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## Running: Omaha Police wins 10K race in Boulder

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It's never a good idea to run from the law, but there's a better reason not to these days: There are at least six Omaha police officers who likely would chase down any criminal on foot.

The six, ranging in age from 26 to 42, are distance runners who teamed to win the public service division at the recent Bolder Boulder 10K in Boulder, Colo.

Michael Pecha, David Pecha, Ryan Sedlacek, Matthew Skradski, Robert Butler and Kurt Sorys combined for a time of 2 hours, 42 minutes, 27 seconds in the mile-high altitude.

"This was a new venture for the six of us," Skradski said, "and our first race as a team. This division had been dominated by fire departments from Colorado for a number of years."

Adding to the impressive time - the Omahans beat runner-up Boulder Rural Fire Department by more than 11 minutes - was that they did it at the mile-high altitude.

"The difference (in altitude) isn't initially felt, but a short distance into the race, we realized we were (tiring) sooner while posting slower mile splits," said David Pecha, who helped organize the group and serves as team captain.

"When we would be slow to recover, the truth of it became apparent: There is no recovery at altitude, a harsh reality with two miles to go."

Pecha said it has been at least 15 years since the Omaha Police had a recognized running group.

"Knowing there were officers running for fitness and for competition," he said, "we decided to combine talents and add a different dimension to our running, a team dimension.

"(Boulder) was our first foray into team competition, but we knew we had the

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talent and determination to field a strong team."

Brothers Mike and David Pecha, graduates of Elkhorn Mount Michael, were college runners at South Dakota State and Creighton, respectively. Butler was a high school runner in Georgia who recently began competing in half marathons. Skradski ran cross country at Omaha Gross.

Sorys' first race was last year's Omaha Corporate Cup Run, and the Bolder Boulder was his second.

"I started running in my 30s to shed a few pounds and relieve stress," he said.

Making the Bolder Boulder more special, David Pecha said, was finishing the race on the University of Colorado football field.

"Team OPD from Nebraska met with greater success on the CU football field than NU has in recent years by soundly defeating all Colorado public service teams," he said.

Pecha anticipates more Omaha officers becoming involved in the team.

"We are already planning future team races and working to recruit other members," he said. "The Bolder Boulder will be an annual event, and with it more public service division wins."

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