley again established her dominance, taking the lead at the mile mark and running solo to the victory with a 33-second winning margin in 18:19. Tyrrell continued her tremendous rookie season, teaming with Griebel to run 2nd and 3rd behind Blakeley until the last half-mile of the race, with Tyrrell finishing 4th and Griebel 5th.

The Lady Hornets finished 11th in the NAIA National Cross Country meet with Blakeley topping off a fantastic season by finishing in 9th place to earn All-American recognition. Her time on the hilly 5000-meter course in 17:52 was her first time under 18 minutes for 5K. Tyrrell finished 79th in 19:13, Griebel was 81st in 19:13, Strader 118th in 19:43, Kolarik in 138th in 19:56. After finishing 14th in the meet a year earlier, an injured Stine finished 163rd, running through pain to help her team.

1988

The Lady Hornets entered the 1988 season with only two of their top seven runners returning off of the District 10 and CSIC championship team that finished 11th at the NAIA Nationals the previous year. With four-time All-American Susan Stine red-shirting, a relatively inexperienced cross country team carried the ESU banner in 1988. ESU started the season with a 2nd place tie at Wichita State led by Strader in 8th, Gretchen Bohm in 9th, and Tyrrell in 10th. A highlight of the season included a 2nd place team finish at the ESU Invitational behind Kansas State. Strader led the Hornets in 10th, followed by Bohm and Tyrrell in 12th and 13th, respectively. Bohm took over as the number one runner at the Swede Invite to lead the team to a 3rd place finish. Bohm had arrived in Emporia as an accomplished sprinter from Cheney High School. Stanbrough convinced her to run cross country and she was a back-of-the pack runner her first year. However, her tremendous work ethic led to gradual improvement every year and eventually she worked her way up to be the team front runner and leader.

Strader contended for the number one runner in leading a Lady Hornet 4-5-6 finish at the Southwest Missouri State triangular, as the women were edged out of the team title by a single point by Memphis State. ESU picked up another 2nd place finish, their fifth of the season, at the Southwestern Invite with Bohm running 19:21 in 7th place.

The Lady Hornets were unable to defend their conference and district titles they had won the previous two years. They finished 4th in the CSIC meet, only three points out of 2nd, behind the 7, 8, 9 finishes of Strader, Bohm, and Tyrrell. The women were 3rd in the District 10 meet, led by Strader's 10th place finish. The 1988 season was an up and down season with ESU finishing out of the top two district spots

for the first time in history and with no national qualifiers for the first time in Stanbrough's five years of coaching at Emporia State.

1989

The 1989 cross country season began at the Wichita State Gold Classic. The women, competing against three NCAA schools, captured a 2nd place finish. A very balanced attack helped ESU sneak up on some quality teams in the women's race. Junior Michelle Tyrrell paced the squad with an 8th place finish in 19:54, with Bohm and freshman Katie Wheeler following in 9th and 10th.

ESU finished 4th at the Kansas University Invitational behind Michigan, Kansas, and Eastern Michigan. Pacing the Lady Hornets were Tyrrell and Bohm, who finished 15th and 20th, in times of 20:10 and 20:33. Freshman Michelle Hebb finished strong as ESU's third runner. The times were affected by prior heavy rains making the course soft and adding to the challenges of the demanding hills of the KU Rim Rock course. Bohm led the ESU women to a meet championship at the Baker University Invitational, finishing in 3rd with a 19:31 for the 5K course. Freshmen Wheeler and Hebb finished in 5th and 6th place. The Lady Hornets won again at the ESU home meet, scoring 21 to Hutchinson's 36 points. Senior Bohm held back to help Hebb and Wheeler along for part the race. At the midway point of the 3-mile race, Bohm took a 20-yard lead over Hebb and Wheeler that she held to the finish.

The Emporia State women rolled to a convincing win at the Swede Invitational by using great team running. Five ESU women finished in the top 20, with Hebb finishing 2nd in 19:42, only one second off the winning pace. Bohm placed 4th and Wheeler 7th. Confusion reigned in the race, as the leader took a wrong turn at 2.5 miles and the entire field followed, necessitating officials to improvise in directing the runners to a modified finished line. The course ran by the competitors ended up an unknown distance, but farther than the originally planned 3 miles.

ESU competed in a unique and enjoyable relay race in 1989 called the *Ekeidin* relay, hosted by Allen County Community College. The Japanese term originally referred to a stagecoach that transmitted communication by stages. The concept involves runners racing relay legs of various lengths, a nice break from traditional cross country racing. The women raced legs of 1 mile-2 mile-1 mile with the men racing miles of 1-2-3-2-1. Northeastern Oklahoma captured the women's title while ESU decided to split their teams into two equal teams and finished 2nd and 4th in the 8-team field. The ESU freshmen-only team of Andria Van Durme, Hebb, and Wheeler came out on top of the veteran team of Stine, Bohm and Laura May.

The Hornets had traditionally used the Southwestern Invitational as a final tune-up before the conference and districts meets. Racing on a flat and fast course, the Hornets had fared well in the past and 1989 would be no exception as they won easily with 17 points. Bohm raced to a 18:50 PR win and was followed by Hebb and Wheeler. The Lady Hornets established themselves as the District 10 favorites by going 1-2-3 and placing six runners in the top 10, scoring a very low 17 points.

With the defection of some schools to the NCAA Division II, the CSIC conference disbanded, so ESU did not compete at a conference meet and instead turned the focus to the District 10 Championships. With a trip to nationals on the line, the Hornets needed to win the meet to advance and were returning to the course where they had won a title at the Baker Invitational earlier in the year. ESU won their sixth district title in the last nine years by placing 1-2-3 with freshman Hebb the individual district champion, followed

by freshmen Wheeler and senior Bohm, who was bothered with a knee injury and unable to train all week. Tyrrell also earned All-District honors by placing 8th.

The 1989 NAIA National Cross Country Championships were held on a cold, windy day in Kenosha, Wisconsin. ESU ran well as a pack with a time gap of 35 seconds for runners 1-5. Entering the meet unranked, they finished with a 14th place showing. It was the sixth time in nine years since the program started in 1981 that they had finished in the top 15 teams. Wheeler finished 99th (19:39) and led the Lady Hornets to become the fourth number one runner of the year. Hebb finished 117th (21:51), Bohm was 119th (19:53), Tyrrell was 133rd (20:01), and Stine finished 157th (20:14). Four-time All-American Susan Stine finished her outstanding cross country career after injury plagued junior and senior campaigns.

1990

With several returning runners, the 1990 cross country season was a successful one. ESU finished 2nd at the Pittsburg Invitational on the flat, fast course of Four Oaks Golf Course with Hebb 2nd in 19:10, Jennifer Mullen (a transfer from Johnson County) 4th in 19:20, Tyrrell 7th in 19:37 and Ingrid Frazier 10th in 19:43. Fast times continued at the traditionally fast course at Missouri Southern as ESU finished 3rd behind DI schools Missouri and Arkansas with Frazier 7th in 18:13.

Jennifer Mullen: All-American

Jennifer Mullen earned All-American honors placing 9th in the NAIA National Championships in 1990. Mullen was a four-time All-American as she captured honors in the three-mile run and the marathon. She was a two-time District 10 Cross Country Champion.



ESU defended their home turf with an Emporia Invitational win over a seven-team field with a perfect score of 15 points, with Frazier, Hebb, Mullen, Tyrrell, Fitzgerald and Brenda Bina all finishing in the top six. Frazier and Hebb went 1-2, both breaking 19 minutes, running 18:52 and 18:59. The traditionally strong Barton County women defeated the ESU women at the Swede Invitational on a hot and windy day that slowed times down. Mullen led the women, finishing 4th in 19:47 over the 3-mile course, followed by Hebb and Frazier in 5th and 8th.

ESU journeyed to Kenosha, Wisconsin in the middle of the season to run on the National Cross Country Course and prepare for the national competition later in the year and finished 3rd in the competition, only two points out of 2nd in the meet won by Loyola University, Illinois. Mullen ran 18:47 on the tough course to finish 3rd, just 11 seconds off the winning time, followed by Hebb in 11th in 19:22. The Southwestern Invitational only had two complete teams and ESU posted a perfect 15 points on Oklahoma Christian. Mullen (18:53), Frazier and Hebb went 1-2-3, and Wheeler, Fitzgerald and Tyrrell went 6-7-8.

For the second year in a row, ESU did not compete in a conference meet and the team championship focus was on the District 10 meet. Just as they had done a week earlier at Southwestern, the Lady Hornets pulled off a 1-2-3 finish in the same order as Mullen (18:23), Hebb (18:42) and Frazier (18:47) dominated

the District 10 meet. Tyrrell added an 8th, Bina, Fitzgerald and Kerri Stine finished 13, 14, and 15, giving the Lady Hornets eight of the top 15 runners and a convincing win over Fort Hays.

The Lady Hornets returned to Kenosha, Wisconsin for the second time in the 1990 season, this time to compete in the National Championships. The women notched a top 10 finish, finishing 9th led by the All-American run of Mullen in finishing 20th in 18:28. Frazier was 41st in 18:57, Hebb 49th in 19:10, Tyrrell 130th in 20:06, Wheeler 161st in 20:28, Brenda Bina in 194th, and Maureen Fitzgerald in 225th, completed the scoring in the field of 327 runners.