TRACK at Cornell aroused considerable enthusiasm as the 1950-51 team came home with all the big titles at the Penn Relays and then went on to win both the Heptagonal and IC4A Championships. The latter victory marked the eleventh time in seventy-five years and the first time since 1936 that the Big Red has won the IC4A’s in track.

The indoor track season got off to a rather unimpressive start as the team lost a well-fought meet in Barton Hall to a good Army team by the score of 65-48. In Madison Square Garden on the 24th of February, Cornell scored twelve points to place sixth in the IC4A track meet. In this meet Gourdine won the high hurdles title. Lingel, who in Buffalo recently had run the 300 in 31.9, Just .9 seconds over the world’s record, finished third in the “600”. Having competed in some of the big meets in the East, the team concluded the indoor season at New Haven against Yale. Co-captains Moore and Mealey both turned in their best clockings of the year, Moore winning the “600” in 1:11.6, and Mealey winning the “1000” in 2:14.2. With the final score being decided by the last relay, Yale squeaked by to win 56-52.3.

By spring the Big Red tracksters were really in high gear. With a complement of capable men like Walt Ashbaugh, Gene Zeiner, Art Gardiner, Dick Brown, Lingel, Gourdine, Moore, and Mealey, the Cornellians were a marked team. They lived up to this at the Penn Relays. Moore quickly won the 400 meter hurdles for the third straight year with the time of 51.8, and the relay team warmed up by winning the Heptagonal mile relay in 3:16.3. The next day, Dick Brown set a new Cornell shotput
Mile relay champs Gourdine, Lingel, Moore, and Mealey with their trophies from the Penn Relays.

Gourdine displays his form.

record as he placed third with 50'6½". Ashbaugh took second in the high hurdles, and then Harry Coyle, Gourdine, Moore, and Ashbaugh combined to win the shuttle hurdle relay in the fine time of 59.5 seconds, just two tenths of a second from the record. Last on the program was the big relay race of the meet, one for the mile relay championship of the United States. Cornell, Villanova, Seton Hall and Fordham were strong challengers to last year's record-setting Morgan State team. Starting on the pole, Gourdine forged ahead to gain a few yards lead. Lingel increased it, as did Moore. Then Mealey smartly withstood the desperate challenge of world champion George Rhoden of Morgan State to speed through the tape first carrying the new Penn Relays and Cornell mile relay record of 3:13.1.

Two dual meets were held during the spring. In Philadelphia, Penn was downed easily by a 100-40 score. Stu Merz won the century in 10.1, Ashbaugh, the hurdles in 14.8, Bob Robertson, the mile in 4:28, Gunther Meng, the javelin with a throw of 175 feet, and Lingel, the 440 with a 49.2 clocking. On a soggy track during Spring Houseparty Weekend, Princeton put up a little more resistance before being scuttled by 80-60. The meet went about as expected with Ashbaugh winning the high hurdles in 14.8 and setting a new meet record.
The next big meet was the Heptagonals at Brown. By this time sports writers were becoming aware of the team’s greatness and consequently were not surprised to see Cornell win. The Big Red scored 50 points, followed by ex-champs Yale with 39 1/2, and Navy with 34 points. Gourdine, one of the day’s main stars, tied the Cornell record and set a Heptagonal record by winning the 220 low hurdles in 23.2, won the broadjump with a 24'3 3/8" leap, and though later requiring six stitches as a result of being spiked on the first turn, set the winning relay team off ahead. Moore won the quarter mile in 47.9 seconds with teammate Lingel placing third. Mealey won the 880 in 1:53.1.

When the time for the IC4A’s rolled around, Cornell was at its peak. In this meet above all, the excellent coaching of Lou Montgomery could be appreciated. It is a tribute to the coach and team the way they together came through to win 33 1/4 to 29 1/4 over Manhattan. In the first day’s trials, Cornell qualified thirteen men as against Manhattan’s eleven. It didn’t take Gourdine long to obliterate not only a Cornell record, but also the second oldest IC4A record, as he soared 25'9 3/4" in the broadjump. In the 440, Moore started poorly and was nipped at the tape by Dick Maicco. Both men had identical times of 47.5 seconds. Gourdine became a double winner when he relatively easily won the low hurdles in 23.7 with co-captain Moore second. Ashbaugh scored by four feet in the high hurdles with a 14.4 clocking. Mealey ran an exciting race from the spectator standpoint in the half-mile. Hanging back for the first 440, he suddenly passed two men on the inside to win going away in 1:53.2.

After school was over, some of the men journeyed to the west coast to participate in the NCAA’s and the AAU’s. Cornell upset predictions when, with forty points, its five man team placed second to USC. Major participants in this meet were Moore, Gourdine, Ashbaugh, and Lingel. Moore won the 220 low hurdles in the Cornell and Washington stadium record time of 22.7 seconds. Gourdine was a close second with 22.9. Moore finished seven yards back of the 440 record holder, George Rhoden of Morgan State, who won his specialty in 46.5 seconds. In this fast final Jim Lingel was fifth. Gourdine was also second in the broad jump, while Ashbaugh rounded out the Big Red scoring with a high hurdles fourth. Several days later in the AAU meet at Edwards Stadium in Berkeley, Moore went after the world’s record of 50.6 in the 400 meter hurdles. He just missed the record but won in the fast time of 51.4 seconds.

After the season two Cornellians were each named twice to the All-American team. Moore was chosen in the 440 and the 220 yard low hurdles, and Gourdine also in the low hurdles and in the broadjump.

Many of the men who gave so unstintingly of their time and energy have graduated, but the meets they won, the records and titles they brought back, and the sportsmanship they exemplified will never be forgotten.
CROSS COUNTRY will have a good season was the word that went out early in September. Men like co-captains Bob Robertson and Bob Grossman, Bill O’Brien, Bob Stuckelman, along with sophomores Steve Pierson, Andy Keller, Dave Willig, Bob Smith, and Dave Pratt gave strength to this announcement.

In their first meet, Cornell beat Colgate 25-32 at Hamilton. Two Red Raiders were the first finishers, but the five way tie of Stuckelman, Willig, Pierson, O’Brien, and Robertson more than made up for these two places.

Penn State, rated by most of the best college harrier teams in the country, swamped the Big Red runners 16-47 at State College, Pennsylvania. Grossman broke up the possible one through seven sweep of the Penn Staters by finishing fifth; following him were Pierson and Stuckelman who tied for twelfth and Robertson in fifteenth place.

Yale was the first Ivy League victim of the Cornellians as it went down to a 26-28 defeat on its home course. The way was rather treacherous due to the fallen leaves. Furthermore, Grossman, O’Brien, and Pierson, some hundred yards ahead,
missed a turn and had to wait for a Yale man to catch up and set them right. All were surprised, therefore, when Grossman crossed the finish line first in 26:28, a time second only to the course record held by Yale’s Ted Mearns. Pierson finished second while O’Brien dropped back to sixth. The Cornell sophs then came in with Willig eighth, Keller ninth, Pratt eleventh, and Smith twelfth.

Co-captain Grossman won his second straight race as the harriers beat Alfred 25-32 on the five and one tenth mile Cornell course. His 28:05 clocking was thirteen seconds over the course record set in 1949 by Dick Church of Syracuse, but was the best time ever turned in by a Cornellian on the course. Grossman was pushed to his time by an Alfred frosh, Bruce Aiken, who finished second. Robertson was fourth, Pierson was fifth, Pratt seventh, Knapp eighth, and Keller ninth.

Army won the Heptagonals rather as expected and Cornell finished second. The Cadets scored 20 points, Cornell 98, and third place Navy 110. Dick Shea of Army won by a quarter mile in 25:06. Grossman put on a strong kick to take fourth and prevent Army from finishing in the first four places. His time was 26:36. Pierson was sixteenth, Willig twenty third, Robertson twenty-fifth, and Pratt thirtieth.

The Syracuse meet, scheduled for Fall House-party Weekend, was postponed because of snow. When the meet was run a week and a half later, the Syracusians demonstrated that the delay hadn’t hurt them by winning 16-47. Ray Osterhaut, a sophomore, covered the soggy Cornell course in a phenomenal 27:20. This handily erased Dick Church’s old record of 27:52. Cornell’s first finisher, again Grossman, was fifth. Pierson was ninth and Albers twelfth.

The Big Red runners placed first in the Ivy League and eighth overall in the IC4A’s. Dick Shea won in 24:55 to give Army second place in the team scoring as Penn State won the title. For Cornell Grossman was sixteenth, Albers forty-ninth, Pierson eighty-second, Pratt one hundred-eleventh, Willig one hundred twenty-fourth, Keller one hundred thirty-third, and Robertson one hundred-fiftieth as the Big Red closed a quite satisfactory and successful season.