



Junior Shalaya Kipp (left) outkicks the NCAA field to win the steeplechase title
Photo Courtesy: Associated Press



Kipp Wins First NCAA Title In Steeplechase

Release: 06/08/2012 Courtesy: CUBuffs.com

DES MOINES, Iowa - Racing for the third time at the NCAA Outdoor Track & Field Championships proved to be the charm for University of Colorado junior Shalaya Kipp as she won the 3,000-meter steeplechase crown on Friday night.

BUFFALO EXTRAS

→ Shalaya Kipp Talks to Flotrack After Her National Championship

Kipp won the race in 9 minutes, 49.02 seconds and became the third Buff in school history to win the title. She also won CU's fifth title in seven years in the steeplechase. Jenny (Barringer) Simpson won in 2006, 2008 and 2009 and her current teammate, Emma Coburn, won in 2011.

"Oh my gosh," Kipp said. "It feels incredible. I've dreamt about it for a long time, so now to actually have a national title feels really cool. When you actually do it, it's even better than you thought."

The race was one of the closest Kipp has had this season since Florida's Genevieve LaCaze was running right with her for just about the entire race, finishing in 9:50.25. The first half of the race was close as the top 10 were running in a tight pack. The field started to string out with three laps to go, but unlike other races this season; Kipp had company with LaCaze on her shoulder.

The duo started to pull away from the field and with just under two laps remaining, LaCaze passed Kipp and put

a couple of meters between the two. But that didn't seem to affect Kipp much as she got right back on LaCaze's shoulder. As the two entered the bell lap it was apparent they were both digging deep to use everything they had. Kipp retook the lead and after the final barrier it was a sprint to the finish. Kipp's closing speed did the trick as she crossed the line first.

"From the beginning of the race I went up to the front, I had my plan," Kipp said. "I wasn't behind anyone so it wasn't blind to me. I didn't want any mishaps, to fall over a barrier or something. I had clear water jumps, so that was nice. Then about 800 meters to go Genevieve LaCaze came upon me, and she overtook the lead. I started to doubt myself. I wasn't sure if I could hold on, but with about 200 meters left I found something in me and was able to kick it home to the finish. You always want to be able to kick over that last barrier. You watch so many falls when people hit it. So we do a lot in practice and it paid off today."

Kipp and LaCaze outran the rest of the field by more than 10 seconds and were the only two to finish in less than 10 minutes. Dartmouth's Alexi Pappas was the third runner across the finish in 10:01.20.

The Salt Lake City, Utah native was already a two-time All-American in the event, but her third time will probably be the sweetest as the NCAA Champion. She has shown steady improvement since arriving on CU's campus and trying out an event she had never even thought of as a possibility. As a freshman she placed fifth overall at NAAs in 2009 and moved up to third as a sophomore in 2010.

"I didn't even really know what the steeple was until I got to Colorado," Kipp explained. "Then I watched my teammates and thought, 'Wow, that's a crazy event. I'm never doing it.' Then one day Mark Wetmore pulled me aside said, 'How about you try the steeple?' and I haven't looked back since."

The national championships will wrap-up on Saturday and the Buffs have two more participants vying for nationals titles. Junior Aric Van Halen will run in the men's steeplechase at 10:52 a.m. and senior Jessica Tebo will run in the 5,000-meter run at 11:19 a.m. The men's steeplechase will be streamed live at ESPN3.com and the 5k will be televised live on ESPNU. Live results can be accessed on NCAA.com, GoDrakeBulldogs.com and flashresults.com.

2012 NCAA OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Jim Duncan Track (Des Moines, Iowa)

Women's Steeplechase finals (top eight scorers only):

- 1. Shalaya Kipp, CU, 9:49.02
- 2. Genevieve LaCaze, Florida, 9:50.25
- 3. Alexi Pappas, Dartmouth, 10:01.20
- 4. Astrid Leutert, Florida State, 10:02.07
- 5. Colleen Quigley, Florida State, 10:05.61
- 6. Melanie Thompson, Oregon, 10:07.18
- 7. Alyssa Kulik, Clemson, 10:07.54
- 8. Rebeka Stowe, Kansas, 10:12.16

SHOW MENU



CU Buffs' Jessica Tebo hopes winning feeling kicks in

By Brian Howell Buffzone.com Boulder Daily Camera

Posted:

DailyCamera.com

Colorado senior Jessica Tebo has never run on the track at Drake Stadium in Des Moines, Iowa.

Not that it really matters.

"A track is a track. It's an oval," she said.

As Tebo has proven throughout her college career, she can find comfort on a track in a hurry. She hopes to find comfort this afternoon when she competes at Drake Stadium in the 5,000-meter run at the NCAA championships.

"I'm excited," she said. "It'll be fun to get out there and compete again."

Tebo comes into today's race as the favorite to win. She has the best time in the country, at 15 minutes, 19.43 seconds. She isn't taking anything for granted, though. Three runners come into the race having run within seven seconds of Tebo's best time.

"It's going to be a tough race, definitely," she said. "I have the best time going into it, but not by very much and anything can happen in a championship race. It would be nice to have a bigger (lead), but it's exciting. It'll make the race a lot more exciting. There's a group of us that have run pretty competitive times and we'll all be together. It'll be interesting to see how the race plays out."

While Tebo doesn't have experience on the Drake Stadium track, she does come in with championship experience. Prior to coming to Colorado, she ran at Seattle Pacific University. During her time there, she won 12 Division II national titles.

"I think she has a certain expectation of where she would be in the race," CU head coach Mark Wetmore said. "I do think it's a little bit of an advantage to have some history of victory."

Tebo said, "Every championship I won was different." That could play in her favor, too. Some of them, she said, were won purely because she was fast on race day. Others were won on guts, where she had to battle against the elements or find a way when she wasn't feeling her best.

"That's something that I would say I'm good at as a runner," she said. "That should help."

Perhaps more than anything, Tebo goes into the race knowing how to prepare for a championship race.

"This one is going to be more about getting really focused and kind of getting excited and hyped up to race," she said.

Tebo did take last year off, though, so she said it feels like it's been a while since she's been in this position.

"Hopefully that'll kick in," she said. "Hopefully when I get there and I'm in the race my past experiences will help me out."

If all goes well, Tebo's past experiences will help her reach a familiar spot: the top of the podium.

"I think if I bring my best race, then I'll have as good of a chance as anyone," she said. "I had a good workout (last) week. There's a lot indicating that (today) will go well, so hopefully it will."

Also for CU, Aric Van Halen will compete in the finals of the men's 3,000-meter steeplechase today.