

CU Buffs' Alyssa Frank reaching new heights heading into NCAA track regionals

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Alyssa Frank is finally healthy, and the Colorado junior is starting to get the results she wants in track and field.

This week, Frank is one of several Buffs that will compete in the NCAA West Preliminary Championships at Mike A. Myers Stadium in Austin, Tex.

She got to the West preliminaries on the strength of a personal-best leap of 5 feet, 8.5 inches in the high jump during the Pac-12 Championships earlier this month.

"It was a barrier I had with 5-8 pretty much all this outdoor season," said Frank, who came to CU from Ryle High School in Kentucky. "I was hoping for it to come and it never did. I knew it was there; I guess I had to find the right time and place to have it happen. Having it happen at conference was actually perfect."

Frank blew away her previous best of 5-7.25, which came just a week earlier during the Pac-12 heptathlon.

"It was a relief because I feel like I'd been so close on so many jumps and to finally have it happen was awesome," she said.

Frank redshirted during the 2010-11 season after spraining two ligaments in her foot during the fall of 2010. Last fall, she had a bulging disc in her back.

"I was nervous I wasn't going to have an indoor season," she said.

She did, however, and even set a personal record in the pentathlon.

Frank's strong performances have continued this spring.

She won the high jump in a pair of meets and finished tied for fourth at the Pac-12 championships. She also set a personal record in the heptathlon at the Pac-12 championships with a score of 4,925, finishing 10th.

In hindsight, she said sitting out the 2010-11 season may have helped her.

"It was difficult sitting out, especially because I work with a group of girls that compete in heptathlon, so we do a lot of events," she said. "It's really easy to see people excel almost on a daily basis. Watching was kind of hard, being the one that wasn't excelling. At the same time, having the opportunity to watch them on a daily basis helped me learn a lot about myself and with track."

Because of that injury, Frank has another year to compete -- and to get better.

"I saw a lot of progress this year," she said. "Having this whole outdoor season healthy and hopefully going into next year healthy could definitely give me some help with getting to where I want to be next year."

As for the prelims this week, Frank said she isn't expecting a certain placing or a certain standard to reach, but one of her next goals is to jump her height: 5-9.

"I'm getting so close," she said. "That has been a goal of mine since I got to college."