



Ex-Buff Goucher 10th in worlds marathon

It's best finish by American since 1995

BERLIN -- Former Colorado standout Kara Goucher finished 10th Sunday in the women's marathon at the world championships on Sunday, the best finish by an American woman since Linda Somers placed seventh in 1995.

Goucher ran a season-best time of 2 hours, 27 minutes, 48 seconds in a race conducted under sunny skies with temperatures in the low 70s on a course that saw contestants complete four loops.

Bai Xue of China won the gold medal, clocking a 2:25:15. Japan's Yoshimi Ozaki, who has trained in Boulder in the past, was second in 2:25:25 and Ethiopia's Aselefech Mergia won the bronze in 2:25:32.

Right behind Goucher was the USA's Desiree Davila (2:27:53) while another former CU runner, Tera Moody, was 28th in 2:36:39.

"My legs felt great, and I felt really relaxed," Goucher said. "It was great to have a loop course where my husband and coach could yell at me. The pace felt comfortable, and it felt like practice."

Goucher did have some problems midway through the race, but managed to maintain her pace.

"I had a lot of problems keeping my fluids down," Goucher said. "After the second personal fluid station, I started throwing up what I took in. I would start taking it, and then a mile later, I'd throw up."

The 2008 CU Athletic Hall of Fame Inductee was the top American throughout the entire race. She came through in 12th place at the 20K mark, was 13th at the 30K-mark and moved up to seventh at the 35K point, but lost several places down the final stretch.

"I started to cramp with 13K to go, and then the field started to surge," she said. "It wasn't there. I just wasn't good enough today. I thought I hydrated myself well leading up to the race."

"I wanted to break 2:30 today, but with the heat, I had to be a little more conservative," Moody said. "I felt really great, but I just didn't have the turnover."



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Feeling good early, Goucher hits wall down stretch

Sun Aug 23, 2009 By Joe Battaglia / Universal Sports



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BERLIN -- As she made her way through Brandenburg Gate after the first 10 kilometers of the race, Kara Goucher looked good and felt better.

Athletes always describe themselves as being "in the zone."

This is what Goucher's zone felt like.

"I can't tell you what happened in the first 90 minutes of the race because I was just completely zoned out," she said. "I couldn't believe how good I felt. I was running in like a dream state."

But Goucher's dream of winning a medal in the marathon on the final day of the 2009 World Championships quickly ran out of steam. Unable to hold down her fluids from fairly early in the race, Goucher began to cramp, then tire.

By the final loop of the race, she was in no condition physically to keep pace with the race leaders, who piled on a punishing pace despite increasing temperatures over the second half.

Xue Bai of China won in 2 hours, 25 minutes, 15 seconds. Yoshimi Ozaki of Japan was second in 2:25:25 and Aselefech Mergia of Ethiopia was third in 2:25:32. Goucher faded some two and half minutes back and crossed 10th overall and first among Americans in 2:27:48.

"My legs felt great and I felt really relaxed," Goucher said. "The loop course felt like a hard practice, very comfortable. But I had a lot of problems keeping my fluids down. When (the leaders) started to surge, it just wasn't there. I just wasn't good enough today."

Goucher stayed with the main pack through the first two loops of the course and did not appear to be in any distress early on. After the first loop, she was in 21st place within a tightly-bunched lead pack and only two seconds from the front. On the second pass through, she moved up seven spots to 14th and remained two seconds off the lead.

"After the second personal-fluid station, I started throwing up what I took in, Goucher said. "I just kept trying to take it and a mile later I would throw it back up. I probably threw up six times. I didn't even take anything from the last water station. I started to cramp with about 13K to go. When the women made that break, my body just wouldn't go."

The effects of dehydration began to set in over the second half of the race. As the pace picked up near the 30-kilometer mark, Goucher was unable to keep up. At the start of the third loop she had fallen six seconds back and was in 13th place. Over the ensuing five kilometers, her deficit grew to 45 seconds.

"I was still like, 'You know what? I'm dying, but so is everyone else is too,'" Goucher said, of her thoughts at 35K. "That's the thing about the marathon, everyone has their breaking point. I still thought that I could still maybe pick a couple people off. But I kept cramping worse and worse and slowing down more and more. I tried to stay positive the whole time but I knew I definitely wasn't going to medal. I still thought I could get up there and get a respectable place but the body was just shutting down."

Goucher's late fade here was reminiscent of what happened to her last November, when she made her debut at the distance at the ING New York City Marathon. Her inability to keep fluids down prevented her from keeping pace with Paula Radcliffe, who won the race easily. Goucher placed third.



By: AP Photo

Kara Goucher said she felt great during the first 90 minutes of her race but then had problems keeping down her fluids and eventually was too dehydrated to keep up with the race leaders.

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In her second marathon, this April in Boston, Goucher had no hydration issues on her way to another third-place finish. She said her training sessions before this race indicated no such problems.

"I had a lot of problems in New York, but in Boston I was fine," Goucher said. "So I really don't know. I haven't had any problems taking fluids through this training block at all. It's frustrating. If I really think I'm going to be one of the best runners in the world, I'm going to have to figure it out because this has cost me twice now."

Equally confounded was Goucher's coach, Alberto Salazar. He said this isn't a matter of Goucher being inexperienced and in need of training her body to accept fluids. Salazar said that in her next race, Goucher may have to change what she puts in her bottle.

Salazar said Goucher was drinking a diluted solution of Powerade mixed with a half packet of GU, an energy gel commonly used in competition and training by endurance athletes, on Sunday.

"It may be, with her, a matter of just drinking plain water and give up on the carbohydrate replenishment," Salazar said. "It doesn't do you any good to have carbohydrates in the water if they're going to make you throw up and now you don't have any fluid either. Maybe we're going to have to go with just plain water."

This was the last race in the foreseeable future for Goucher, who said she is sticking to her plan to take time off to start a family with her husband Adam, a 2000 U.S. Olympian in the 5000m.

Adam acknowledged that this was not how his wife wanted to go into that time away.

"Honestly, it's a little bit sad," he said. "I know how hard she has been working and I know what she expected, and what I expected, and Alberto, and everybody expected and thought she could do. Today wasn't her day I guess. Unfortunately, that sucks. But she's young. This was her third one. I really think she's going to learn a lot from this. She'll be upset. It'll take a little bit of time to get over it. But she'll move on."

Goucher vowed as much, saying she hopes to be back competing in time for the next World Championships in Daegu, South Korea, as she readies for the 2012 Olympics.

"It all depends on how things in my personal life go but I'd like to be back running by 2011," Goucher said. "As soon as little Goucher is born and I lose the weight, I'll be back. I love the marathon. I'm really disappointed today. This wasn't my best race but it's another step toward London."





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Defense has shining stars

Turnovers, big hits help turn game

By [Tom Silverstein](#) of the Journal Sentinel

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Green Bay — It would be wise to think the Buffalo Bills or Cleveland Browns or any other opponent the Green Bay Packers face would be better-prepared to face their new 3-4 defense were this a regular-season game.

Teams spend only a few hours on the field preparing for exhibition games, and teams like the Packers that blitz a lot are difficult to handle because of the unpredictability of the scheme.

So the fact the Packers' No. 1 defense did not give up a point for the second straight week shouldn't immediately qualify them for elite status. But, according to at least one member of the unit, it does send out a message that opponents need to hear.

"That's the standard," cornerback Al Harris said after the game. "We always hear about teams who want to come to Lambeau Field because of the tradition and whatnot. We're starting to take that personal. We want it to be like, if you're coming in here, we're going to whip your (butt). That's how we're looking at."

What made the Packers' 31-21 victory over the Bills Saturday night at Lambeau Field something of an eye-opener were the numerous outstanding individual plays made against the Bills. It's becoming clear defensive coordinator Dom Capers has a lot to work with as he installs his new defensive scheme.

The Packers continued to put pressure on opponents with their blitzing defense, but what really stood out with the No. 1s was the continued assault on opposing quarterbacks, ball carriers and live balls. The starters, who played a little less than two quarters, forced four of the five turnovers the Bills committed, setting up the offense for two touchdowns and a field goal in the first half.

Forcing a pair of interceptions and three fumbles, the Packers brought their two-game takeaway total to nine. They held the Bills to just 102 yards and six first downs in the first half while adding three sacks.

"You look at the way the veterans are competing, I think they're having fun playing," Capers said. "It looks that way because they're playing aggressively. I feel the guys are excited about playing. These guys love to play football."

The Bills and their no-huddle offense were coming off a victory over the Chicago Bears in which their

top two quarterbacks, Trent Edwards and Ryan Fitzpatrick, had combined for 23 of 26 completions for 232 yards (103.8 passer rating). Against the Packers, they were not nearly as effective, completing 20 of 29 passes for 165 yards and one touchdown with two interceptions (66.02 rating).

From the start, the Packers came out breathing fire.

The players who had the biggest impact to start were safety Nick Collins (deflected pass that was intercepted), end Johnny Jolly (two sacks), linebacker Brandon Chillar (forced fumble), defensive end Cullen Jenkins (forced fumble), rookie Brad Jones (sack and forced fumble) and linebacker Desmond Bishop (interception and several big hits).

Three of the Bills' first four possessions ended in turnovers and all probably would have yielded points if the Packers offense hadn't failed on fourth-and-1 on the Buffalo 15 on one of the ensuing possessions.

The continued high level of play from Chillar and Bishop weren't surprising, but perhaps the most impressive performance for the defense was the play of Jolly, who has missed 13 training camp practices with a right ankle sprain and sat out all but one practice this past week.

On the Bills' second possession, he whipped first-round draft choice Eric Wood at the line and sacked Edwards for a 3-yard loss to the Bills' 9. Two plays later, he broke through the line again and hauled down Edwards, allowing Chillar to come in from behind and knock the ball loose.

"Even when I'm out, I try to stay in shape," Jolly said. "I'm not worrying about what snaps I'm going to get or anything. I'm just trying to take care of business."

Jolly's performance will probably ease the coaches' concern that they have to rush first-round pick B.J. Raji into action. Raji, who didn't start practicing until Monday because of a contract dispute, still needs to get into playing shape and isn't guaranteed a starting spot when the regular season opens.

Raji played about 10 snaps in the second quarter with mixed results. He showed how powerful he can be collapsing the pocket, but he also showed he needs to do a better job staying on his feet and reading blocks.

Also of note was the play of Jones, the seventh-round outside linebacker, who until Monday had not practiced at all because of a bad back. He took over for starter Aaron Kampman early in the second quarter and showed some of the pass rush ability the Packers saw in him when he played at Colorado.

On a second-and-2 play at the Bills' 31 with 41 seconds left in the half, Jones shot around guard Seth McKinney and drilled Fitzpatrick, causing the ball to pop loose. Bishop jumped on the ball at the 26 and three plays later kicker Mason Crosby kicked a 36-yard field goal to make it 24-0.

Jones later gave up a 6-yard touchdown completion to tight end Travis McCall in the third quarter on a play on which his coverage wasn't poor.



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