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Top 5 Events

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- Lorie Line And Her Fab Five
- Walker Williams Band

“He was our No. 1 runner this year,” Wetmore said. “But everybody else stepped up so much that I don’t think the outcome of any race would have changed.”

What makes Wetmore such a good coach isn’t his No. 1 runner, but the strength of the rest of the team. Among this year’s top seven runners, four of them weren’t members of the varsity team last year. Freshman Pierce Murphy and Connor Winter, sophomore Hugh Dowdy, and senior Aric Van Halen, all made an enormous jump from middling in the junior varsity ranks, to scoring members of an NCAA podium team—a feat clearly facilitated by Wetmore.

The final cog in the championship machine was this year’s No. 2 man (No. 1 at Pac-12s), Blake Theroux. In 2011 the Virginia native finished 183rd at NCAAAs; this year he finished 38th, good enough for an All-American certificate.

These top seven established themselves early on, as they were the top seven scorers in the team’s season opener, the Rocky Mountain Shootout.

The thing that makes this year’s finish more impressive is that a majority of the men have better pedigrees on the track than on the cross country course. Hurysz boasts a 3:42.89 1500m personal record, as well as a 13:38 5000m best. Van Halen is an All-American steeplechase and Theroux and Dowdy both qualified for the NCAA Regional Track meet this past spring.

“We can reasonably expect a significant step in their track performances,” Wetmore said. “I hesitate to predict particular times. In any case Connor, Blake, and Hugh will make nice steps and we’re looking forward to what track season has to offer.”

With all of this fall’s football drama, CU’s winningest sports team was the silent silver lining to it all. It’s comforting to know that there is a winning tradition somewhere on CU’s campus and knowing Wetmore’s coaching history—it includes numerous Olympians, and NCAA indoor and outdoor champions—it’s safe to say that it will be around for a while.

“We can expect to see a number of these guys back again next year,” Wetmore said. “We would aspire that they will take another step in fitness, and competitiveness; it should be a very competitive team”

It’s no wonder that Wetmore was named Pac-12 coach of the year. With such high expectations of the hallowed program, he took a bunch of nobodies and showed the rest of the NCAA a clean pair of heels; something that you can expect to see again come indoor and outdoor track.

And so in the midst of CU football hiring their fifth head coach since Mark Wetmore took over the cross country program, tucked away in the corner of the ramshackle Balch fieldhouse, the quiet, ponytailed leader is sitting in his windowless office, making magic in the form of long runs and interval workouts, turning high school kids into NCAA champions and happily keeping the tradition of CU running alive and kickin’.

Contact CU Independent Sports Editor Ryan Sterner at Ryan.sterner@colorado.edu



About Ryan Sterner

Ryan Sterner is a reporting superstar. Raised in Minnesota by the soft glow of day time Judge Judy re-runs, his interests don’t run any deeper than running, writing, and top Ramen. If you see him on the street, make sure to say howdy. He is also President of the Boulder Running Club; facebook it.

Tags: [Aric Van Halen](#), [Blake Theroux](#), [coaching staff](#), [Connor Winter](#), [CU cross country](#), [CU sports](#), [Hugh Dowdy](#), [Jake Hurysz](#), [mark wetmore](#), [Pac-12 Coach of the Year award](#), [Pierce Murphy](#)

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SPORTS UPDATE



12:25 AM DEC 11, 2012 / comments

San Jose State's Mike MacIntyre accepts CU head coaching job

The University of Colorado announced Monday that it had reached a deal with San Jose State University's Mike MacIntyre to take on the beleaguered CU football program. Mike MacIntyre is named the CU Buff's new head football coach. (Amy... [read more »](#))

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