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Ski team remains in first at Montana

CU extends lead by 18 points Saturday

By Cheng Sio on January 17, 2010

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The Colorado Buffaloes ski team may not be sitting in front of the fireplace sipping hot chocolate, but they are sitting comfortably – in first place, that is.

Eleven top 10 finishes has helped CU extend its lead from 42 to 60 points Saturday with one day left at the Montana State Invitational at Bozeman, Mont.

In the men's 10-kilometer freestyle, senior Vegard Kjoelhamar narrowly missed the win as he finished (24:52.92) eighteen-hundredths of a second behind the winner, Martin Kaas of New Mexico (24:52.74). CU junior Jesper Ostensen, senior Matt Gelso and senior Patrick Neel also placed in the top 10.

Over at the women's 5k freestyle, sophomore Eliska Hajkova also finished second (13:53.46), but the difference was not as close as Denver's Antje Maempel cruised (13:36.92). Freshman Joanne Reid joined Hajkova in the top 10 circle with a sixth-place finish.

The women's giant slalom wasn't too shabby as they had three skiers – freshman Erika Ghent, junior Katie Hartman and sophomore Sara Hjertman – in the top 10. The men's giant slalom saw junior Gabriel Rivas place sixth and sophomore Taggart Spent go eighth.

Head coach Richard Rokos said he thought Saturday went well and predicts his team should win the meet.

"It was another good day for us on the alpine hill, and with the Nordics doing as well or even a little bit better than yesterday, we should be in good position to win the meet," Rokos said in a news release. "We have the slalom tomorrow, and that's been our stronger event recently, so it'll be interesting to see what we can do even though slaloms are so much more unpredictable. No lead is really that safe when you end with the slalom."

The meet ends Sunday with the first runs of slalom races at 9:45 a.m. The second set of slalom races follows at 1 p.m.

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