



Bufs finish second at NCAA Ski Championships

Kjoelhamar wins men's 20K freestyle

Camera staff report
Saturday, March 14, 2009

RUMFORD, Maine — RUMFORD, Maine -- Colorado sophomore Vegard Kjoelhamar won the NCAA men's 20K freestyle title here Saturday, leading CU in a furious rally that saw the Buffs jump from fifth to second in the final team standings.

Denver successfully defended its NCAA title, coming from behind a second straight year to win it with 659 points.

Colorado, meanwhile, moved from fifth to third after the women's freestyle race, then up one more notch to claim the second-place trophy by the slimmest of margins.

CU finished with 602.5 points, just a half-point ahead of third-place New Mexico. Alaska-Anchorage used three top five finishes to take fourth with 584 points, with Vermont fifth (573) and Utah sixth (568) to give Western schools five of the top six finishers.

It was the 13th time in the 56 NCAA championships that DU and CU both finished in the top two, and the second straight runner-up finish for the Buffs.

"Second place is not exactly what we came here for, our ambitions are the highest," head coach Richard Rokos said. "With everything that happened during these three days and with a little bit of misfortune, this is probably the best that we could hope for."

In the men's 20K race, Kjoelhamar took a significant early lead en route to blowing out the field in winning his first NCAA title. He finished in a 44 minutes, 07.9 seconds, well ahead of runner-up Lex Treinen (Alaska-Anchorage), who clocked a 44:27.3.

CU's other men, however, struggled. Junior Matt Gelso finished 20th and ophomore Jesper Ostensen, who was third in Thursday's classical race, never really got untracked and was back in the field in 31st.

Kjoelhamar became the fourth Buffalo to be crowned the NCAA freestyle champion, the first since Kit Richmond, who won in 2006 at Steamboat Springs. The other two were Per Kare Jakobsen in 1989 and Bjorn Svensson in 1991.

"I just started skiing for myself today as if it was a 20K individual start," Kjoelhamar said. "I didn't try to attack or make a gap, so it was nice and a very good feeling when I saw the end results. It's a great feeling to end my season with a win. I am sad that the season is over but I am already thinking about next year and I will start next season with a bunch of training and try to be better."

Kjoelhamar's win was also the 80th overall individual title by a CU skier, which continues to be the most by any school. Denver is second (73), followed by Utah (63) and Vermont (54).

It was CU's 10th individual title over the last four years, the second this year with Gabriel Rivas' Friday slalom win; that matches two other times Colorado skiers have won 10 titles in a four year span, joining the 1960-63 and 1986-89 teams.

CU's women produced a second place in the 15K race when Buff Alexa Turzian was edged in a sprint by Denver's Antje Maempel. Turzian was in first for a short time at the start of the sprint but Maempel was able to catch her at the end, finishing in 38:35.0, a half-second ahead of Turzian.

"I felt really good today; the race was a super-slow tempo because it was long and I was just waiting to make my move, I just didn't know where," Turzian said. "In the past I've gone out too hard but today I focused on when to make that move and I did. When I took that lead I was feeling really good, high energy through the sprint to the finish but I just didn't get my technique right for the sprint. It wasn't that I was too tired or didn't have energy but I just didn't have the technique to sprint her out and she did."

Colorado senior Maria Grevsgaard, the defending champion in the event, led at several points during the race and was among the six battling to get ahead at the end. However, she suffered a fall that took her out of the mix and she eventually finished sixth in 39:00.5.

Grevsgaard finished her CU career with several school records, most notably atop the charts in career wins (24) and tied for the most career podium (top three) finishes with 34. She won two NCAA titles, both coming last year.

NCAA skiing

Team Scores -- 1. Denver 659; 2. Colorado 602.5; 3. New Mexico 602; 4. Alaska-Anchorage 584; 5. Vermont 573; 6. Utah 568; 7. Dartmouth 555; 8. Middlebury 426; 9. New Hampshire 394; 10. Nevada 284; 11. Colby 209; 12. Northern Michigan 195; 13. Bates 175; 14. Williams 147.5; 15 (tie). Alaska-Fairbanks and St. Lawrence 122; 17. Michigan Tech 121; 18. Montana State 85; 19. Wisconsin-Green Bay 35; 20. St. Michael's 31; 21. Gustavus Adolphus 17; 22. St. Scholastica 13.

Women's 15K Freestyle --1. Antje Maempel, DU, 38:35.0; 2. Alexa Turzian, CU, 38:35.5; 3. Rosie Brennan, Dart., 38:41.2; 4. Annelise Bailly, DU, 38:43.4; 5. Sophie Caldwell, Dart., 38:49.8; 6. Maria Grevsgaard, CU, 39:00.5; 7. Caitlin Patterson, UVM, 39:10.9; 8. Polina Ermoshina, UNM, 39:15.4; 9. Annelies Cook, Utah, 39:18.3; 10. Hannah Dreissigacker, Dart., 39:20.3. Other Front Range Finisher: 28. Kate Dolan, DU, 41:00.0.

Men's 20K Freestyle -- 1. Vegard Kjoelhamar, CU, 44:07.9; 2. Lex Treinen, UAA, 44:27.4; 3. Raphael Wunderle, UAA, 44:27.9; 4. Martin Kaas, UNM, 44:28.4; 5. Max Treinen, UAA, 44:29.9; 6. Mike Hinkley, DU, 44:39.0; 7. Patrick O'Brien, Dart., 44:42.6; 8. Jesse Lang, MTU, 44:43.2; 9. Simeon Hamilton, Midd., 44:44.7; 10. Simon Reissmann, UNM, 44:45.1. Other Front Range Finishers: 19. Harald Loevenskiold, DU, 45:42.4; 20. Matt Gelso, CU, 45:45.1; 24. Daniel Clark, DU, 46:10.5; 31. Jesper Ostensen, CU, 47:28.1.



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Rivas wins NCAA slalom title

But Buffs slip into fifth place in team standings

Camera staff report
Saturday, March 14, 2009

BETHEL, Maine -- Colorado junior Gabriel Rivas won the NCAA men's slalom title Friday, but a key disqualification in the women's race cost the Buffs some points and CU slipped into fifth in the team standings with just two events remaining.

Vermont took the team lead with 484 points, followed by (482), New Mexico (481), Utah (444) and CU (439.5).

"Overall we're still alive and kicking," head coach Richard Rokos said. "This puts a lot of pressure now on our Nordic team, but as long as it's mathematically possible, there's always a chance that we can still take it."

Rivas, a native of France, blistered the course in a two-run time of 1:36.69, easily defeating New Mexico's Petter Brenna (1:37.50). Rivas led the field after a first run of 47.77, and then posted the second-fastest run despite starting in the 30th position to become CU's first male slalom champion since Andy LeRoy in 2000. LeRoy currently is the head coach for Denver.

Rivas' win was the 14th men's slalom crown and the 79th overall individual title by a CU skier, the most by any school. Denver is second (72), followed by Utah (63) and Vermont (54).

"Since I've been in the U.S., I've thought about this race, and it's very special because it's only a one-day race, not a ranking," Rivas said. "I just wanted to get out front early and show what I'm able to do."

The bad news came on the women's side, as after the completion of their slalom, CU sophomore Katie Hartman was disqualified for straddling a gate. She had finished 19th in the standings (in 1:48.25), and the disqualification cost Colorado 20 team points.

Also on the women's side, sophomore Carolina Nordh hooked the tip of a ski around a gate late in her first run and had to stop and hike, costing her valuable seconds. The top women's finisher was senior Lisa Perricone, who closed out her CU career with a 16th place finish.

The championships conclude today with the longer Nordic freestyle races, which to Colorado's favor, have been its strong suit this winter. The women's 15K race is set for an 8 a.m. start and the men's 20K version is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m.

NCAA Championships

Team scores -- 1. Vermont 484; 2. Denver 482; 3. New Mexico 481; 4. Utah 444; 4. Colorado 439.5; 6.

Alaska-Anchorage 376; 7. New Hampshire 368; 8. Dartmouth 359; 9. Middlebury 331; 10. Nevada 233; 11. Colby 193; 12. Williams 140.5; 13. Bates 123; 14. St. Lawrence 118; 15. Northern Michigan 105; 16. Alaska-Fairbanks 62; 17. Michigan Tech 51; 18. St. Michael's 31; 19. Montana State 28; 20. Wisconsin-Green Bay 18; 21. Gustavus Adolphus 7; 22. St. Scholastica 3.

Men's slalom -- 1. Gabriel Rivas, CU, 1:36.69; 2. Petter Brenna, UNM, 1:37.50; 3. Leif Haugen, DU, 1:37.70; 4. Joshua Kernan, Colby, 1:38.10; 5. Sean McNamara, UNH, 1:38.16; 6. Vincent Lebrun-Fortin, Colby, 1:38.25; 7. Gregory Berger, UN, 1:38.30; 8. Andrew Wagner, Midd., 1:39.45; 9. William Ford, UNH, 1:39.60; 10. Stefan Hughes, CU, 1:39.71. **Other Front Range Finishers:** 11. John Buchar, DU, 1:39.73; 14 (tie). Drew Roberts, CU, 1:40.94; 25. Ian Lochhead, DU, 1:48.75.

Women's Slalom -- 1. Malin Hemmingsson, UNM, 1:42.36; 2. Estelle Pecherand-Charmet, UNM, 1:43.58; 3. Jilyne McDonald, UVM, 1:44.29; 4. Meg Ryley, UVM, 1:44.36; 5. Aileen Farrell, UNH, 1:44.74; 6. Courtney Hammond, Dart., 1:45.30; 7 (tie). Alexandra Parker, UAA, and Veronica Archambault-Leger, UNH, 1:45.41; 9. Lindsay Cone, St. Lawrence, 1:45.61; 10. Eva Huckova, UU, 1:45.62. **Front Range Finishers:** 14. Ida Dillingoeen, DU, 1:46.78; 16. Lisa Perricone, CU, 1:46.89; 17. Claire Abbe, DU, 1:47.20; 25. Molly Ryan, DU, 1:50.95; 29. Carolina Nordh, CU, 1:55.19. **Disqualified (2nd run):** Katie Hartman, CU.



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