



Barringer clocks fastest steeplechase time in the world this year

CU star crushes steeple field at NCAA regional

Camera staff

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NORMAN, Okla. -- Colorado senior Jenny Barringer ran the fastest time in the world this year in the 3,000-meter steeplechase on Saturday to win her fourth consecutive NCAA regional crown.

Barringer finished in 9 minutes, 26.20 seconds, besting U.S. Olympic teammate Anna Willard's mark of 9:26.85.

"Jenny ran very well; we were hoping for under 9:30 to re-establish the collegiate record and she did that," Buff head coach Mark Wetmore said. "Conditions were not the best. They were mid 80s and possibly upper 90s, but it was not windy and dry."

Barringer's time also bested her collegiate and NCAA Midwest Region Championships records. Barringer set the collegiate record of 9:29.20 at last year's NCAA Championships, when she won her second national title. The regional meet record was 9:44.31, set in 2007.

"I think it was important to get a good effort in the steeple before nationals," Barringer said. "It went as well as I could have possibly asked for. It was really, really hot and to be able to go out and run this hard under those conditions was really good. Going into it I wanted to run somewhere around 9:30. I went out where I felt comfortable today and so I'm please with a 9:26. I wanted to get a hard effort in before nationals and show that I was back and ready to compete at a top level."

The time is Barringer's fifth NCAA mark this season. She also owns the NCAA record in the indoor mile (4:25.91), in-door 3K (8:42.03), indoor 5K (15:01.70) and outdoor 5K (15:07.64).

Saturday was just her second steeplechase of the 2009 season. She got out to a quick start and no one even tried to keep pace with her. She had a 40-meter lead with five laps to go and increased it to 100 meters with just two laps remaining. As Barringer entered the bell lap, she started to lap the field and punched her ticket to defend her title at the outdoor championship.

The NCAA Champppionships are set for June 10-13 in Fayetteville, Ark.

Barringer wasn't surprised that no one tried to keep up with her.

"I expected it less this time because I knew I could go hard from the gun and what I was going to try to run hard," Barringer said. "People are running for position in this meet, not so much for time, to qualify for nationals, so I didn't really expect anyone to come out with me."

Barringer finished a full 33.50 seconds ahead of the runner-up, Rice's Lennie Waite, who finished in 10:00.71. Baylor's Erin Bedell took third, finishing in 10:01.71.

CU freshman Emma Coburn finished the same heat of the steeplechase in 10:25.82 and was ninth overall. She ranks fifth in the region and is ninth in the country, so she has a good chance to also advance to nationals on the descending order list. Sophomore Emily Hanenburg took second in the first heat and was 16th overall in 10:55.07.

On the men's side, Buff sophomore Christian Thompson was ninth overall in the men's steeplechase. He ran a time of 9:07.31. Thompson ranks fourth on the region list and is 20th on the national list.

CU senior Chase Dukes placed 11th overall with a toss of 186-06 and Patrick Bachmann took 21st overall with a throw of 171-01.

The final list of NCAA Championships participants will be released Monday. Barringer is the only automatic qualifier for the Buffs, but Matt Tebo, Thompson, Brandin Williams and Coburn also have good chances to make their first trip to the meet.

Jordan Kyle, who did not compete at regionals, will look to compete in the 10,000-meter run which is not contested at this meet.



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