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Two University of Montana harriers to nationals

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TWO UM HARRIERS
TO NATIONALS

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MISSOULA--

Montana's first and second place winners in the Big Sky cross country meet on Nov. 8 will compete in the NCAA finals at Van Cortland Park in New York City this Saturday (Nov. 22).

University of Montana coach Harley Lewis said Wade Jacobsen, twice Big Sky champion (1968-69) and George Cook will compete in the NCAA six mile cross country finals this Saturday against 727 of the nation's best runners.

Jacobson, a Simms, Montana native, is the most improved runner on the 1969 Grizzly squad, Coach Lewis said, Wednesday. "Wade knew after the Idaho State meet when Nelson Karagu beat him that he had alot of work to do. He accomplished his purpose and is in the best shape he has ever been," Lewis said.

The UM mentor said the two harriers have been training hard since the Big Sky meet and in the last week logged over 130 miles.

Lewis said Wade should finish in the top 25 which is considered the All-American cross country team. The Montana coach isn't sure what Cook will do. "George has really improved this season as a freshman and I'm just not sure of what he is capable of doing. He could surprise some people in New York." Cook is a native of Highland Falls, NY.

Lewis said the third place Big Sky finisher will not be able to compete in the New York meet. Ray Velez is ineligible because of an NCAA ruling making seniors ineligible if they competed as freshman. The 1969-70 class is the last one affected by the ruling.

The NCAA favorite has to be Pacific 8 champion Oregon, runnerup Washington State, ICAAA champion Villanova, and Western Athletic Conference winner, Texas-El Paso.

Runners to beat in the finals include Washington State's Gerry Lindgren, who has never been defeated in a NCAA championship meet, Steve Pre Fontaine, Oregon and Art Dulong of Holy Cross.

The Montana runners will fly to New York Friday and return Sunday.

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