

Collegiate Running Association 10k Road Race National Championship: Elite Preview

Expect to see new faces at the front of the **Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10k presented by Martin's** this year. As the first-ever road race with prize money reserved specifically for the top college finishers, this year's edition has brought in a slew of highly decorated college runners from across the country. There will be a \$10,000 prize purse awarded to the top 10 overall male and female college finishers.

Both the men's and women's fields contain athletes coming from a range of different backgrounds. The top entries in the men's race include former and current NCAA Division I All-Americans, Olympic Trials qualifiers, former Team USA representatives, and even a former soccer standout that has quickly become a prominent professional road racer. Leading the women's field is a 2013 World Track and Field Championships qualifier, a versatile racer that is competitive from the mile to the half-marathon on the roads, track, and cross country, Olympic Trials qualifiers, a former NCAA Division III National Champion, and a professional triathlete with plenty of road racing experience.

"We are very excited about this elite field for our first national championship event," said Jon Molz, co-founder of the Collegiate Running Association. "We created this organization with the hope that we would promote competition between current and former NCAA runners from Division I, II, and III, as well as between undergraduate students and graduate students, and that is exactly the type of field that we have. This is the first time there is an event that allows all college students, regardless of where they go to school or how many classes they are taking or whether they still have eligibility remaining, to compete at the same time and chase after a prize purse reserved specifically for college runners."

Cole Atkins (Zap Fitness, Blowing Rock NC) @cole_atkins

Former soccer standout at High Point University began running during his senior year in college and has quickly become a prominent road racer. Cole currently races professionally for Zap Fitness in North Carolina and has had a lot of success over the last couple of years. He has been a US Championship qualifier on the track and is already a 2016 Olympic Trials Marathon qualifier. (13:51 5000m road, 22:50 8k road, 29:20 10,000m)

Andrew Benford (Rogue Athletic Club, Austin TX) @andrewbenford

A former NCAA All-American for the University of Richmond in the 3k Steeplechase, Benford now runs for Rogue Athletic Club in Austin, Texas. Benford has represented Team USA multiple times in mountain racing and competed for the US Collegiate Ekiden relay. (8:39 3k Steeple, 13:55 5000m, 65:35 half-marathon)

Paul Chelimo (UNC-Greensboro, NC) @paulchelimo

Two-time runner-up in the 5,000m at the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships (2012 & 2013). Chelimo has been one of the most heralded runners in the NCAA from the 1500m - 10,000m XC over the last few years and has recently started his road racing career as he finishes up his undergraduate studies at UNC-Greensboro. (3:40 1500m, 13:21 5000m, 28:37 10,000m XC)

Tyler McCandless (Newton Running Elite, Boulder CO)

@trackty

A former NCAA All-American for Penn State University and current professional runner for Newton Running based out of Boulder CO. Tyler was a 2012 Olympic Trials qualifier in the marathon and has had a successful road racing career from the 5000m - marathon. He is currently finishing up his PhD in meteorology. (63:16 half marathon, 2:16 marathon)

Ty McCormack (Auburn University, AL)

@tmacxc

2013 NCAA Cross Country All-American for Auburn University. Recently placed third at the 2014 SEC Indoor Track and Field Championships in both the 3000m and 5000m races. (3:45 1500m, 8:50 3k Steeple, 13:52 5000m)

Esther Erb (NYAC, Lambertville NJ)

@estherb86

A Richmond native, Erb placed 3rd at the 2013 US Marathon Championships and was a 2012 Olympic Trials qualifier as well. She's a former multiple time NCAA All-American while at Case Western University and won the 2008 D-III National Championship in the 10,000m. (34:09 10,000m, 1:14:34 half-marathon, 2:36 marathon)

Ashley Higginson (Saucony, NJ/NY TC)

@ashleyhigz

Represented Team USA at the 2013 World Track & Field Championships in the 3k steeplechase and was 4th at the 2012 Olympic Trials. Higginson is a former three-time NCAA All-American for Princeton and now runs professionally for Saucony as part of the NJ/NY TC. She is also currently pursuing a law degree at Rutgers. (4:11 1500m, 8:59 3000m, 9:34 3k Steeple)

Kellyn Johnson Taylor (Northern Arizona Elite, Flagstaff AZ)

@kjxcountry16

A versatile racer on the track, roads, and in cross country from the mile to the half-marathon, Kellyn has had tremendous success lately. After placing 4th at the 2014 USA XC Championships in February, she went on to win the NACAC XC Championships in Trinidad while representing Team USA. Kellyn was also a former multiple-time NCAA All-American for Wichita State. She is currently taking classes in order to pursue a career in firefighting. (15:30 5000m, 32:30 10,000m, 1:12:27 half-marathon)

Julie Patterson (Endorphin Fitness, Richmond VA)

University of Richmond school record holder in the 10,000m, is a standout triathlete that placed 2nd at the 2011 US Collegiate National Triathlon Championship and was a member of the USA gold medal winning triathlon team at the 2012 World University Games in Taiwan. Currently living and training in Richmond VA while pursuing her PharmD/PhD at Virginia Commonwealth University. (34:50 10,000m)

Additional Information:

The Collegiate Running Association is set to welcome over 1000 members to its inaugural 10k road race championship in Richmond, VA on March 29, 2014. The race, which will be held as part of the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10k presented by Martin's has already attracted 3,388 entrants that are taking at least one college class, 1,005 of which are members of the Collegiate Running Association.