



Emma Coburn qualified for the finals of the Olympic 3,000-meter steeplechase
Photo Courtesy: Associated Press



Coburn Advances To Olympic Finals

Release: 08/04/2012 Courtesy: Linda Poncin Sprouse, Assistant SID

LONDON- For the second consecutive Olympic Games, there will be a University of Colorado student-athlete in the finals of the 3,000-meter steeplechase as senior Emma Coburn easily advanced on Saturday morning.

She follows in the footsteps of former Buff Jenny (Barringer) Simpson who finished ninth in the event at the 2008 Beijing Games.

Coburn finished the race in 9 minutes, 27.51 seconds, the second fastest time in her career. She was third in the second section of the event, earning one of the four automatic qualifying positions. Her time was the 11th best of the day. She will run in the finals on Monday at 2:05 p.m. MST (9:05 p.m. in London).

This was Coburn's first Olympics, but she has had major international racing experience since she competed at the 2011 IAAF World Championships in Daegu, Korea. The experience seemed to help her as she maintained calm throughout the race. She quickly moved to the front of the pack after the start and was third after the first full lap.

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The Crested Butte, Colo. native took the lead when Portugal's Clarisse Cruz tripped on a barrier with just over five laps remaining. Coburn would hang on to her lead until there were 600 meters left. At that point Ethiopia's Sofia Assefa and Tunisia's Habiba Ghribi both passed Coburn, but she held strong as the top three pulled away from the rest of the field. Coburn was able to close well and finished .11 seconds behind Ghribi (9:27.42). Assefa won the heat in 9:25.42.

"Leading wasn't plan A, but I knew it was possible because I'd done it in Daegu," Coburn said. "The woman leading tripped and I suddenly was in the lead. I knew I had to lead to keep pace. I was kind of relieved when the two other women came up at about 600 meters and I just latched onto them and ran through. I'm confident I can run similarly in the finals."

Colorado head coach Mark Wetmore and associate head cross country coach Heather Burroughs were happy with Coburn's performance.

"Heather and I are very happy with the races this morning," Wetmore said. "Emma didn't plan to lead. But the race was slowing down and it's generally better to squeeze the slower runners out the back. Then the Portugal woman went down and Emma discovered herself out front. She managed it well, kept the pace pretty honest, allowed the normal attrition to take place, and then closed carefully. I think she kept a few seconds in the tank."

"So now, if she recovers well, she can look forward to a more aggressive race in two days, maybe a chance to run her fastest time. She is excited, as are we."

Coburn's U.S. and CU teammate senior Shalaya Kipp did not advance to the finals as she finished 12th in the first heat of the steeplechase; finishing in 9:48.33. It was still a good run for Kipp who just wrapped up an amazing season; winning the 2012 Pac-12 and NCAA Championships and placing third at the U.S. Trials in June.

"Shalaya did fine for her first experience at this level," Wetmore said. "I think her final time today was about the same as Jenny (Barringer) Simpson's at her first "major" international race in Japan in 2007. It is the seventh month of racing for Shalaya. She had a great year and has many more coming."

Kipp ran a solid race and was in the same section with world record holder Gulnara Gulkina (Russia). She was able to run with the field for most of the race but was always near the back. Her time was 30th overall.

"It was alright," Kipp said. "You get out there and there are more elbows than you've ever seen, even though there is the same number of people. I kind of got shoved to the back early on and got boxed. The race was going by so fast, you just try to think of jumping over every barrier, then all of a sudden there are three laps to go and I find myself at the back of the pack. It's not like anything I've ever really experienced before. I wish I could have been at the front of that pack."

Former Buff Dathan Ritzenhein placed 13th the 10,000-meter run, finishing in 27:45.89. This was Ritzenhein's third trip to the Olympics, his second in the 10k.

CU student Flora Duffy finished 45th in the triathlon, clocking a time of 2:08.54. She was competing for her native country of Bermuda.

Social Media: The official twitter hash tag for CU at the Olympics is #LondonBuffs. Please follow CU track and field's handle on twitter: @CUBuffsTrack and @CUBuffs for updates throughout the games.

30th Olympic Games (Olympic Stadium, London, England) Women's 3,000-Meter Steeplechase

1. Hiwot Ayalew (Ethiopia) 9:24.01
11. Emma Coburn, 9:27.51

30. Shalaya Kipp, 9:48.33

Men's 10,000-Meter Run

1. Mohamed Farah, Great Britain, 27:30.42

13. Dathan Ritzenhein, 27:45.89

Buff's In London Track & Field Schedule (All Times Are Mountain)

Women's 3,000 Meter Steeplechase

(Emma Coburn and Shalaya Kipp)

Mon. 8/6: Finals, 2:05 p.m.

TV: Tape-delayed on NBC between 11:35 p.m.-12:35 a.m.

Women's Marathon

(Kara Goucher)

Sun. 8/5: Finals, 4 a.m.

TV: Tape-delayed on NBC from 5-8 a.m.

Women's 1,500 Meters

(Jenny Simpson)

Mon. 8/6: Round 1, 4:45 a.m.

TV: Tape-delayed on NBC between 9-9:30 a.m.

Wed. 8/8: Semis, 12:45 p.m.

TV: Tape-delayed on NBC - no time is given

Fri. 8/10: Finals, 1:55 p.m.

TV: Tape-delayed on NBC - no time is given

SHOW MENU



CU's Emma Coburn advances to finals of steeplechase at Olympics

By John Meyer *The Denver Post* *The Denver Post*
Posted:

DenverPost.com

LONDON — Shalaya Kipp discovered running at the Olympics can be a lot rougher than running in a college meet for the University of Colorado.

"You get out there and there's more elbows than you've ever seen," Kipp said of Saturday's women's steeplechase semifinal, "even though they're the same number of people."

Kipp failed to advance to Monday's final, but teammate Emma Coburn qualified easily. Coburn, who made her international debut a year ago when she ran at the world championships in South Korea, led most of her heat before cruising in third.

"Walking out here, hearing the crowd, and everyone's cheering so loud even though there were no Brits in our race — it was a really great atmosphere to be in," said Coburn, who grew up in Crested Butte.

Coburn didn't intend to lead so much of her heat, but pacesetter Clarisse Cruz of Portugal tripped early on, putting Coburn in the lead.

"Luckily I avoided her fall," Coburn said. "It was close to being a disaster, but I was paying close enough attention because it was still pretty early on, where there's lots of jostling, rubbing elbows and everything. I was on edge at that point, guarding my space."

Because the pace was a little slower than Coburn wanted to run, she felt she had no choice but to take the leader's role. She kept it until late in the race when Sofia Assefa of Ethiopia and Habiba Ghribi of Tunisia overtook her.

"I was kind of relieved when the two other women came up with 600 to go, to just get a little bit of a break, and try to latch onto them," Coburn said. "I eased up little bit that last 100, so I'm confident I can run similar to this performance again in the final — hopefully a little bit faster, too."

Kipp got trapped in the back of her heat early and could not recover, but she will have great memories of the day she became an Olympian.

"Oh my gosh, they open those doors (to the track), I heard a sound and at first I thought it was the wind," Kipp said. "Then I realized it was the crowd, they're fantastic, they're so loud. I thought when you heard that kind of noise on TV, they're like adding it in, but it's real."

Coburn seems remarkably unaffected by the magnitude of the event, grateful for the opportunity without letting it affect her ability to perform.

"I am definitely so thrilled to be here, and I'm so honored to have these three letters (USA) across my chest," Coburn said. "I have to just treat it like any other meet. It's a 400-meter track, there's the same amount of water jumps, there's the same amount of barriers. Although there's an Olympic Village and there's flags and there's gear and there's media, I just have to have a tunnel of what the end goal is. Remember it's a steeplechase and it's 3,000 meters. If it's at Potts (track) in Boulder or in London, England, in the Olympics, I have to try and stay focused and grounded."

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The Salt Lake Tribune

Olympics: SLC's Shalaya Kipp comes up short of final, but gains experience

Olympics • She gets boxed in early, finishes 12th out of 15 in 3,000 steeplechase.

By Michael C. Lewis

The Salt Lake Tribune

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Updated: August 4, 2012 11:55PM

London • It did not take long for Shalaya Kipp to get her first taste of major international track experience at the London Olympics.

The moment the gun went off for her preliminary heat of the women's 3,000-meter steeplechase on Saturday, the elbows started flying. "You get out there and there's more elbows than you've ever seen, even though it's the same number of people," she said. "I kind of got shoved to the back early on and was boxed in."

The 21-year-old Salt Lake City native and Skyline High School grad never quite recovered, and wound up 12th out of 15 runners in 9 minutes, 48.33 seconds at the Olympic Stadium.

That was far off her personal-best of 9:35.73, never mind qualifying for the final.

Germany's Gesa Felicitas Krause won the heat in 9:24.91, with the top four qualifiers automatically moving on, along with the next three fastest times over the three heats. That's how defending Olympic champion Gulnara Galkina of Russia made it, finishing fifth in Kipp's heat in 9:28.76.



Shalaya Kipp Courtesy University of Colorado

The slowest qualifier was Portugal's Clarisse Cruz, in 9:30.06, despite falling early in her heat.

But for Kipp, racing here wasn't about what she could do now.

It was about what she can do in four years, when the Olympics are in Rio de Janeiro and she will be a much more experienced runner — hopefully with designs on greater achievements than simply reaching the final.

"In four more years, I will have had a lot more races and training under my belt," she said.

Emma Coburn certainly believes that will help.

Kipp's close friend and teammate at the University of Colorado finished third in her heat of the steeplechase — between them, they're the "SteepleBuffs," after CU's buffalo mascot — and said gaining experience at international meets like the Olympics and World Championships is invaluable in becoming a truly elite competitor.

"It helps you be a little more confident in your own abilities," Coburn said. "Although I'm on the starting line for the world's best steeplechasers, it gives me a little more confidence that I myself belong here, too, and I think she has that now."

Kipp also has the brilliant memory of walking into the majestic Olympic stadium — packed with 80,000 roaring fans — for the first time.

"Oh my gosh," she said, "they opened those doors and ... I heard a sound, and at first I thought it was the wind. And then I realized it was all the people. It was the crowd. They're fantastic. They're so loud. I thought when you hear that kind of noise on TV, they're just like adding it in. But it's real."

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Rockford's Dathan Ritzenhein finishes 13th in 10,000-meter run

LONDON - In a race that covers more than six miles, Dathan Ritzenhein's Olympic run in the 10,000 meters came down to a split-second.

Ritzenhein, who was born in Grand Rapids, Mich., and grew up in nearby Rockford, let a small bit of distance develop between himself and the lead pack with less than 10 laps to go – finishing 13th Saturday at Olympic Stadium.

"It was just an error early on to let that little gap form," said Ritzenhein, who finished in 27 minutes, 45.89 seconds. "Obviously I was strong enough to stay in it. It was just a matter of poor tactics really."

The Americans collected a medal in the race, though, when Galen Rupp of Portland, Ore., snared silver in a time of 27:30.90.

Great Britain's Mohamed Farah won gold for the host nation in 27:30.42.

Ritzenhein spent more time in recent years focusing on the marathon, an event that carried him to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing – and a ninth-place finish.

The three-time Olympian – he qualified for the 2004 Games in the 10,000 – said devoting time to the streets as a marathon impacted race reaction Friday.

"There's not as much room for error in a race like this where a split-second decision makes a big difference," said Ritzenhein, who ran in college at the University of Colorado. "In marathon, you have a little more time to react.

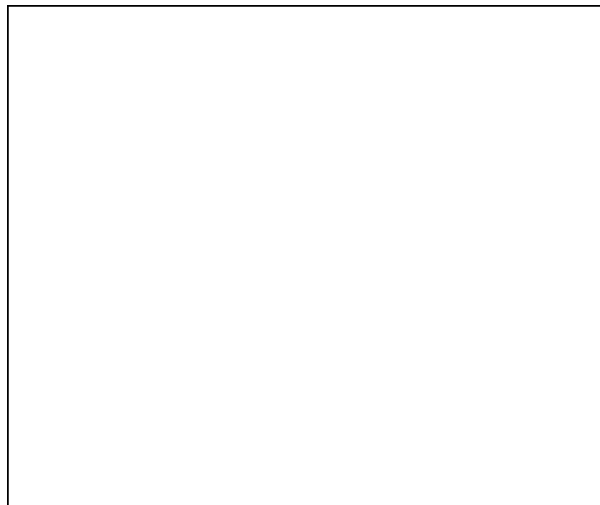
"It showed I've been away from the track for years. When you're used to it, when you've been racing, you know when those moments happen – when to go.

"Unfortunately, I left that little gap – and I think that was the time away. I paid a little price at the end."

Ritzenhein became pinned behind a pair of runners with less than 10 of the 24 laps remaining.

As the lead pack of a dozen runners hit the gas to make a race-defining move, the

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Michigan native was in the classic wrong place at the wrong time.

"They had quite a few accelerations," Ritzenhein said of the lead group. "I got the gap to about five meters at one point, but at that point we were running so fast."

Staying with the likes of Farah and Rupp proved more than Ritzenhein and the rest of the elite field could handle.

"You can't imagine the speed that these guys do," Ritzenhein said. "It's just incredible."

Ritzenhein said he plans to continue straddling the distance running fence. He expects to compete in the Chicago Marathon on Oct. 7.

In 2013, though, he said he'll return to the track to focus on races such as the 10,000.

"I want to dedicate a full year to this," Ritzenhein said of the 10,000. "I made big gains after all the time I'd been away."

"I want to have that one big year, still."

Bryce Miller writes for the Des Moines Register

For more coverage on Dathan Ritzenhein, visit [freep.com/dathanritzenhein](http://www.freep.com/dathanritzenhein).

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Dathan Ritzenhein cites 'bad tactics' for his result in Olympic 10,000 meters

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Peter J. Wallner | pwallner@mlive.com

By

LONDON, ENGLISH – Dathan Ritzenhein was not pleased with the way he ran in the Olympic 10,000-meter run Saturday.

"I gave it all today but had bad tactics," he **tweeted** late Saturday. "Showed my time off the track letting the gap open, but happy to have gave (sic) it everything."

Ritzenhein, a 2001 Rockford High School graduate, **finished 13th in 27 minutes, 45.89 seconds** in his third Olympics. He spent most of the race in the middle of the pack and ran much of the final three laps on his own, trying desperately to catch the lead pack.

He received an **outpouring of emotion after the race**.

"It was just an error early on to let that little gap form," Ritzenhein told USA Today in an interview from London. "Obviously I was strong enough to stay in it. It was just a matter of poor tactics, really."

Ritzenhein also congratulated his Nike training partners, Mo Farah from Great Britain and American Galen Rupp, who won the gold and silver.

"Congrats to my boys You didn't surprise me at all," he said.



Dathan Ritzenhein

AP file photo

Ritzenhein, 29, plans to race next in the Chicago Marathon on Oct. 7.

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AP Photo

Great Britain's Mo Farah, right, celebrates along with American Galen Rupp after the two finished one-two in the 10,000 meters. They are training partners with Dathan Ritzenhein.