

Cross country: CU Buffs claim men's Pac-12 title again

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SANTA CLARITA, Calif. -- The Colorado men's cross country team stuck to its plan and came away with another conference title.

On Saturday morning at Robinson Ranch Golf Course, the Buffaloes won the Pac-12 Championship for the second year in a row.

"It was great. We all stuck together through the whole race," said Aric VanHalen, who finished 12th overall.

The Buffs, ranked No. 2 in the country, scored 49 points to top second-place Stanford by 33 points. Stanford is ranked No. 3 nationally.

On the women's side, Oregon took the team title, while Colorado was fifth.

Individually, Arizona's Lawi Lalang won the men's title and Stanford's Kathy Kroege won the women's title.

CU's men won their 24th conference title and 14th in the last 17 years. All seven of CU's runners finished between 7-18, led by Blake Theroux, who was seventh in 23 minutes, 40 seconds.

"Our goal today was to win the team title and maybe we sacrifice an individual position here or there just to make sure we didn't make any team mistakes," CU head coach Mark Wetmore said.

Wetmore was particularly impressed by Theroux, a sophomore who was 28th at this meet in 2011.

"Blake keeps getting better every race," Wetmore said. "The days of him being an unknown runner, I think are soon to be gone."

The 21st-ranked Colorado women were also defending champs, but were simply hoping for a top-five finish with No. 3 Oregon, No. 4 Stanford, No. 5 Arizona and No. 6 Washington also in the field.

"We were a little closer to the big four than we expected to be," Wetmore said. "We finished fifth and ran OK."

CU was led by Shalaya Kipp. An Olympian this past summer in the steeplechase, Kipp placed 11th overall with a time of 20:36. Freshman Carrie Verdon wasn't far behind, placing 16th in 20:41.

CU's top five runners all finished in the top 40, helping the Buffs keep an impressive streak alive. They have never finished lower than sixth in a conference championship meet.

Pac-12 Championships

At Robinson Ranch Golf Course

Santa Clarita, Calif.

Men's 8K

Team scores -- Colorado 49, Stanford 82, Oregon 105, Arizona State 109, UCLA 113, Washington 119, Arizona

166, Washington State 200, California 234.

Top 5 finishers -- 1. Lawi Lalang (Arizona), 22:49; 2. Stephen Sambu (Arizona), 22:50; 3. Trevor Dunbar (Oregon), 23:28; 4. Parker Stinson (Oregon), 23:28; 5. Lane Werley (UCLA), 23:33.

Colorado results -- 7. Blake Theroux, 23:40; 8. Jake Hurysz, 23:41; 9. Hugh Dowdy, 23:42; 12. Aric VanHalen, 23:46; 13. Martin Medina, 23:49; 14. Pierce Murphy, 23:50; 18. Morgan Pearson, 24:04.

Women's 6K

Team scores -- Oregon 47, Arizona 69, Stanford 82, Washington 92, Colorado 124, UCLA 172, Utah 200, California 209, Arizona State 210, USC 295, Oregon State 305, Washington State 308.

Top 5 finishers -- 1. Kathy Kroeger (Stanford), 20:06; 2. Jordan Hasay (Oregon), 20:10; 3. Elvin Kibet (Arizona), 20:11; 4. Alexi Pappas (Oregon), 20:12; 5. Allie Woodward (Oregon), 20:16.

Colorado results -- 11. Shalaya Kipp, 20:36; 16. Carrie Verdon, 20:41; 27. Rachel Viger, 21:05; 30. Elizabeth Tremblay, 21:16; 40. Jana Stolting, 21:38; 41. Camille Logan, 21:39; 58. Diana George, 22:10.