



Collegiate Mountain Running Championships return to Loon Mountain
U.S. Championships to be held concurrently; U.S. Mountain Running Team to be selected

June 30, 2016 - Lincoln, NH - On Sunday, July 3, the nation's top mountain runners will return to Loon Mountain in Lincoln, New Hampshire for the 2016 Collegiate Mountain Running Championships and the U.S. Mountain Running Championships. Additionally, these men and women will compete for the chance to represent Team USA as part of the [U.S. Mountain Running Team](#). The top six overall men and top four women will be named to the team competing at the 2016 World Mountain Running Championships. This will be the third annual CRA Mountain Running Championship, and second time the event is being held as part of the Loon Mountain race presented by [acidotic Racing](#) (2014). There will be a \$3,000 prize purse for the top-3 men's and women's collegiate finishers (\$750, \$500, \$250).

Expect new collegiate champions this weekend, as defending champion Patrick Smyth (Utah) has completed his master's degree, and 2014 and 2015 women's champion, Morgan Arritola (Central Oregon CC), is returning from injury and will not compete. Last year, along with the Collegiate National titles, Smyth and Arritola also captured the U.S. titles and earned automatic bids to the U.S. Mountain Running Team.

On the Collegiate side, there's a lot of talent according to Steve Taylor, co-founder of the [Collegiate Running Association](#), but he added the following caveat: "Just because they're fast on the road and track, doesn't necessarily mean that speed translates to the different terrain afforded by a mountain race; however the potential is there for some new faces to immediately stamp their names in the mountain running history books." Taylor said he expects Amanda Lee, Bethany Sachtelben, Mary Ballinger, Taylor Ward, and Mandy Ortiz to be in the mix on the women's side, while he predicted Matt Daniels, Hayden Hawkes, Johnny Hogue, Victor Pataky, Myles Scarano and Kurt Ward to battle on the men's side.

Since the creation of the Collegiate Championships, top collegians have the opportunity to compete for a collegiate national title, a U.S. Championships and automatic bids to the U.S.

Mountain Running Team for the opportunity to represent the U.S. at the World Championships all within one event. Many are transitioning to the trails from road, track, or cross country backgrounds, and may be running their first mountain race. "It's exciting to see some fast roadies and talented collegiate track stars on the entry list," said Nancy Hobbs, chairperson of USATF's Mountain Ultra Trail Council. "I expect we'll witness very intense competition for not only the championships titles, but also for the team spots. The course at Loon, although mostly uphill, has some flat sections and even a steep downhill past the halfway point. The last climb could be where the race is won, or lost."

That last climb is the famed lung and quad-busting Upper Walking Boss. With a maximum grade at a severe 46.2%, positions can change from the base of the Boss to the finish line less than one mile away.

Like the [World Mountain Running Championships in Bulgaria](#) this September 11, the men and women will run separate races with both genders running approximately 10 kilometers on a mixture of dirt, grass, wide pathways, single track, and rocky sections. The average grade throughout the course is between 10-12 percent with the course gaining 3100 feet from start to finish. The men's race is set to begin at 8:00am with the women's race to follow at 9:00am EST. Follow the action live by following the Collegiate Running Association on twitter [@collegerunning](#).

Meet the Collegiate contenders for the men:

Matt Daniels, 28, Evergreen, CO – (@MattDaniels480) part of the Hudson Elite program and 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials Qualifier in the Marathon and finished second in last month's Mt. Evans Ascent. He was a 12-time NCAA DII All American while at Adams State with PR's of 3:59 (Mile), 13:50 (5000M) and 1:03:43 in the Half-Marathon. He finished runner-up twice in the NCAA DII Mile and 4th and 5th in the NCAA DII Cross Country Championships helping his team claim the team title on both occasions.

Hayden Hawks, 25, Cedar City, UT – while a senior at Southern Utah this spring, Hawks ran 13:53 (5000M) and 29:29 (10,000M) on the track in April. Has PR's of 13:51.72 (5000M) and 28:53.12 (10,000M) and is the 2015 Big Sky Cross Country Champion and earned NCAA DI All-America honors in cross country. He jumped into a 50K trail race in Colorado recently...and won.

Johnny Hogue, 21, Richmond, VA – (@JParker_3) A rising junior for the Richmond Spiders, Hogue placed 23rd in February's 2016 USATF Cross Country Championships in Bend, OR and returned in April to place 5th in the 2016 Collegiate 10K Road Race Championships in Richmond, VA. A West Virginia native, he is known to excel and embrace tough courses.

Zachary Holloway, 22, Corvallis, OR – (@ZachTrailRunner) a top-10 finisher in the 2015 Collegiate Mountain Running Championships in Bend, OR. A 3K steeplechase specialist for the Western Oregon Wolves winning the 2016 John Knight Invitational.

Justin Keefe, 23, Richmond, VA – (jkeefe221) A triathlete by trade and recent Richmond graduate he won last weekend's Cohasset Triathlon and placed 7th in the 2016 Collegiate 10K Road Race Championships. He finished 9th in the first ever Collegiate Mountain Running Championships held at Loon Mountain in 2014.

Seth Kolosso, 22, Colorado Springs, CO – lives and trains in the mountains. Ran for the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs where he set the course record in the 2014 Estes Park 10K.

Victor Pataky, 25, Columbus, OH – won the 2016 All-Great Elite Meet in the 3K steeplechase in 9:03.87 and set an 8K cross country PR of 24:42 at the 2014 NCAA DIII Pre-National Meet. A 5-time SAA Outdoor Track Champion, Pataky competed in the 1500M, 3KSC, 5,000M, 400H and 4X400M Relay at the 2016 SAA Outdoor Championships where he won titles in the 3KSC and 5,000M.

Myles Scarano, 23, Huntsville, AL – (@TheGoogleGuy) a 32:21 10K cross country PR and 31:09 on the road, Scarano is a University of Alabama at Huntsville alum.

Kurt Ward, 26, Auburn, AL – (@KurtMWard) in graduate school at Auburn University he won the 2016 Big Dog Auburn 10K Trail Race and recently placed 4th in the Rope Mill Half Marathon. Competed as an undergraduate for Weber State University.

Meet the Collegiate contenders for the women:

Mary Ballinger, 28, Martin, TN – (@run_mary) steeple athletes typically transition well to trails and mountains. While competing for Zap Fitness, Ballinger ran 9:51 in the 3K steeplechase and qualified for the 2013 USATF Championships. Won the 3K steeplechase national title at the 2009 NCAA DII Outdoor Championships while competing for University of Southern Indiana. She is a nine-time NCAA DII All-American for the screaming eagles. Serves as UT Martin Cross Country Coach.

Amanda Lee, 27, Boulder, CO – (@AllTerrainRunnr) placed 2nd in the 2015 Collegiate Mountain Running Championships in Bend, OR in her first mountain race and has transitioned to the trails where she has excelled. In graduate school with Boston University and competed in the steeple at Middlebury College in Vermont as an undergraduate.

Mandy Ortiz, 21, Eagle, CO – (@MandyIro) the 2013 Junior (U20) World Mountain Running Champion, led Team USA to a silver team medal in the 2014 Junior (U20) World Mountain

Running Championships and represented Team USA at the 2015 NACAC Mountain Running Championships last year in Canada finishing second for the team.

Bethany Sachtleben, 25, Manassas, VA – (@Bsach1) ran for George Mason University and holds a 5000 meter PR of 16:21, and a 10,000 meter PR of 33:32 winning multiple Atlantic 10 Conference in track and cross country. Sachtleben finished second in the 2015 Collegiate Trail Running National Championships and 2016 Collegiate 10K Road Race National Championships within the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10K. In graduate school at NOVA.

Annmarie Tuxbury, 22, New Hartford, CT – (@AnnmarieTuxbur1) ran for Bryant College where she ran 17:14.26 in the 5,000M and 36:18.82 for 10,000M her senior year. As a graduate student is having a successful road racing career in Connecticut.

Taylor Ward, 25, Auburn, AL – a 2016 US Olympic Team Trials Qualifier in the marathon (2:38:30), recent winner of the Deseret Utah 10K in 34:30. During her career Weber State she earned All-Conference honors six times and earned multiple Academic All-Conference honors. She twice competed with the Wildcats at the NCAA Cross Country Championships. She currently has four times on the Weber State career top 10 list. She has the third fastest time in WSU history in the indoor 5,000 meters and is ninth in the indoor 3,000 meters. She also has the fourth fastest time in the outdoor 10,000 meters and the seventh best in the outdoor 5,000 meters. She is currently pursuing a Master's of Science degree in Radiologic Sciences at Weber State.