

CU Buffs women's soccer team heads to hostile territory

Texas A&M soccer team draws fiery crowd

By Ryan Thorburn, Camera Sports Writer
Boulder Daily Camera

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The Colorado men's basketball team usually struggles to draw 6,000 fans to its games at the Coors Events Center.

That hasn't deterred CU soccer coach Bill Hempen from thinking big in terms of potential crowd sizes at the home pitch.

"I'd love to have 6,000 or 7,000 people wrapped around Prentup Field some day," Hempen said.

The Buffs hope to have a record crowd turn out on Oct. 30 for the final home game of the season, which will also be the last time legendary senior Nikki Marshall plays at Prentup Field.

But first CU must deal with a daunting road trip to No. 20 Texas A&M (6 p.m. on Friday) and Texas (noon on Sunday) this weekend. The Aggies are famous for drawing huge crowds and set the NCAA record with 8,204 fans for a match against North Carolina in 2006.

"They don't like their opponents very much," Hempen said when asked what the atmosphere for college soccer is like in College Station. "They will make comments about your family members. But I told some of the young players that they don't really know your family members. ...

"It can be an electric environment. Hopefully we can withstand that initial onslaught and give ourselves a chance to win."

The Buffs (8-7 overall, 5-2-0 Big 12) are currently second in the conference standings with 15 points. Missouri (10-4-3, 5-0-2) is in first place with 17 points and Texas A&M (10-5-1, 4-2-1) is third with 13 points.

"I think to get a piece of it we have to go 3-0," Hempen said on the subject of a Big 12 regular season title. "If we want to stay in the upper echelon of the conference we need to win two of three. If we want to stay in the middle of the pack we need to win one of three. The good news is everybody has something to play for and no one is going to have it easy."

CU, in the midst of five consecutive road games, is coming off a 1-0 victory at Kansas.

"What we're finding out about the league is that everybody is struggling on the road," Hempen said. "That was a huge win for us and it keeps us in the hunt."

Only the top eight teams qualify for the Big 12 Tournament to be held Nov. 4-8 in San Antonio. Missouri defeated CU in the title match last season.

Moving on up

The CU women's cross country team sprinted up the latest USTFCCCA coaches poll released Tuesday, moving up 16 spots from No. 19 to No. 3 after winning the NCAA Pre-National Invitational last Saturday. The CU men remained fourth in the poll.

The women collected 331 points. Washington recorded all 12 first-place votes for 360 points to remain on top of the poll, and Villanova notched 346 points for second place.

The men had 324 points. Stanford recorded 10 first-place votes and 358 points to take the top honor in this week's poll, followed by Oregon (337) and Oklahoma State (332).

Individually, Jenny Barringer was named the Big 12's runner of the week for the second time this month after racing to a first-place finish at the NCAA Pre-National Invitational on Saturday. The senior ran the 6K course in 19 minutes, 50.9 seconds and was the only harrier in all three sections of the race to finish in less than 20 minutes.

Barringer finished 29.9 seconds ahead of second-place finisher Susan Kuijken (Florida State). By the midway point of the race, she was already 23 seconds ahead of her closest competition, coming through at 9:46.6.

The 2009 Big 12 cross country championship will be held on Oct. 31 in Columbia, Mo.

Winning mentality

A week after picking up Liz Kritza's first Big 12 victory, CU's volleyball team looks to extend its winning streak at the Coors Events Center when it hosts Kansas State at 7 p.m. tonight.

CU and KSU have each recorded one win in the conference this season. The Buffs are 6-12 overall and sport a 1-8 league record, while the Wildcats are 7-11 overall and are 1-7 in the Big 12.

CU leads the all-time series 25-20 but is looking to snap a four-game skid against the Wildcats. K-State was actually ranked in the preseason but the team has dropped eight of nine matches entering tonight's tilt.

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Cross country rankings: Women move up, men stay put

Barringer named Big 12 Runner of the Week

By Ron Knabenbauer on October 21, 2009

The Colorado Buffaloes women's cross country team moved to No. 3 in the nation after the most recent U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association poll.

On Tuesday, the women's squad jumped 16 spots in the poll after being ranked 19th previously.

Senior Jenny Barringer was also named Big 12 Runner of the Week on Tuesday after she finished first at Pre-Nationals in Terre Haute, Ind. last weekend.

The men stayed at No. 4 in the most recent USTFCCCA poll.

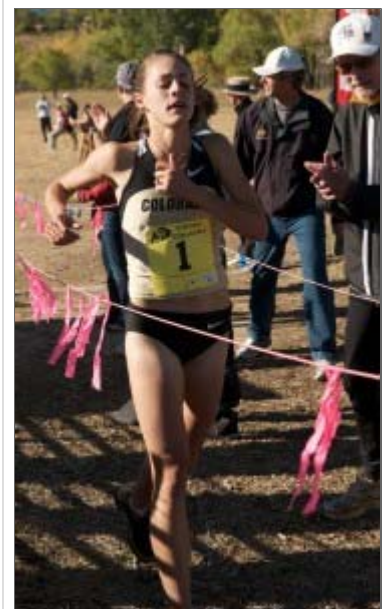
Both squads are also the top ranked teams in the regional poll as well.

The Buffs next meet is the Big 12 Championships on Oct. 31 in Columbia, Mo. The women's race will start at 9 a.m. while the men's race will start at 10 a.m.

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Earlier this season, senior Jenny Barringer crosses the finish line in first place during a cross country meet in South Boulder. In the most recent coaches poll, the women's cross country team were ranked No. 3 in the nation. (CU Independent file/Lee Pruitt)

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Spiker spirits stay high

Volleyball hosts Kansas State on Wednesday

By Gina Yocom on October 21, 2009

CU volleyball head coach Liz Kritza said she sees a pending good matchup for her team.

“I know our records are similar,” Kritza said of rival Kansas State, “although they have been successful in the past, this is a rebuilding year for them, and it will be a competitive match.”

The CU volleyball team may have a low record (6-12, 1-8 in the Big 12 Conference), but players say their spirit is high. They host Kansas State (7-11, 1-7 Big 12) Wednesday at the Coors Events Center.

Kritza said focusing on continual improvement is how they are keeping their morale up.

Junior middle blocker Schylur Edelman also said Kansas State will be a good match-up because CU’s fast offense will spread KSU’s bigger players out.

When asked about the team’s weak points, Kritza said it’s all about consistency.

“Consistency, I know it is one thing they have struggled with — that is what we need to focus on,” Kritza said. “There have been moments where we have played high-level volleyball, and there are other moments where we make errors. We can’t compete with those errors.”

Edelman said she agrees the team needs to be more consistent with their play.

“Our biggest challenge is playing at a high level consistently, it’s our biggest problem,” Edelman said. “We will have a really good play followed by a bad play. We are very up and down.”

The Buffs say they are proud of their strengths, with a major one being team balance.

“Not one person carries the team,” Edelman said. “If I am not having a good night, then the other girls will have a good night.”

Kritza said the team is very supportive.



While playing Kansas State last season, then-junior setter Kaitlyn Burkett and a Wildcat player battle above the net. CU lost in four sets to KSU on Nov. 12, 2008. Kansas State is scheduled to return to Coors Wednesday night. (CU Independent file/Morgan Hofmann)

“We have a better performance team-wise,” Kritza said. “We don’t just rely on one or two people.”

Recently, the team added a new player to this well-balanced squad in junior outside hitter Katie Evanyo.

Kritza said it is unorthodox to have a new player brought in at this point in the season, but she has brought experience to the team. As far as getting mixed in with the other players, Evanyo hasn’t had any problems.

“She got in the mix quickly at practice and it was apparent she was going to contribute,” Kritza said.

So far, Evanyo has been a positive addition for her new teammates, they say.

“Katie is great to have around, really positive, outgoing, great connection immediately,” Edelman said. “She added depth to our roster and a great new vibe.”

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