

For Immediate Release  
November 11, 2010 ~ Arizona Athletics Media Relations  
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**The Week in Arizona Cross Country**  
**NCAA West Regional Championships**  
**Eugene, Ore.**

**Facility:** Springfield Country Club  
**Date:** Saturday, November 13, 2010  
**Time:** Women 6k - 9:45 a.m. PST  
Men 10k - 10:45 a.m. PST



**Wildcats Set to Face Conference Foes**

**EUGENE, Ore.**—Only one meet separates The University of Arizona’s men’s and women’s cross country programs from the NCAA National Championships and the end of the 2010 cross country season. That race comes Saturday as the No. 6 women and unranked men do battle with the best of the west at the NCAA West Regional Championships in Eugene, Ore.

For the women, simply showing up might be enough to seal the deal as far as earning a bid to the NCAA Championship meet. While a top-two finish at the regional meet automatically guarantees a spot at the NCAA Championships, a complicated formula that takes into account overall finishes at previous meets, performances against other top teams and a myriad of other factors is used to determine the at-large bids.

With three team victories on the season—including the Roy Griak Invitational crown— and runner-up finishes at both the Pre-National Invitational and Pac-10 Championships, the Wildcat women have done more than enough to earn their at-large points no matter what the outcome of Saturday’s race.

Despite this, the women will be looking to seal that automatic qualification by finishing in the top-two at the Springfield Country Club this weekend—a feat the team hasn’t accomplished since the 2001 season.

The women come in at the No. 6 spot in the country—a rank they have held for the better part of the season—and will face off against the likes of No. 4 Stanford, No. 7 Oregon and No. 11 Washington in what should prove to be another battle between the four squads that finished just six points away from each other at the Pac-10 Championships two weekends ago.

The men enter the race as a long-shot to advance beyond the race, but look to end the season strong after putting together their best team performance of the year at the Pac-10 meet. Even without a team invite to the national meet, junior transfer Stephen Sambu still stands a very good shot of advancing to the Nov. 22 meet and will simply need to perform as he has throughout the season to achieve the feat.

Sambu and the rest of the men’s team will also be running their first 10,000-meter race of the season this weekend, which will be interesting for the junior as he never competed in a championship cross country race of that length in junior college though he is undefeated at the distance if you include track and field.

The women’s 6,000-meter run will take place at 9:45 a.m. PST while the men will follow at 10:45 a.m. Results should be available shortly after the races conclude on The University of Oregon’s website (www.goducks.com).

**2010 Cross Country Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
9-4	George Kyte Classic	Flagstaff, Ariz.
9-17	Dave Murray Invite	Tucson, Ariz.
9-25	Griak Invite	Minneapolis, Minn.
10-1	ASU Invite	Mesa, Ariz.
10-16	NCAA Pre-Nationals	Terre Haute, Ind.
10-30	Pac-10 Championships	Seattle, Wash.
<b>11-13</b>	<b>NCAA West Regionals</b>	<b>Eugene, Ore.</b>
11-22	NCAA Championships	Terre Haute, Ind.

**Wildcat Quick Facts**

Location.....Tucson, Ariz.  
Nickname.....Wildcats  
Colors.....Cardinal and Navy  
Conference.....Pacific-10  
Founded.....1885  
Enrollment.....37,000  
President.....Dr. Robert Shelton  
Athletic Director.....Greg Byrne  
2009 NCAA Finish (Women).....30th  
2009 Pac-10 Finish (Women).....5th  
2009 All-American (Men).....Mohamud Ige  
2009 Pac-10 Finish (Men).....8th

**Director of Track & Field/Cross Country**

Fred Harvey

**Cross Country Head Coach**

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**Assistant Coaches**

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## Last Time Out

The women helped make the final Pac-10 Championships before the conference expands to 12 teams a memorable one, with the top four teams finishing within 6 points of each other.

The Stanford women took home their 15th team title at the meet with a total of just 62 points, edging the Wildcats who finish with 65 points who just edged the Oregon and Washington women who tied with 68 points.

It was just the second time in conference history that four teams finished with less than 70 points and marked the closest margin of victory for the Pac-10 meet in history—mark that was previously held by Arizona as well when they fell to Oregon by just five points in 1995.

Sophomore Jenn Bergman led the way for Arizona again, coming home in seventh place in 20:15.32, her second time pacing the Wildcats this season.

Freshman Elvin Kibet (11), sophomore Megan Meyer (12) and junior Hannah Moen (13) finished back-to-back-to-back to join Bergman in earning All-Conference honors. Freshman Amanda Russell finished 22nd overall to cap the Arizona scoring. All five women ran person best on the course and ran under 21 minutes.

On the men's side, junior transfer Stephen Sambu stuck with the leaders from Stanford for the majority of the race, only falling off pace a bit at the end. Still, against the stiffest competition he has faced in his career, Sambu finished fifth overall and—maybe more important—now knows what it takes to take on the big guns.

## Pre-National Battle

The No. 6 UA women duked it out with No. 3 Florida State in the Blue Section of the Pre-National Invite in Terre Haute, Ind. The 13-point spread was small enough that UA head coach James Lie felt the flip flop of a couple positions could have led to an Arizona victory.

Junior Hannah Moen led the way for the women with an 11th place finish in 20:36. Freshman Elvin Kibet (20th) scored by being the second athlete across the line for Arizona and has scored in every meet this season for the Wildcats as have sophomore Jenn Bergman (21st) and Moen. Arizona was the only team in the competition to place four athletes in the top 25 and it was the best finish by an Arizona team (men or women) at the event in the school's meet history.

## Griak Surprise

The UA women entered the Griak Invitational last month in Minneapolis, Minn., ranked behind four other teams and not given too much thought as far as a run at the team title was concerned. The women handled any naysayers in style, however, and proved that rankings mean nothing as they dominated the competition en route to their first team title in the event.

Jenn Bergman and Hannah Moen led five Arizona athletes in the top 25, the only team to do so, to help win the 6000-meter event and give the Wildcats what has to be considered their most impressive team victory in nearly a decade.

## Just a Matter of Jenn

Sophomore Jenn Bergman came to Arizona as a highly heralded recruit, having advanced to the finals of the Foot Locker Nationals as a senior. As a freshman, Bergman was arguably the team's number two runner as the season progressed and even led the Wildcats at the NCAA National Meet last season.

Now, as a sophomore, Bergman looks to really be hitting her stride if her performance at the Griak Invitational was any indication. Bergman finished the 6000-meter course 11th overall in 21 minutes, 24 seconds to lead the Wildcat women to their first ever team title at the 25th anniversary of the meet.

Bergman will be expected to continue to be one of the leader's for the Wildcat women as the season progresses, especially with the strong of important meets that now awaits the UA team.

## Wildcats In The Rankings

The UA women kicked off the season ranked in the USTFCCCA Coaches' Poll at No. 25 following their first NCAA Championship appearance since 2001. The Wildcats climbed to No. 23 when the first week of rankings following competition came out but dropped to No. 26 after Week 2, despite thoroughly dominating their competition at the Dave Murray Invitational at home, the team's first meet as a whole team.

The drop in rankings was soon forgotten, however, as the squad rocketed to No. 9 following their victory at the Griak Invitational and again to No. 6 after winning the ASU Invitational the following weekend. The women maintained their No. 6 ranking after their second place finish at the Pre-National Invite and have continued to stay there after their conference championship performance. This is the highest ranking for the UA women since finishing fourth overall at the NCAA Championships in 2001 and first top 10 rankings since the same season.

The UA women have also climbed to No. 2 in the NCAA West Regional rankings, behind only Stanford.

## 2010 USTFCCCA NCAA Division I Cross Country Rankings

### Women's Rankings Points

1.)	Villanova	359
2.)	Oregon	344
3.)	Florida State	334
4.)	Texas Tech	322
5.)	Georgetown	315
<b>6.)</b>	<b>Arizona</b>	<b>297</b>
7.)	Colorado	279
8.)	Syracuse	264
9.)	Stanford	258
10.)	New Mexico	238
11.)	Iowa State	236
12.)	Duke	216
13.)	Providence	208
14.)	Stony Brook	206
15.)	Texas	199
16.)	Michigan State	172
17.)	North Carolina	169
18.)	Princeton	151
19.)	Minnesota	147
20.)	Washington	140
21.)	Michigan	82
22.)	California	78
23.)	Tulsa	72
24.)	Virginia	71
25.)	Boston College	68

## No Sophomore Slump

The UA women could not have expected anything more from their team last year on a roster that featured over 10 freshmen athletes. In every meet on the season, at least three freshmen scored a point for the squad and they were essential in leading the Wildcats to their first NCAA Championship appearance in nearly a decade.

If the new season is any indication, the impressive freshman year is not giving way to any sophomore slump. Jenn Bergman returns as arguably the team's top runner while Megan Meyer has scored for Arizona in three meets so far. Liz Apgar did her part at the Griak Invitational, picking off several New Mexico athletes to make the win even more dominating and scoring at the Pre-National meet. The sophomores look every bit like the freshmen that put the Wildcats on the map this season to begin with.

## Not To Forget The Freshmen....

Even with the impressive showings on the part of the sophomores, it's perhaps the freshmen on the 2010 roster that have made the biggest splash.

Freshmen Elvin Kibet has also scored in every meet this season to date, including a season opening victory for Kibet at the George Kyte Classic in Flagstaff, Ariz.

Amanda Russell, who has scored in all but one race, was a two-time Foot Locker Finalist during her high school year's and Kibet has great distance running in her blood with two sisters competing prominently on the international stage and they look every bit as good as advertised early in the season.

The third freshman of the trifecta, Erin Menefee, has shown her impact as well in scoring for the Wildcats at the Dave Murray Invite and winning the individual title at the ASU Invitational.

## Pull Out Your Record Books

The last time the UA women found themselves ranked in the top 10 in the country, they wound up finishing fourth overall at the NCAA Championships behind the individual title of Tara Chaplin in 2001.

That year was also the last time Arizona was represented in any form - be it an individual or as a team - at the NCAA Championships until last year's upstart group of youngsters led them back to Terre Haute. Arizona returns essentially every part of the squad and then some this year.

## Moen Them Down

UA junior Hannah Moen struggled for much of the last cross country season with injury and never truly got to the form many expected after her exceptional freshman campaign.

Moen made her return to the cross country scene in style this season though, running down ASU's Lindsay Prescott down the stretch of the Dave Murray Invitational in Tucson to win the meet and lead her team to it's second victory in as many years in the event.

Moen also led the Wildcats at the Pre-National Meet with her 11th place finish.

## Give Due to Sambu

Much ado is made about big recruiting pick ups in college basketball or football, but for Arizona the most important new addition to the athletic program could very well be junior college transfer Stephen Sambu.

An absolute beast at the junior college level, Sambu brings back memories of some of the great Wildcat distance runners of the past and has shown he can live up to the hype as well, winning both the Dave Murray Invite and the Griak Invitational individual titles.

His time at the Griak was just shy of a course record, high praise seeing as it's played host to some of the great distance runners of the past 25 years.

## More on Sambu

If anyone had failed to notice Sambu before the season started, his performance at the Griak sure turned some heads. Following the meet, [flotrack.org](http://flotrack.org)—one of the leading providers of all news track and field/cross country - named Sambu as their sleeper on the men's side of competition to win the individual national title.

## More Flotrack Love

On top of naming Sambu as their men's individual sleeper, the site also listed the Arizona women as a team to watch to take home the overall team championship award at this year's National Championships.

## A Triple Dose of the Flotrack Love Potion

Flotrack seems to have become quite fond of the UA squad, and features them on Oct. 27 in the weekly team segment, covering the UA women taking part in one of the daily workouts. The video can be found on their website.

## Impressive Streak

Up until the Pre-National meet, the UA women had won all four meets they had taken part in up to that point, including the Griak Invite, the Dave Murray Invite, the George Kyte Classic and the ASU Invite.

With back-to-back runner-up finishes at the Pre-National Meet and Pac-10 Championships, the UA women have yet to finish worse than second at any meet this season.

## Women Not Alone

The women's streak is impressive, but it's hard to judge it as being more exceptional than the pace Sambu has set in his collegiate career.

Sambu did not lose a single meet to a collegiate competitor while at Rend Lake Community College, winning more individual national titles in the process than most teams will see in a decade. That streak encompassed both his cross country and track and field schedule and he has kept it going as a Wildcat, winning the Dave Murray Invite and the Griak in his first two Division I appearance.

Though Sambu finished fifth at the conference championships, he stuck with last year's NCAA runner-up in Elliot Heath of Stanford for the majority of the race and performed exceptionally considering he had missed several weeks of practice time before entering the meet.

## Running in The Family

Freshman Elvin Kibet is no stranger to successful running. Her two older sisters have seen quite the careers on the international running circuit. Sylvia Kibet was the silver medalist at the World Championships in Berlin last year in the 5000-meters and finished fourth in the event at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. She also holds the Kenyan indoor records in the 1500-meters and 3000-meters.

Elvin's other older sister, Hilda, is also quite the accomplished runner. Hilda is one of the top half-marathon and 10k racers in the world and has finished in the top 10 at the World Cross Country Championships the last three years.

Elvin has been one of the most impressive members of the UA team this

## **Pac-10 Tidbits**

One interesting thing to note on the women's side is that, in the history of the Pac-10 Championships, only three teams in the conference have won the team title: Oregon (7), Washington (3) and with their win at this year's meet, Stanford leads the way with 15 victories.

On the same token, no team outside of Arizona State (7) has finished second in the meet more times than Arizona, who now has five runner-up finishes in the 24-year history of the event.

UA head Coach James Li has often said that winning the conference is pretty much equivalent to winning the national championship and he is not far off. Five of the past nine National Championships teams have come from the Pac-10 and all won the conference crown as well.

Despite the conference's dominance of cross country team competition, only two Pac-10 athletes have ever been able to claim the individual national title and both were Wildcats. Amy Skieresz accomplished the feat in 1996 and Tara Chaplin did the same in 2001.

Oddly enough, despite the UA women's strong season last year, they had not cracked the top-5 at the conference meet since 2001 when they also finished second. On the flip side of that statistic, the UA team had not finished below fifth in a meet from 1988 up until that 2001 season.

The Arizona men have won the event seven times since the 1969 season, most recently in 1999 and have posted eight conference champions in that time. Robert Cheret was the most recent victory, winning back-to-back in 2004 and 2005.

## **On to the Regional**

The Wildcats ended a whole host of obnoxious streaks at the Pac-10 meet and will look to end another slew at the NCAA West Regional as well. The women have finished no better than fifth at the meet since 2002—a fifth place finish at last year's meet being the only saving grace since the team finished as the runner-up at the 2001 Regional Championships.

## **More Regional Tidbits**

The regional meet will not just be interesting to watch for the UA women, but also to see how Stephen Sambu does in his first ever 10,000-meter cross country championship race. While undefeated at the distance on the track, the junior college circuit only features an 8,000-meter championship run—an event Sambu mastered and never lost at while at Rend Lake Community College (though it's also interesting to note he never lost a 10,000-meter race on the track either).

## **Hassan On To Something?**

Junior Abdi Hassan is a name you will see more than your fair share of during the track and field season. However, as a middle distance runner, you wouldn't expect to see much of his name during the cross season.

Despite that, Hassan has seen his performances steadily improve over the past three meets and he may just be the team's second best runner following his 42nd place finish at the conference meet in a season's best time of 24:44.68. It will be interesting to see how his recent "hot" streak improves at the regional meet.

## **Meyer Under the Radar...Again**

If you want to talk about an athlete who has made a career of flying under the radar, it is UA sophomore Megan Meyer. Coming out of high school as a huge question mark, Meyer didn't even make it to Arizona's travel team until the NCAA Regional Meet last season. Her point-scoring finish perhaps saved Arizona's chances of advancing to the NCAA Championships.

Since then? She only went on to run one of the fastest junior 10,000-meter times in the *world* during the track season and the third fastest in Arizona history behind only the legendary Amy Skieresz and Tara Chaplin and advanced to first round of the NCAA Championships in the event. Meyer also ran one of the top-10 fastest 5,000-meter times in school history.

Diamond in the rough may be a bit of an overstatement as Meyer certainly showed flashes of brilliance in high school but few may have expected the sort of output she has given the Wildcats over the past year. The soft-spoken youngster has quietly been one of the staples during the Wildcats' current season, scoring in every meet 6,000-meter meet. Here's to hoping her 12th place, All-Conference finish at the Pac-10 Championships helps to shine some of the spotlight on the impressive sophomore.

## **Ready for Track Season?**

With all the talk about the current run of the UA women's cross country team, it's easy to forget the huge season Arizona has on the track beginning just two months away. The Wildcats will host the final Pac-10 Conference Championships right at Roy P. Drachman Stadium in May and will look to be a contender in many events on both the men's and women's sides.

For more information on the progress and going on's with the 2011 team, be sure to check out the track and field page on [arizonawildcats.com](http://arizonawildcats.com) each Wednesday to see episodes of "Tracking the Cats". Head coach Fred Harvey sits down with UA track and field SID Jeremy Hawkes and a myriad of guests to talk about all the makings of a Division I track and field program and if you want your information straight from the source, then that's the place to get it.

In an effort to maintain the interactive nature of the show, Coach Harvey hopes that all guests that have any questions about the UA track and field program to feel free to forward those questions to Jeremy Hawkes ([jhawkes@email.arizona.edu](mailto:jhawkes@email.arizona.edu)) each week and Coach will answer them on his show the following week.

## 2010 Arizona Team/Individual Finishes (Only Point Scorers Listed)

### 2010 Men's Cross Country Results

#### George Kyte Classic

Buffalo Park—Flagstaff, Ariz.

8,000-meters

2nd Place

1. Patrick Zacharias, 26:21.0
7. Ryan Clark, 27:41.7
8. Michael Brondello, 27:42.1
9. Rory McLeod, 27:52.3
17. Noe Ramirez, 28:28.5

#### Dave Murray Invitational

Dell Urich Golf Course—Tucson, Ariz.

4.25 Miles

2nd Place

1. Stephen Sambu, 20:08.52
6. Patrick Zacharias, 21:41.14
9. Noe Ramirez, 22:01.73
10. Jordan Mara, 22:05.54
14. James Eichberger, 22:35.29

#### Griak Invitational

Les Bolstad Golf Course—Minneapolis, Minn.

8,000-meters

14th Place

1. Stephen Sambu, 23:41
89. Noe Ramirez, 26:06
90. Patrick Zacharias, 26:08
105. Jordan Mara, 26:26
107. Michael Brondello, 26:38

#### ASU Invite

Toka Sticks Golf Course—Mesa, Ariz.

3 miles

1st place

2. James Eichberger, 15:19.0
3. Abdi Hassan, 15:22.9
4. Noe Ramirez, 15:25.2
5. Jordan Mara, 15:27.2
6. Patrick Zacharias, 15:28.2

#### Pre National Invite

Wabash Family Sports Center—Terre Haute, Ind.

8,000-meters

34th Place

114. Abdi Hassan, 25:02.0
186. Patrick Zacharias, 25:54.6
196. Noe Ramirez, 26:04.3
209. Jordan Mara, 26:25.2
220. James Eichberger, 26:54.2

#### Pac-10 Championships

Jefferson Golf Course—Seattle, Wash.

8,000-meters

8th Place

5. Stephen Sambu, 23:07.77
42. Abdi Hassan, 24:44.68
48. Noe Ramirez, 25:04.87
49. James Eichberger, 25:08.90
51. Patrick Zacharias, 25:11.33

### 2010 Women's Cross Country Results

#### George Kyte Classic

Buffalo Park—Flagstaff, Ariz.

5,000-meters

1st Place

1. Elvin Kibet, 17:24.1
2. Elizabeth Apgar, 18:15.9
3. Melanie McGrath, 18:32.3
8. Kat Howard, 18:58.2
11. Christina Rodgers, 19:18.7

#### Dave Murray Invitational

Dell Urich Golf Course—Tucson, Ariz.

3 Miles

1st Place

1. Hannah Moen, 16:56.65
3. Jenn Bergman, 17:08.67
4. Elvin Kibet, 17:19.13
5. Amanda Russell, 17:21.20
6. Erin Menefee, 17:26.11

#### Griak Invitational

Les Bolstad Golf Course—Minneapolis, Minn.

6,000-meters

1st Place

11. Jenn Bergman, 21:24
12. Hannah Moen, 21:26
14. Elvin Kibet, 21:28
15. Megan Meyer, 21:29
24. Amanda Russell, 21:43

#### ASU Invite

Toka Sticks Golf Course—Mesa, Ariz.

3 miles

1st place

1. Erin Menefee, 17:56.4
2. Hanna Henson, 18:03.9
5. Kat Howard, 19:01.5
7. Christina Rodgers, 19:21.8
10. Deanna Sullivan, 20:13.6

#### Pre National Invite

Wabash Family Sports Center—Terre Haute, Ind.

6,000-meters

2nd Place

11. Hannah Moen, 20:36.9
20. Elvin Kibet, 20:45.9
21. Jenn Bergman, 20:46.4
25. Megan Meyer, 20:49.0
51. Liz Apgar, 21:16.9

#### Pac-10 Championships

Jefferson Golf Course—Seattle, Wash.

6,000-meters

2nd Place

7. Jenn Bergman, 20:15.32
11. Elvin Kibet, 20:25.28
12. Megan Myer, 20:29.23
13. Hannah Moen, 20:29.32
22. Amanda Russell, 20:38.25