



Bufs ready for RM Shootout

Latest poll has CU men ranked No. 3 in nation

By Ryan Thorburn

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The results of the Iowa State Invitational had to be pleasing for Colorado cross country coach Mark Wetmore.

The host Cyclones grabbed the September headlines with Clayton Carper winning the men's race on his home course with a time of 25 minutes, 27.69 seconds.

However, the next seven finishers were all Bufs.

That should bode well for the deep CU men's team -- ranked third in the USTFCCCA poll behind Oregon and Oklahoma State -- when the Big 12 championships are contested in Ames, Iowa, on Nov. 1.

"We had instructions to run a particular pace and we were all in a pack and he pulled away," said CU senior Chris Pannone, who finished second behind Carper with a time of 25:58.67. "We weren't concerned with place at all. ... It's always nice to place that high, but whether I was second or eighth didn't matter as long as we were running our race."

The Bufs host the Rocky Mountain Shootout on Saturday. The regional field includes Air Force and Wyoming.

"The approach always going into the Shootout is it's our first real assessment of where we are fitness-wise and where we need to go for here," Pannone said. "It's really just a stepping stone for the rest of the season. Our goal is to run the course the way we know how to run it and beat as many teams as possible."

Pannone, who was CU's No. 7 racer at the conference championships in 2007, has taken on more of a leadership role on what should be a very good team. He also feels poised for a breakout senior season.

"I've been through the program and the training now. My body has adapted," Pannone said. "This was the best summer I've had. I expect to perform better than I ever have this season."

The women's team was one point shy of cracking the national top-30 and is ranked sixth in the Mountain Region entering Saturday's event.

The open races start at 8:15 a.m. The men's collegiate 8K will start at 10 a.m. and will be followed by the women's 5.8K race at 10:45.

Volleyball

CU returns to action at 6 p.m. tonight against Baylor in Waco, Texas. The Buffs -- who lead the all-time series with the Bears 21-4 -- are coming off a dramatic five-set victory over Texas A&M (16-25, 23-25, 25-22, 25-20, 15-9) last Saturday at the Coors Events Center.

Alex Buth continued her impressive senior season with a career-high 26 kills as CU improved to 8-4 overall and 2-1 in the Big 12. For her efforts Buth was named the national player of the week by CVU.com.

The Bears are 11-3 overall and 3-1 in conference this season. The Buffs play No. 2 Nebraska (12-0, 4-0) at 2 p.m. Saturday in Lincoln.

Soccer

The No. 18 Buffs (8-1-2) will take a nine-game unbeaten streak on the road this weekend with matches at Missouri (6-3, 1-1) on Friday and Kansas (7-3, 1-1) on Sunday.

Bill Hempen's team saw its eight-game win streak end with a 1-1 tie against No. 12 Oklahoma State last Sunday at Prentup Field.

Senior Gianna DeSaverio scored CU's goal against the Cowgirls and has three goals in the last two games.

Notable

CU's tennis team will compete at the Air Force Invitational on Friday and the men's golf team will compete at the Windon Memorial in Chicago on Sunday.



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