



## Colorado's Olympian returns to Terre Haute for Pre-Nationals

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— The NCAA Pre-Nationals event Saturday at LaVern Gibson Championship Course, which is possibly the biggest and most inclusive NCAA athletic event with more than 70 men's and women's teams competing, could provide a clearer look at this year's NCAA title contenders.

The two probable individual favorites will be testing their fitness with the NCAA Championships slated for just over a month from now on Nov. 21.

Jenny Barringer of Colorado has returned for her final season of NCAA eligibility. She redshirted last year's cross country season, and went on to have a breakout season on the track. She set six NCAA records, and finished fifth in the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the world championships in breaking her own American record with a time of 9:12.50. She was ninth in that event in the 2008 Olympics.

Barringer told Running Times Magazine recently about her decision to return to college despite the opportunity to turn pro.

"... But anyone who has run cross country on a really good team would understand," Barringer said. "You're never going to get this type of team atmosphere or camaraderie ever again in your running career. I've talked to a lot of professional runners about their collegiate years versus their pro years. Hopefully, I've got a really good exciting career ahead of me on the track and I just didn't want to lose the opportunity to run with these girls and vie for a national championship. I didn't want to trade that just for a couple of months training on my own as a professional."

Barringer, who has been a two-time NCAA runner-up to Texas Tech's Sally Kipyego, broke a course record in her first cross country race in a Colorado uniform in almost two years in the Rocky Mountain Shootout on Oct. 3 in Boulder. She ran the 5.8K course in 19:25.

Colorado is ranked No. 19 in the latest United States Cross Country Coaches Association poll, but — as Saturday's meet is designed to do — the Buffaloes could make a big move with a good head-to-head performance against five teams ahead of them in those rankings.

On the men's side, 2008 runner-up Sam Chelanga of Liberty is the favorite to win the 2009 title, with last year's champ and 2008 U.S. Olympian Galen Rupp of Oregon moving on to the professional ranks.

Chelanga runs at 11:40 a.m. Saturday in the Men's White race, which will also feature top-ranked Stanford and outstanding sophomore Chris Derrick, who was seventh as a freshman last year in Terre Haute.

"I absolutely see Chris getting better," Stanford coach Jason Dunn told The Stanford Daily recently. "He's got a good head on his shoulders and he's in really good shape now for where we are at in the season. He's only going to get better."

- Indiana State men optimistic — Coach John McNichols' Indiana State men's team is ranked eighth in the Great Lakes Region, and the Sycamores will have a chance to compete against four teams from that region, including Michigan State and Butler ranked ahead of them.

McNichols has said this may be the deepest team he's ever had at ISU, which could bode well for one of the best Pre-Nationals races for his team.

What exactly equates a "good" outcome in the Pre-Nationals can be hard to figure.

"You can place 15th or so in one of these races and be pretty good, and that would ultimately rank you in the top 50 or 60 in the country," McNichols said. "The perception of performance is difficult to interpret. The winning teams are

typically teams that are going to be — if not national champions — are going to be teams that place in the top 5 at nationals, almost for sure.”

The Sycamores will be trying to push themselves against some of the nation’s best, more specifically against teams such as Michigan State that McNichols would like to see his runners challenge during the race.

“We should be in the middle of the field for sure or even better than middle. That’s based on what we did at Notre Dame, and we went away from that feeling that we had not done very well. If the guys are ready to respond to the level of chaos they’re going to face when the gun goes off at 11 a.m., it could be a good day,” McNichols said.

#### Indiana State Pre-Nationals

Saturday

#### RACE ASSIGNMENTS

11 a.m. — Men Blue (35 Teams): Air Force, Alabama, Arizona, Auburn, Brown, Butler, Cal-Berkeley, Cal-Poly, Florida, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Harvard, Illinois State, Indiana State, Iowa, IUPUI, Kansas, Loyola (MD), Marquette, Miami (OH), Michigan State, Montana, Montana State, N.C. State, Northern Arizona, Oregon, Toledo, Tulsa, UNC-Charlotte, Utah State, UTEP, Washington, Washington State, Western Kentucky, William & Mary.

11:40 a.m. — Men White (35 Teams): Arizona State, BYU, Central Michigan, Cincinnati, Colorado, Colorado State, Columbia, Dartmouth, Dayton, Eastern Kentucky, Florida State, Illinois, Iona, Iowa State, Lamar, Liberty, Louisville, Loyola (IL), Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Ohio University, Portland, South Alabama, Southern Illinois, Southern Utah, Stanford, UC-Davis, UCLA, UC-Santa Barbara.

12:20 p.m. — Women Blue (37 Teams): Air Force, Arizona, Auburn, Butler, Central Michigan, Colorado, Dayton, Eastern Kentucky, Florida State, Georgetown, Harvard, Iona, Iowa, Iowa State, James Madison, Kansas State, Liberty, Louisville, Loyola (IL), Marquette, Miami (OH), Michigan State, Mississippi, Nebraska, NC State, Ohio University, Oregon, Oregon State, Rice, Southern Utah, Stanford, Toledo, Tulsa, UC-Davis, UTEP, Vanderbilt, Western Kentucky.

12:55 p.m. — Women White (37 Teams): Akron, Alabama, Arizona State, Baylor, Brown, Cal-Berkeley, Cincinnati, Colorado State, Columbia, Eastern Michigan, Florida, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Illinois, Illinois State, Jacksonville, Kansas, Loyola (MD), Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Northern Arizona, North Carolina, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Princeton, Syracuse, Texas, UC-Santa Barbara, UNC-Charlotte, Utah State, Wake Forest, Washington, Washington State, Western Michigan, Wichita State, William & Mary.

1:30 p.m. — Open Men (3 Teams +): Kansas State, Vanderbilt, Wichita State.

2:10 p.m. — Open Women (3 Teams +): IUPUI, Lamar, Montana State.

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