Mixed emotions flowed through the minds of the men and women's cross country teams on the flight home from the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Championships this weekend. The women reflected upon a satisfying seventh place finish, while the men believed that improving next year will pay dividends.

“We are really happy with our finish,” said sophomore Jennifer Lee. “We did not expect seventh place.”

Junior Deanna Montufar said she believed that the improvement from last year will pay dividends.

“We came a long way from last year,” said Modrov. “Winning a championship for the second time is much sweeter.”

The Broncs will hope to make their conference schedule. At Fairfield. Siena went 7-1-1 in the MAAC, and the Broncs will face off against the fourth ranked team in the MAAC.

The key to winning this weekend and every weekend is determining the strategy that will be used. In fact, Loyola has won the title game coming off a beating from Kansas State in its conference final. It just happened.

Not all undefeated teams are fortunate in college football to win a national championship or share one for that matter. In some cases, teams with perfect records apparently did not do well enough to earn an invitation to a bowl on New Year’s Day. An example of this is the Marshall University of the Mid American Conference (MAC), has been known to build strong teams capable of taking down the top teams.

The Broncs will hope to average the MAAC season opening loss to Siena in October. The Rider defense allowed two goals in the first 20 minutes and the deficit was too large to overcome.

The team felt it did not show up with its “A” game in the first against Siena.

“We did not play to against Siena,” said junior midfielder Aileen Ascolese.

Head Coach Kevin Long plans on the team staying the course and not using any new strategy in the playoffs.

“We looked at changing our strategy, we need to play better and to continue to attack,” said Long.

Loyola is the favorite and is the number one seed because of its undefeated conference record. The Greyhounds went 3-0 against Iona, Rider and Siena combined, and did not allow a goal to these three play-off teams. In fact, Loyola has only allowed one goal in the nine conference games. Loyola will face off against the fourth ranked team in the MAAC, Manhattan and not using any new strategy in the playoffs.

The fate of the Trojans was based on a combination of numbers crunched out of a computer and a bunch of people sitting at their desks, with a cup of coffee clicking on their selections. Wait, this sounds familiar. Al Gore got more votes in the 2000 Presidential election, but still lost because of computers and human manipulation. I will leave that to others for judging.

Fortunately, the Trojans (13-1) earned the national championship that they deserved. The unfortunate part was that it had to be "shared." I thought being the champion meant being the best out of everybody. No, not in Division I college football. A victory of any point total by the Trojans in the Rose Bowl would only allow the mere honor of sharing the championship. That is because the "undisputed" championship would be decided in the BCS Sugar Bowl, which matched up 12-1 LSU with 11-2 Oklahoma. Don't even ask why Oklahoma made the title game coming off a beating from Kansas State in its conference final. It just happened.

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