



Collegiate Sport Clubs

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CU Men's Lacrosse Begins Nationals Tuesday vs. BC in Denver

COMMERCE CITY, Colo. – The University of Colorado men's lacrosse team will begin their quest for their first national championship tomorrow at 7 p.m. against Boston College at the Dick's Sporting Goods Park complex.

If the No. 7 seeded Buffaloes (11-5) defeat the BC Eagles, they will then likely play No. 2 seed Colorado State in the quarterfinals on Wednesday afternoon. The Rams play No. 15 Minnesota-Duluth on Tuesday at 4 p.m.

While the possible matchup with CSU looms, CU head coach **Mike Ryder** said his team's focus is on BC.

“We've played CSU so many times this season that we don't really have to prepare for them,” Ryder said. “We're focused on our game with Boston College.”

The Buffs and the Rams have played twice this season, and both times Colorado State squeaked out a one goal victory. The two team's first matchup came on Apr. 16 at the Rocky Mountain Lacrosse Showdown at INVESCO Field at Mile High in which the Buffs came back from an 8-3 halftime deficit to tie the game in the fourth quarter, but ended up losing 9-8. The two state rivals second matchup came on May 6 in the Rocky Mountain Lacrosse Conference Semifinals in which CU jumped out to a 5-0 lead in the first quarter, but this time it was CSU who had the comeback and won from four straight goals in the second half.

Ryder said that in both games and in CU's three other losses during the year, the offense got out of a rhythm while their opponent went on a big run. He said his offense is the best it's been all season and can beat the top caliber teams like No. 10 Boston College and No. 2 Colorado State.

“We feel that if we can get the ball in our offense's hands when other teams start to go on runs, that will kind of shut them down and give us a couple of goals to help finish off some of those top teams,” Ryder said.

Colorado holds a 2-0 all-time advantage against Boston College (11-4), with both games having been decided in overtime. Their most recent meeting came on Apr. 22 of this season in which the Buffs pulled out a 10-9 victory after sophomore **Jack Cranston** scored in the second overtime.

Ryder calls Cranston, a transfer-student from NCAA D-I Vermont, one of the best athletes on the field in any game.

“When he is running past guys with short sticks or guys with long poles, it really opens a lot of other guys as well,” Ryder said. “He is such a good athlete and he is not a liability on the defensive end.”

One of his teammates he has opened up this year is senior attackman **A.J. Blackburn**, who had his best statistical year since his 62-point sophomore campaign in 2009. Through 15 games this season, Blackburn has scored 27 goals and has added 21 assists for 58 points. Blackburn, who already holds the team record for goals, assists and points, will likely break his 2009 mark this week at nationals.

Tuesday's Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association first round game against Boston College will begin at 7 p.m. MDT at Field 12 of the Dick's Sporting Goods Park complex. CollegeLax.us will provide live video and blog of the game on their website.

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