

RUNNING TOWN, USA



The CU men's track and field team won the 2008 Big 12 Outdoor Championship while the Buffs hosted the meet in May of 2008.

For 30 years, world class athletes and running enthusiasts have known what the media recently discovered: Boulder is the best running town in the United States. Runner's World has dubbed Boulder, "America's Best Running City" and an "Ideal Location for Runners", while Outside Magazine proclaims it, "The Best Sports Town in America".

These accolades come as no surprise to the host of national and international athletes who have made Boulder their training base. During the 1970's and 1980's, Boulder was home to world record holders such as Steve Jones, Ingrid Kristiansen, Rob de Castella, and Arturo Barrios, as well as Olympic Champions Frank Shorter and Rosa Mota.

The list of contemporary runners who live and train in Boulder is equally impressive: 2000 Olympic Marathon Champion Naoko Takahashi, 2008 Olympic Marathon Champion Constantina Dita-Tomescu, multiple Japanese corporate teams and U.S.-based Kenyan road racers. Numerous CU national and world level alumni have trained in the Boulder area during the last four Olympiads. They include Olympians Jenny Barringer, Alan Culpepper, Shayne Culpepper, Billy Nelson, Jorge Torres and Dathan Ritzenhein, 2006 Boulder Boulder champion Sara Slattery, and World Championship team members Ed Torres, Steve Slattery and Renee Baillie.

These athletes are drawn to Boulder by the unparalleled variety of training venues, temperate year-round climate, opportunity to train at elevation, and support of a running-friendly community that enters 54,000-plus in its Memorial Day road race. Boulder has over 200 miles of running and biking trails and more than 30,000 acres of open space. The vast availability of trails is matched only by the variability of their terrain. All are within a 20 minute drive of CU's campus. In the mountains and foothills west of town are venues such as the Mesa Trail, Switzerland Trail, Magnolia Road, Gold Hill, and Flagstaff Mountain. Adjacent to campus is the 12-mile Boulder Creek Path which connects to Sanitas Mountain, the Bobolink trail, and the Wonderland Lake trailheads. East of town are Teller Farm and the Boulder Reservoir ("The Res") which connect to dozens of miles of dirt roads and trails.

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The University of Colorado's outdoor track, Potts Field, is one of the best competition venues in the country. It features NCAA/IAAF specification parallel approaches for the long jump, triple jump, pole vault and high jump as well as a world-class remote hammer and discus venue. Potts Field has the highest Mondo Super-X installation in the country, thus making it potentially the fastest sprint track in the U.S.

Boulder's climate makes it an ideal year-round training base. The average high temperature during winter months is 49 degrees, while summer months average a high of 83 degrees with negligible humidity. Boulder residents enjoy over 300 sunny days a year—more than residents of San Diego or Miami.

Besides the aforementioned Bolder Boulder, there are well-organized races virtually every weekend: the Boulder Backroads Marathon and Half Marathon, 5K Kickoff Classic, West End 3K, Pearl Street Mile, Rocky Mountain Shootout, Uni-Hill Downtown 1K, Sunrise Stampede 10K, and Boulder Roadrunners All-Comers Track Series.

In February of 2007, Boulder hosted the USA Cross Country Championships which selected our national teams for the IAAF World Championships in Mombasa, Kenya. The crowd of 10,000 spectators was estimated to exceed the combined attendance of the previous five national championships. Former USA Track and Field President Bill Roe remarked, "As usual, every time I come to Boulder I'm blown away." Deena Kastor, 19-time U.S. champion, captured her eighth cross country title and said, "This was, hands down, the most amazing national championship I've been a part of." Beyond the attendance, the most compelling story of the day was arguably the success of CU's alumni: former Buffaloes swept the top four places in the men's senior race while two former NCAA champion Buffaloes qualified for the senior women's team.

In May of 2008, the University of Colorado hosted the Big 12 Conference Track and Field Championships. This three-day competition was one of the most prestigious and competitive meets in the country and featured NCAA champions, World Championship Team members and 2008 Olympians. During the competition, ten Big 12 meet records were broken and two world-leading marks were established. The three-day attendance of over 5,000 cheered the Colorado men to the team title in a victory over No. 1 ranked Texas A&M.

Summer or winter, cross country or track season, workout day or racing day, for the weekend warrior or the Olympian, Boulder presents the ideal environment. While other cities may claim occasional weekends of running enthusiasm, Boulder is inarguably the year-round "Running Town, USA".



2006 Bolder Boulder Champ
Sara Slattery



Dathan Ritzenhein, Adam Goucher, Alan Culpepper and Jorge Torres at the 2007 USA Cross Country Championships

2011 COLORADO CROSS COUNTRY