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DURHAM, N.H. - The University of New Hampshire woodsmen team will host dozens of teams from the Northeast and Canada at the 62nd annual Spring Meet Friday, April 18 and Saturday, April 19 on the UNH campus in Durham. Last year's event, held at Dartmouth, fielded 26 teams from 13 schools.

Woodsmen's competitions as we know them today started in 1947 at Dartmouth College. That was the year Ross McKenny, Billy Robes, and Nate Whiteside organized what was called "Woodsmen's Weekend," known today as Spring Meet. It was organized to stimulate interest in 'out-of-door crafts' through inter-collegiate competition. The competition has been held continuously since 1948, and UNH has not hosted in ten years.

"The action is fast-paced, exciting and makes for great spectator viewing. The students train and compete all season to be at the top of their game for Spring Meet," says Chris Robarge, horticulture manager for the Thompson School of Applied Science who coaches the team with team alum AJ Dupere.

During the two-day meet, six-member teams (men, women and Jack & Jill) compete in events such as chain saw, bow saw, single buck, underhand chop, standing chop, log roll, pulp toss, canoeing, and more. Team members compete in singles, doubles, triples and team events.

In addition, this year's Spring Meet will feature the STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Collegiate Series and will be filmed by ESPN to air in the fall on ESPNU. The purpose of the Collegiate Series is to identify the top collegiate lumberjack sports athletes from around the country and provide them with the opportunity to advance in the sport. One competitor from each school will compete in the underhand chop, chain saw and single buck for an opportunity to represent the Northeast at the STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Collegiate Finals to be held in Columbus, Ga. June 27, 2008.

UNH has fielded a woodsmen team for 40 years. This year's team, which is a university-recognized co-ed sports club sponsored by UNH Campus Recreation, has 22 male and female members from around New Hampshire as well as Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont. While many team members major in forest technology or forestry, majors from

across the university are represented. Team member Megan Bujnowski, a forest technology major at the Thompson School for Applied Science, took third place in the fall 2007 Collegiate Game of Logging at Paul Smith's College in New York.

Events run continuously each day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the west edge of campus, off Mast Road near Spinney Lane. Admission is free and everyone is welcome. For more information about the meet, check out the team Web site at www.unh.edu/woodsmen. To learn more about the STIHL® TIMBERSPORTS® Collegiate Series, visit www.ESPNOuthdoors.com and click on TIMBERSPORTS or go to www.stihltimbersports.com.

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Photographs available to download:

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/woodsmen/woodsmen1.JPG>

Caption: UNH senior Josh Edwards, a forestry major, competes in the bow saw. Credit: Chris Robarge.

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/woodsmen/woodsmen2.JPG>

Caption: UNH junior Jess Wikle, a forestry major, competes in the chain saw. Credit: Lydia Williams.

