



# Barringer cultivated her killer instinct

## Bufs' Coburn soaking up season with star

By Ryan Thorburn  
Tuesday, June 9, 2009

BOULDER, Colo. — It's hard to believe now, but three years ago Jenny Barringer wasn't a great finisher on the track.

She was a little too nice to her competitors.

That all changed when the future Olympian stunned the women's 3,000-meter steeplechase field with a school record time of 9 minutes, 53.04 seconds to become the first Colorado true freshman to win an NCAA title.

Earlier that season, Barringer placed second at the Big 12 Championships (10:21.90) and was fourth during the qualifying round of the NCAA Championships (10:12.38).

"It took a little bit of time to develop that killer instinct," Barringer said during a recent interview with the Camera. "I didn't show it until the last race that year and I surprised some people. Sometimes it takes a little bit of time to get that confidence."

Entering this year's NCAA Championships, which begin on Wednesday in Fayetteville, Ark., Barringer will be seeking her third national title in the steeplechase. She is the defending champion in her signature event after winning the 2008 final with a time of 9:29.20.

Barringer -- who ran the fastest time in the world (9:26.20) this year at regionals and is the current American record holder (9:22.26) -- plans to finish her outdoor career at CU with a third championship in the event.

The senior hopes to pass the torch in the event to CU freshman Emma Coburn, who is ranked ninth nationally with a personal record time of 10:06.54.

"I hope she's sweeping up my records in three years," Barringer said of her protégé. "She's really talented and sometimes she's too nice. That's a compliment. What she needs to work on more than her running skills is developing her killer instinct."

Coburn has soaked up every second of being in the program at the same time as Barringer, who was ninth in the steeplechase at the Olympics in Beijing last summer.

"Jenny is just really consistently excellent," Coburn said. "I have had the tendency not to close all that strong and kind of just hang on and not do anything spectacular. But she's running consistent the whole way. ...

"In high school, for a lot of us, you knew you could always out-kick the people you were running with. Not a lot of people took track all that seriously, and I didn't really have to have a killer instinct in high school."

In 2007, Barringer had her shoe clipped during the NCAA steeplechase finals and ended up seventh. That might explain why she has been breaking away from the pack early and never looking back this season.

Michigan State's Nicole Bush ranks second in the event entering the NCAA's with a PR of 9:39.38.

"Jenny loses the whole pack in the first five steps," Coburn said. "If someone wants to be stupid they can try and be with her for a lap, but her pace is what I can do for an 800. At nationals she might have a couple people go with her at the beginning, but even at regionals, which was our most competitive race so far, she blew everyone out of the water."

Coburn isn't planning on shocking the field the way Barringer did as a true freshman. Mostly because her mentor is in the field.

"It's kind of nice for me to be her friend and her teammate, walking up to the line with her knowing she's also nervous but confident," Coburn said. "I know she's hoping she can do well and thinking of me, too. I also know everyone else is looking at her and they are a little bit scared and intimidated and freaked out."

"But she's kind of my ally, which is nice."

### **Barringer honored**

Colorado senior Jenny Barringer was named the USTFCCCA Mountain Region Track Athlete of the Year on Monday, one day after becoming the third American woman to race a sub-four minute 1,500-meter run at the Prefontaine Classic.

Barringer was named the USTFCCCA Indoor Track Athlete of the Year in March. The Oviedo, Fla. native set a collegiate and school record with a time of 3:59.90 in the 1,500 on Sunday, but Barringer was the runner-up in the event to Gelete Burka by .01.



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college track and field

## Vaultler Frawley leads Colorado contingent

By Natalie Meisler  
The Denver Post

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In an era when no man, woman or child ventures a few feet off the ground on skis or wheeled objects without a helmet, pole vaulters scale far greater heights with the breeze in their hair.

At first glance, it's an event for adrenaline junkies. Raw intelligence need not apply. Then consider the two best pole vaulters in the state are Air Force's Nick Frawley and AFA-bound Smoky Hill state champion Chase Cooper.

No one gets into the academy without some serious smarts, much less survives three years, as Frawley has done. By the way, the best vaulter in the country, Rice's Jason Colwick, is an engineering major.

"He's head and shoulders over everyone. He's a freak athlete," Frawley said of Colwick, a steady 18-footer. But watch out when Cooper moves an hour southwest. "I cannot wait to have him here,"

said the future AFA mentor. "Being able to train together will fire up both of us."

Frawley, the NCAA outdoor runner-up a year ago, has an 18-1 indoor best and hopes to crack that mark at the NCAA outdoor meet this week or in late June at the U.S. championships.

Like Cooper, Frawley was a nationally ranked 17-foot vaulter in high school, in Texas. Although he took recruiting trips locally and to some Atlantic Coast Conference schools, there was only one place he wanted to go.

"I think I wanted to fly since I was 10 years old. I told my dad I was going to Air Force when I was 12," Frawley said.

Frawley leads a contingent of 10 Division I men's qualifiers from the state to the NCAA meet in Arkansas.

In a class by herself is University of Colorado Olympian and two-time NCAA steeplechase champion Jenny Barringer. Although she set an NCAA 1,500 meters record Sunday in the Prefontaine Classic in 3 minutes, 59.90 seconds, Barringer will concentrate on the steeplechase, in which she leads the current world rankings.

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## AREA WOMEN

Air Force: Sara Neubauer, shot put and discus

Colorado: Jenny Barringer, steeplechase; Emma Coburn, steeplechase

Colorado State: Missy Faubus, shot put

Northern Colorado: Rachael Stevens, high jump

## AREA MEN

Air Force: Kellen Curry, 110-meter hurdles;  
Daniel Castle, 1,500; Nick Frawley, pole vault;  
Sean Houseworth, 10,000

Colorado: Jordan Kyle, 10,000; Matt Tebo, 5,000;  
Christian Thompson, steeplechase; Brandin Williams, javelin

Colorado State: Wil Buchanan, 1,500; Alex Godell, hammer throw

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