

# HEAD COACH RICHARD ROKOS



- ❁ Six NCAA Championships
- ❁ 11 NCAA West Regional Championships
- ❁ 170 All-Americans
- ❁ 31 Individual National Champions

Richard Rokos and Colorado Skiing. In 20 seasons, the combination has been synonymous with success. When he was promoted to head coach on July 3, 1990, the process to return a program that was eight years removed from an NCAA title back to

national prominence took its first step. Twenty seasons, five national team titles, 29 individual champions and 158 All-Americans later, it is a program that has turned steps into strides.

Rokos, 60, is the 11th and longest tenured head coach in CU ski history, has guided Colorado to five national championships, winning NCAA crowns in 1991, 1995, 1998, 1999 and 2006. In addition, his Buffaloes have won individual titles (29 total) in 12 different years. That first team title came in his first season as head coach, a unique accomplishment in any sport, and served as a bookend for the school as it came on the heels of CU's first in football.

Only eight coaches in CU history have coached their teams longer than Rokos has been at the reins of the ski team; all eight coached at least 22 seasons and Rokos is now the ninth to coach a team for two decades. With all of his teams qualifying for the NCAA Championships, his 20 trips to nationals are the second most by any coach in school history.

He has also coached the Buffs to 10 Rocky Mountain Intercollegiate Ski Association (RMISA) titles, the last coming in 2010, events that also serve as the NCAA West Regional, as well as seven runner-up finishes.

His skiers, alpine and Nordic, have posted 232 top 10 finishes at the NCAA Championships; that total includes 100 first team All-Americans, with 27 earning two-time single-year All-American mention, and 58 second-team All-Americans.

Under Rokos, the Buffaloes have won 50 of 123 meets they have skied in, including the five NCAA crowns and the 10 RMISA Championships/NCAA West Regionals (1991, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2008 and 2010). On 41 other occasions, CU has finished as the runner-up.

Though he has been notified on six different occasions that he was the selection for the RMISA coach of the year, including 2006, Rokos has declined the honor for personal reasons, mainly that he doesn't believe in the philosophy and that the student-athletes deserve the credit.

One of Rokos' greatest accomplishments since taking over the program has been turning what was once essentially an individual sport, pulling divergent skiers—men and women, Nordic and Alpine, into a team event at CU. Prior to his arrival, the two units rarely saw each other prior to the national championships, as they trained and raced separately. But it was his philos-

ophy, to be an educator as well as a coach, to understand the physical and psychological significance of a student-athlete and to introduce harmony and mutual support that has made it a more unified program. Credit Rokos himself for the strong camaraderie because there is very little that he asks of his skiers that he doesn't do himself. That includes 6 a.m. ice hockey games, off-season dryland training, mountain bike rides from Boulder to Winter Park and back, hiking Pikes Peak, playing soccer and rollerblading through Boulder.

Rokos, who also coordinates all alpine aspects of the program, was already very familiar with the CU ski program upon his hiring, as he was promoted from alpine coordinator to the post. He served one season (1989-90) in that role under his predecessor as head coach, Tim LaVallee, and was the head coach of Colorado's Alpine "B" Team for the two years prior to joining the varsity staff (1987-89). With Rokos tutoring the alpine skiers, the 1990 team finished third in both the West Regional and the NCAA championships, with one individual national champion in the latter.

Rokos brought to CU a great amount of racing and coaching experience. He competed in his native home of Czechoslovakia and internationally for 19 years before beginning his coaching career with the Czechoslovakian Junior National Team in 1977. The year prior to joining the junior national team, Rokos graduated from the University of Masaryk with a masters' degree in physical education, his emphasis in his diploma work was the use of ski slopes with artificial surfaces for slalom and giant slalom practice. In 1969 he earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the College of Machiner. He has additional course work in Prague (Level II International Coaching License), Colorado State (athletic training) and the University of Colorado (special education).

Leaving the Czech national team in 1980, Rokos went on to coach at several ski schools in Austria before finally coming to the United States to coach at the Grampian Mountain Ski School in Michigan the following year. He then spent four years (1984-87) working with the U.S. Pro Ski Tour before settling down in Boulder.

Rokos was the head alpine coach of the 2007 United States team that participated in the World University Games teams in Tarvisio, Italy. It was the sixth time he coached the team, having previously done so in 1995 (Jaca, Spain), 1997 (Mugu, Korea), 1999 (Zakopane, Poland), 2003 (Tarvisio) and 2005 (Innsbruck, Austria). Combined, his athletes have brought home three gold medals, along with four silver and several bronze including one by a former Buffalo, Erika Hogan, in 2003. He was also the head coach of the entire U.S. Team in the 1997 event in Korea.

In 2006, he earned a Top of the Rocky Award as the region's top college coach as selected by the writers and critics of the *Rocky Mountain News*. The honor made mention of CU being the first-ever shorthanded team to win an NCAA title, recording the biggest second-day comeback in the meet, and Rokos



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specifically being mentioned by President George W. Bush when the Buffs were one of 12 teams invited to the White House. Rokos was saluted by the president, who called him a “proud American” in reference to his defecting to the States for freedom, which he also privately had mentioned upon meeting him, “There’s nothing like freedom.”

He was also selected as the 2006 Coach of the Year in the state of Colorado by the Sportswomen of Colorado Hall of Fame.

Rokos was born May 25, 1950 in Brno, Czechoslovakia. He

and his wife, the former Helena Konecny, and then-18-month-old daughter Linda, left a communist-bound native homeland in 1980 for Austria where they spent a year preparing their visas, and defected from Czechoslovakia to the United States (Detroit) a year later before calling Colorado their permanent home beginning in 1982. He and Helena are the parents of two grown children Linda, now an alpine instructor at Eldora and Thomas, and one grandchild, Stella (11), who is also an avid skier.

## ROKOS YEAR BY YEAR

Team Finishes Season						Regional	NCAA		All-Americans				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		NCAA	Champions	Total	A	(B)	C	D
1991	6	1	—	—	—	1st	1st	2	14	9	(3)	5	2
1992	1	2	2	1	1	4th	5th	2	5	2	(2)	3	2
1993	4	1	—	1	—	1st	4th	2	10	5	(1)	5	—
1994	1	4	—	2	—	1st	4th	—	7	4		3	1
1995	6	—	—	—	—	1st	1st	2	12	4	(1)	8	5
1996	3	1	1	1	—	2nd	4th	—	8	4	(1)	4	1
1997	1	3	2	—	—	2nd	3rd	—	7	5	(2)	2	3
1998	3	3	—	—	—	2nd	1st	3	9	5	(2)	4	2
1999	4	1	—	1	—	1st	1st	3	9	7	(3)	2	3
2000	4	2	—	—	—	1st	2nd	3	9	6	(1)	3	4
2001	1	3	2	—	—	2nd	3rd	—	7	7	(1)	—	3
2002	1	3	1	1	—	1st	2nd	1	6	4		2	5
2003	1	2	1	2	—	2nd	3rd	—	6	2		4	1
2004	—	2	1	2	1	5th	4th	—	8	5	(2)	3	—
2005	—	2	2	1	—	3rd	6th	—	5	3	(1)	2	—
2006	4	2	—	—	—	1st	1st	4	8	7	(3)	1	4
2007	2	3	1	—	—	2nd	3rd	—	6	4	(1)	2	3
2008	2	2	2	—	—	1st	2nd	4	7	5	(2)	2	2
2009	3	2	1	—	—	2nd	2nd	2	7	5		2	3
2010	3	2	1	—	—	1st	2nd	1	8	7	(1)	1	3
2011	5	—	—	1	—	1st	1st	2	12	7	(3)	5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11 titles</b>	<b>6 titles</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>(30)</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>49</b>

(KEY: A—first-team; (B)—two-time first-team; C—second-team; D—multiple second-team honors in addition to a first-team performance or another second-team finish.)

## BUFFS IN ROKOS ERA

Here is how Colorado stacks up against the other three national powerhouses Denver, Utah and Vermont since Richard Rokos became head coach in 1991.

## NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Denver	7
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>6</b>
Utah	4
Vermont	2
Dartmouth	1
New Mexico	1

## INDIVIDUAL NCAA CHAMPIONS

Denver	32
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>31</b>
Utah	29
Vermont	24

# ASSISTANT COACHES



## Bruce Cranmer

### Head Nordic Coach

Bruce Cranmer, a familiar name among skiing historians in Colorado, is in his 12th season at the head Nordic coach for the Buffaloes.

Cranmer skied collegiately for CU, helping the Buffs to two national championships in 1972 and '73 under coach Bill Marolt. He later

went on to compete for the U.S. Ski Team from 1980-88 when he was a member of the 1985 World Championship team.

Longtime Coloradoans certainly know the name, as his grandfather, George, started the Winter Park Ski Resort in Winter Park, Colo., which has blossomed into one of the finer skier areas in the world.

Cranmer also brings an outstanding coaching resume with him to Boulder, as he was the head cross country coach at Vermont, helping the Catamounts to four NCAA Championships between 1989-2000. Vermont was also the national runner-up three different times under Cranmer and head coach Chip LaCasse.

In his tenure at CU, the Buffs won the 2006 and 2011 NCAA Championships and have finished in the top three at the national meet seven other times in his 12 years. He has coached eight skiers to 10 individual NCAA Championships, including Eliska Hajkova and Reid Pletcher in 2011. He also has coached two athletes to individual NCAA Championship sweeps, first in 2006 when current assistant coach Jana Weinberger (then Rehemaa) won both the classical and freestyle championships and then in 2008, Maria Grevsgaard won both championships.

In the past seven years, CU has racked up nine of those 10 individual championships and the Buffs have had at least one individual champion on the Nordic side each of the past four seasons.

Others who have won individual NCAA Championships are Mari Storeng (2002, women's freestyle), Kit Richmond (2006, men's classical), Vegard Kjoelhamar (2009, men's freestyle) and Matt Gelso (2010, men's classical).

The Buffs have also won the mythical Nordic national championship five times under Cranmer's tutelage, scoring the most Nordic points at the NCAA Championships in 2004, '06, '08, '10 and '11, the only five times the Buffs have topped the Nordic points list since the NCAA went to a combined skiing championship in 1983.

CU's men's Nordic skiers have earned the most points at the NCAA Championship five times under Cranmer (2004, '06, '08, '10, '11), the only five times since 1983 the Buffs have topped that point total, as well. On the women's side, Cranmer's teams have earned more points than other women's Nordic squads four times under Cranmer (out of six times in CU history), including in 2002, '06, '08 and '11.

Cranmer's squads have six times won races at the NCAA Championships, starting in 2002 when the women won both the classical and freestyle races. In 2004, '06 and '08 when the Buffs won the Nordic overall title, CU won three of the four races. In 2009, CU won the men's classical race, in 2010, CU won the men's classical and women's freestyle races and in 2011, CU won the men's classical and women's freestyle races. CU has won the men's classical race each of the past four seasons at NCAAs.

Grevsgaard set a new CU record when she won 24 races between 2006-09, eight more than any other skier in CU history, Nordic or alpine. Out of the 18 skiers that have won five or more races in a season, Cranmer has coached five of them, including Grevsgaard's totals of 11 in 2008, matching the CU record, seven in 2007 and five in 2009, and Rehemaa's five in 2006 and Gelso's five in 2010.

In Cranmer's first season in 2001, Storeng became just the seventh skier in CU history to earn two podium appearances in their first NCAA Championship as she was the runner up in the classical race and took third in the freestyle race.

A total of 20 of his athletes have earned 42 first-team All-America honors and in all, and he has had at least one first-team All-America performance each year and seven times CU has had four or more Nordic athletes earn first-team All-America honors, including a CU record five, accomplished in 2010. CU's four athletes earning first-team honors in 2011 earned a combined seven honors, the most in CU history, one more than the 2004 and '10 teams.

Including second-team All-America honors, Cranmer has coached 22 athletes to 70 such honors in his time at Colorado. In his time at CU, the Buffs have had 17 skiers win a total of 69 races, including 12 skiers winning 61 races since 2006. CU has won at least six races in each of the last six years and three of those years the Buffs won 12 or more Nordic races throughout the season. The Buffs have twice swept all four Nordic races under his tenure, in 2008 at the RMISA Championships when Grevsgaard and Kit Richmond both swept the races, and in 2009 at the Alaska Invitational when Grevsgaard won both races while Gelso and Kjoelhamar each one a men's race.

In his time at Vermont, the Catamounts boasted 12 individual Nordic NCAA Championships including a pair of four-time winners in Thorodd Bakken and Laura Wilson and a pair of Olympians in Joe Galanes and Kerrin Petty. Former DU Nordic coaches Knut and Trond Nystad were also All-Americans under Cranmer's tutelage while at Vermont.

Cranmer also coached for two U.S. Olympic Teams, the 1994 squad in Lillehammer, Norway, and the 1998 team in Nagano, Japan. Outside of skiing, Cranmer spent time as a Quality Control Engineer on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline and as an Outward Bound instructor in Bertchesgaden, Germany.

Born September 15, 1950, in Denver, Cranmer graduated from Aspen High School. He won NBC's Survival of the Fittest in 1985 and won the overall Great American Ski Chase in 1986. He is also a Class 5 whitewater kayaker. He is married to the former Patricia Drislane.



# ASSISTANT COACHES



**Jana Weinberger**  
*Assistant Nordic Coach*

A five-time first-team All-American and two-time individual NCAA Champion for the University of Colorado, Jana Weinberger is in her fifth season as the assistant Nordic coach at her alma mater.

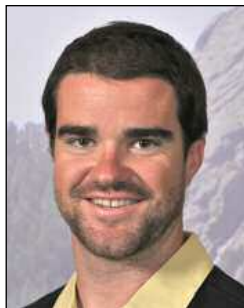
Already in her four previous season at CU, a total of nine CU skiers have won 40 races while 10 different Nordic skiers have won 22 first-team and 32 overall All-America honors. Five Buffs have also captured six individual NCAA Championships, as well.

As a former student-athlete at CU from 2003-06, Weinberger raced 28 collegiate races, claiming 27 top 10 and 23 top five performances. Her most prolific season came her senior year in 2006 when she captained the national championship team and swept six consecutive races, including winning the individual championships in both the freestyle and classical events at the NCAA Championships.

As a result of her performance in 2006, she was awarded the Dick Schoenberger Memorial Award, presented to CU's most outstanding skier each season. When she won a pair of All-America citations in 2004, she became just the sixth women's cross country skier to accomplish that feat and first since former teammate and former assistant coach Mari Storeng in 2001. Weinberger was also the recipient of the Outstanding Nordic Woman award in both 2003 and '04.

Prior to her collegiate career, she skied for the Tartu Ski Club in Estonia. She also competed in basketball and track & field at Estonia Sport Gymnasium.

Born July 27, 1979 in Russia, the former Jana Rehema is the daughter of Udo and Veir Rehema. She graduated from the University of Colorado in 2006 with a degree in international affairs. She is married to former CU All-American and her predecessor as the assistant Nordic Coach, Dan Weinberger, and the couple had a daughter this past off season, Klara.



**Drew Roberts**  
*Assistant Alpine Coach*

Drew Roberts, a 2010 graduate of the University of Colorado, is in his first season as the assistant alpine coach for the Buffaloes.

Roberts skied for the Buffaloes from the 2007-10 seasons, skiing at the NCAA Championships each season for the team. He was an All-American in 2009 and All-RMISA skier twice for the Buffs.

He competed in 52 races for the Buffaloes and had just two disqualifications and one other race unfinished in four years. He had 33 top 20 performances with at least five each season while the number increased each year with 11 his senior season. He also compiled 16 top 20 finishes, exactly four each season, and three podium appearances with one race victory, the 2007 Montana State Invitational in his first collegiate race.

Born April 12, 1985 in Steamboat Springs, Colo., he graduated from Steamboat Springs High School and skied on the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club from 1990-2003 before moving on to the U.S. Ski Team from 2004-06. He was fifth at the World Junior Championships in 2005 in the slalom and took sixth in that event in 2006 at the U.S. National Championships. He was named the Colorado Alpine Skier of the Year in 2005. He also lettered in soccer at SSSH. He is the son of Michael and Marne, has an older brother, Ryan, and a younger sister, Christine, who skied for Dartmouth.



**Jodi Mossoni**  
*Administrative Assistant*

Jodi Mossoni enters her 10th season with the Colorado ski program, having joined the east campus office staff in May 2002.

Mossoni is a Centennial State native and graduated from Berthoud High School before attending Colorado State University and beginning a career with StorageTek. She and her husband, Mark, are the former owners of the A&W

restaurant in Louisville, Colo., and she is a former president of the Buffalo Belles.

She enjoys skiing, golf and doing scrapbooks of her two children, Kory and Joleen, both graduates of the University of Colorado. Kory was a four-year letter winner in football as a linebacker at Colorado before signing as a free agent and having a tryout with the New Orleans Saints.



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