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Student Guide 2010: Coburn takes the reins

By Matt Johnson

The University of Colorado cross country/track programs have recently been led by one outstanding runner: Jenny Barringer.

However, with Barringer now graduated, another upperclassman is ready to step up: Emma Coburn.

Coburn, a rising junior from Crested Butte, will run in both cross country and track, having already made a name for herself. and Field Championships in the steeplechase and first in the same event at the Big 12 Championships in May.

Coburn's second-place finish nationally led to her earning the prestigious title of All-American. This, Coburn says, is her mos

"Getting second at nationals and saying I'm an All-American is really exciting, and the title of All-American is something that get."

Coburn is also the USA Junior record holder in the steeplechase. In her win at the Big 12 Championships, she set a meet re these accolades just add to her motivation.

"Athletically, it's if you do something well once, you want to do it again and you want to beat yourself. I think if I wasn't perfor showing in my races — if I was losing and running slow — I would not be motivated at all," Coburn says. "The fact that it's al definitely motivates me to keep working harder."

Besides personal motivation, Coburn says her coaches have developed her work ethic and perspective on her own perform:

"My coaches have transformed me from this OK high school runner who no one's heard about to a pretty good collegian whi maybe an Olympics," she says. "Mentally they've definitely prepared me and made me feel more comfortable."

Her teammates also provide support for her, especially during training.

"It's just nice to have people going through the same things you're going through and to understand the pain of racing and th

Coburn will have some major support around her in cross country. The Buffs have three runners from the top 15 finishers at and Allie McLaughlin, and senior Laura Thweatt.

In track, sophomore Shalaya Kipp will compete alongside Coburn in the steeplechase. Kipp was the fourth-place finisher in t last season.

Both teams will have to cope with the loss of Barringer, but Coburn is optimistic the Buffs can still perform well.

"Jenny wasn't around this year in track, and Shalaya and I figured it out and did well," she says. "Her biggest impact, I think, coming back so strong this year, I don't think it's going to be that tremendous of an impact."

As cross country season approaches, mental preparation will be key for the young Buffs, who currently have 14 underclassr

"I think if we all just focus, do the job, and treat it as a business, that you're going to the line to do your job and get it done — we will be fine," Coburn says. "It's just getting that mental game."

Coburn knows that her opportunity to run and compete for CU is special. Hopefully she can help continue the dominance th

"To say that you're on the cross country/track team here — people know what that means, and they know that has weight to Coburn says. "I'm also proud of the fact that our team has done so well historically and that we're still doing well. It's really fu

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NCAA Cross Country Preview 2010: Women

Can the Ducks beat the Wildcats? Will Hasay be the next Koll?

By Brian Metzler

As featured in the Web Only issue of Running Times Magazine

The top four runners from last year's NCAA Division I cross country season have progressed: Illinois' Angela Bizzarri, Colorado's Jenny Barringer and Florida State's Susan Kuijken have graduated and runner-up Kendra Schaaf transferred from Washington to UNC. Perhaps the best distance runner in the field last year, Iowa State's Lisa Koll (11th) has also [moved on](#) to greener pastures.

What does that mean? This fall, there's a blank canvas waiting to be splattered with paint, er, uh, mud. With several decorated stars gone, there's a field of runners ready to make their mark, including protégés of Barringer and Koll.

Virginia's Catherine White, somewhat of a surprise as the number four finisher last fall, is the top returnee, but so is Colorado sophomore Alli McLaughlin, who was somewhat of a surprise as the number five finisher last year as a true freshman. UTEP's Ripser Kimaiyo (ninth last year, plus fourth in the 5,000m during the outdoor track season) looks like an up-and-comer. And Iowa State's Betsy Saina came out of the cornfields with a runner-up finish in the 10,000m (behind Koll) at the NCAA track championships in June.

Which of those runners will be in the lead pack at the NCAA Division I Championships on Nov. 22 in Terre Haute, Ind? Which schools are the teams to beat this fall? Here's a primer to get the season started.

TEAM TO BEAT

Villanova

They say repeating as champions is much harder than winning a title the first time. But that might not be the case with the Wildcat program, which won six straight NCAA titles from 1989-1994. That doesn't have much to do with this season, but having five of its top six runners from last year's NCAA championship team certainly does. Senior Amanda Marino (sixth at last year's NCAA cross country meet, plus 11th in the 5,000m during the outdoor track season) leads the way, but also back are juniors Sheila Reid (13th in cross country, fourth in the 1500m in track) and Bogdana Mimic (22nd in cross country, 13th in the 5,000m on the track) and senior Ali Smith (24th in cross country) and Brooke Simpson (60th). History might also be on 'Nova's side: Since 1989, only six different schools have won an NCAA title: Villanova (8), Stanford (5), BYU (4), Colorado (2), Washington (1) and Providence (1).



CONTENDERS

Oregon

The Ducks didn't have a great national championship race, but they should be stronger than they were a year ago now that Jordan Hasay (18th) has a full year of college experience under her belt. Oregon has plenty of depth, but the real key might be senior Alex Kosinski, who finished a disappointing 81st last year after battling the flu and injuries midway through the season. (She was eighth in 2008 and 13th in 2007.) Fellow seniors Claire Michel (87th at NCAAs last fall and the school record-holder in the 3,000m steeplechase) and Zoe Buckman (Pac-10 1500-meter champion) will help out, but freshman Sarah Andrews (2009 Pan Am 5,000-meter champion) could also have an immediate impact.

Florida State

After a runner-up showing last year following two third-place finishes in 2007 and 2008, coach Karen Harvey has the Seminoles heading in the right direction. The 'Noles will need to have someone step up to replace Susan Kuijken, but with a nucleus of senior Pasca Cheruiyot (16th in cross country, fifth in the NCAA 10,000m), sophomore Amanda Winslow (39th), junior Jennifer Dunn (42nd) and senior Pilar McShine (55th last year, but 29th in 2008), the Seminoles should be in pretty good shape. They'll be

bolstered by senior Andrea Palen, who dropped a lot of time off her track PRs, and by Northern Arizona transfer Astrid Leutert.

Washington

It's so hard to develop a dynasty in cross country. After winning the NCAA meet with a very young team in 2008, the Huskies slipped to third last year and then lost top runner Kendra Schaaf (transfer to North Carolina) and top assistant coach Kelly Strong (who's now at Cal-Poly). That said, coach Greg Metcalf still has a cupboard full of talent, including two-time All-Americans Mel Lawrence and Christine Babcock.

OTHERS TO WATCH

Florida

After a solid seventh-place effort from a year ago, the Gators bring back six of its top seven runners, including Rebecca Lowe (15th) and Charlotte Browning (21st).

Stanford

Another program loaded with young talent, the Cardinal will be counting on junior Stephanie Marcy (53rd), Kathy Kroeger (63rd and fifth in the NCAA 5,000m in the spring) and sophomore Alex Dunne (73rd).

Duke

Last year's eighth-place team had six freshman and sophomores. Carly Seymour (29th) is the top returnee.

Colorado

Jenny Barringer has moved on, but a young nucleus lead by sophomore Allie McLaughlin (fifth last year) and junior Emma Coburn (115th).

OTHER PROGRAMS ON THE RISE IN 2010: North Carolina, Providence, Virginia, Syracuse, BYU, Georgetown, UTEP

TOP INDIVIDUALS

Jordan Hasay, Oregon—After a slow start to her college career, Hasay [hit her stride](#) in track and should be in the mix this fall.

Catherine White, Virginia—She's the top returning runner from 2009, when she finished fourth among individuals as a junior.

Allie McLaughlin, Colorado—Placed fifth last year as a true freshman in just her third season as a distance runner.

Betsy Saina, Iowa State—She finished 141st at NAAs last year, but while training with Lisa Koll she took second in the NCAA 10,000m run in the spring.

AND DON'T FORGET

Amanda Marino, Villanova; Emily Infeld, Georgetown; Risper Kimaiyo, UTEP; Kathy Kroeger, Stanford; Cecily Lemmon, BYU; Emily Sisson, Wisconsin.