

Tuesday's results

MLB

Red Sox.....3
Phillies.....0

Astros.....5
Orioles.....6

Padres.....0
Yankees.....8

Dodgers.....3
Reds.....1

Blue Jays.....0
Brewers.....7

Nationals.....1
Twins.....2

Bizzarri, Lemman receive honors

Eddleman Award recognizes UI's top male and female student-athletes

BY DANIEL JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER

With the 5,000-meter run coming to a close at this year's NCAA National Championship, Angela Bizzarri was still trying to distance herself from the pack.

"With about two laps to go, there was a group of about four girls," Bizzarri said. "Until about 200 meters, there was someone probably within one second of me, so, it was, obviously, a really close race."

But the sophomore ran away from two of the four to take second in the race and rewrite the Illinois record books, setting a new school-best mark in the event with a time of 15 minutes, 46.08 seconds.

Bizzarri's performance earned her a fourth All-American honor in what she considered her best performance of the year.

Her accomplishment at the Championships was instrumental in her being named female recipient of the 2007-08 Dike Eddleman Award on Tuesday, marking the seventh time in the last eight years a track and field athlete has taken the women's honors.

"This past weekend was my best race, I (ran my personal-best time), I did really well; I guess that was the standout race from this year," Bizzarri said concerning what she felt secured her the award.

Joining Bizzarri as this year's recipient was linebacker J Lemman, who received the award for the men.

After a 132-tackle season in which he helped lead the Illini defense to the Rose Bowl, Lemman was Illinois' first consensus All-American since linebacker Kevin Hardy in 1995. Lemman signed as an undrafted free agent with the Minnesota Vikings.

"Coach Zook has always said to us that if you put the goals of the team first, you will always accomplish your personal goals," Lemman said in a press release. "I think this year was a perfect example of that for us. We knew we would have a chance to help turn the football program around and because of the success we had as a team, I have benefited by receiving awards like this."

Bizzarri and Lemman encompass two of the three sports that Eddleman participated in while a varsity athlete at the University from 1947-49.

Eddleman is arguably one of the greatest and most accomplished athletes in school history. He was a two-time NBA All-Star and competed in the 1948 London Olympics. And while Bizzarri was willing to admit that she did not know of Eddleman's legacy before coming to Illinois, she is now more than cognizant of it, especially after winning the award that bears his namesake.

"No, I hadn't heard of him," she said in an interview session Tuesday. "But after coming to this University I did."

The Mason, Ohio, native said what it meant to win the award after coming from a different sporting climate.



WESLEY FANE THE DAILY ILLINI

Angela Bizzarri speaks with reporters outside Bielfeldt Academic Administration Building on Tuesday after being awarded the female recipient of the University of Illinois Eddleman Athlete of the Year Award. Bizzarri, who was recently named an All-American in distance running, joins fellow All-American J. Lemman in winning the University award.

"I think most athletes, you end up kind of far from home," she said. "But you pick up on it real quick."

"You compete, you're wearing your school colors every race, and that's where you're graduating from. I will always be an Illinois student, and that's from where I will be based."

Lemman, like Bizzarri, had always spoke highly of the University and his hometown of Champaign throughout the season.

"I am so proud to be an Illini and to have been part of this magical 2007 season," he

said.

Though Lemman's lengthy legacy at the University concluded following the end of the 2007 season, Bizzarri will have the next two years to build upon hers; one that is already growing by the day and quickly catching up to Lemman's.

"It's hard to say I'm going to get this place or that, but I can always improve on my times, I can always get faster," she said.

"I think that's my main goal. But it's just really exciting to be put on the same level and up for the same award as J."