



Collegiate Sport Clubs

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CU Cycling Heads to Nationals at Lake Tahoe



Katie Sodergren races at the conference championships two weeks ago in Winter Park.

TRUCKEE, Calif. – The University of Colorado cycling team will head to Lake Tahoe this weekend as the Buffaloes compete at the 2010 Collegiate Mountain Bike National Championships. The Northstar at Tahoe Resort will host the event that begins Friday Oct. 15 and goes until Sunday Oct. 17.

Colorado last won the mountain bike nationals in the 2005.

Last year the Buffs finished second at nationals with fellow state school Fort Lewis College bringing home the championship. CU will look to build on the success from last October that also included 11 riders finishing in the top ten in the four events of cross country, short track cross country, four cross and the downhill.

CU will race in the same four events this year.

The women will begin the weekend festivities on the cross country course on Friday at 8 a.m. while the men will start at noon. The cross country event includes two hours of straight racing on a 7.1 mile course that features 1100 feet of climbing on the currently snowless ski resort.

Short track cross country will kick off on Saturday morning with the women beginning at 8 a.m. while the men take off at 10 a.m. The race will consist of about 20 minutes of racing on a course that is less than a mile long.

Colorado's men's cross country team will include **Russell Finsterwald, Brady Kappius, Blake Harlan**, and team president **Matt Wiebe**.

"We are bringing a stacked men's cross country team this year and are hoping for some stellar results," Wiebe said.

The women's cross country team includes **Diedre York, Katie Sodergren, Claire Bernard** and **Ellen Patten**.

Four cross will begin on Saturday afternoon with qualifying starting at 1 p.m. and the race beginning at 3:30 p.m. Four cross is similar to a BMX race but on mountain bikes instead.

The downhill competition will be the final event on Sunday with seeding beginning at 9 a.m. and the finals race starting at noon.

Colorado's gravity team will compete in the four cross and the downhill events with the men's squad being made up of **Joey Schusler**, **Michael Larsen**, **Nick Caron** and **Jack Kelly**. York and **Brittany Engleking** will make up CU's women's gravity team.

At nationals last year, the gravity team was the stronger of CU's two squads with four racers finishing in the top ten in the downhill. Schusler won the men's race while Larsen also finished in the top five for the Buffs in fourth place. On the women's side, York was the highest placed CU rider in fourth while **Neven Steinmetz** finished seventh.

York will also compete in the omnium competition because she will race in all four events this weekend. Riders competing in the omnium competition receive points after each race. The person with the most overall points at the end of the four races will then be crowned the winner.

Information links

CU Cycling website: www.cucycling.com

College Mountain Bike Nationals information: <https://www.usacycling.org/events/2010/collegiatemt看/>

Northstar at Tahoe website: <http://www.northstaratahove.com/>

CU Rider Quick Facts from Team President Matt Wiebe

Men's Cross Country

Russell Finsterwald – Russell is a two-time USA world championship team member and has the potential to make the podium at nationals in his freshman year of racing at CU.

Brady Kappius – Brady is a CU graduate student and has been racing mountain bikes at the pro level for quite a while. He has the potential to grab a podium spot in cross country and is a favorite in the short track race.

Blake Harlan – Blake is a senior this semester and is looking to go out with a bang. He has been CU's best finisher at nationals the past two years and has represented CU at nationals for the past four years. He has a great chance to podium as well.

Matt Wiebe – Matt will be representing CU at nationals for the third year in a row. He is the only rider to win a race in men's cross country for CU this season, but he has been plagued with bad luck the entire season. If he can put a good race together, he has a shot of stealing a podium spot.

Women's Cross Country

Diedre York – Diedre will be representing CU for the second year in a row at nationals. She is one of the fastest girls in the conference and we are hoping for her to have a great race. She is also competing in both the gravity events. She has a great shot at getting on the podium in the Omnium competition.

Katie Sodergren – Katie is an exceptionally strong rider and will be representing CU at nationals for her second time. We are looking for her to build on last years' experience and put another solid race together.

Claire Bernard – Claire will also be representing CU at nationals for her second year in a row. She has not been racing much this season due to a foot injury, but she is looking to have another great performance and add to our team's overall points.

Ellen Patten: Ellen will be representing CU for her first time at nationals. She is a freshman this year. Ellen has been getting faster all season and we are hoping for her to have a break out performance at nationals this year.

Men's Gravity

Joey Schusler – Joey is the two time defending national champion in the downhill and is undefeated in collegiate racing. We are hoping for more of the same from Joey. This will be his third year representing CU.

Michael Larsen – Michael is an awesome talent on our gravity team and placed fourth last year at nationals in the downhill. He will be looking to improve on that performance this year.

Nick Caron – Nick is definitely our most consistent finisher on the gravity team. He has been putting in top ten finishes all season long and we are looking for him to step up and keep that going at nationals this year. This will be Nick's third year in a row representing CU.

Jack Kelly – Jack has had some bad luck this season, but has the potential to get to the podium at nationals if he puts a solid run together. This will be Jack's second year representing CU.

Women's Gravity

Brittany Engleking – This will be Brittany's third year representing CU at nationals. She has been a consistent finisher at all the races this season and we are looking for more of the same from her at nationals this year.

Diedre York – See women's cross country section above.

Top CU finishers from 2009 Nationals

Men's Cross Country

8 – Blake Harlan
12 – Kevin Kane
23 – Chris Peterson

Women's Cross Country

13 - Mia Wilhelm
14 - Katie Sodergren
15 - Diedre York

Men's Short Track Cross Country

5 – Blake Harlan
12 – Kevin Kane
36 – Chris Peterson

Women's Short Track Cross Country

8 – Flora Duffy
16 – Diedre York
17 – Mia Wilhelm

Men's Four Cross

3 – Joey Schusler
10 – Michael Larsen
15 – Nick Caron

Women's Four Cross

2 – Neven Steinmetz
10 – Diedre York

Men's Downhill

1 – Joey Schusler
4 – Michael Larsen
27 – Nick Caron

Women's Downhill

4 – Diedre York
7 – Neven Steinmetz
22 – Brittany Engleking