

Runners start season

By BRANDON SCHULTE
Staff writer

Looking to improve on last year's NCAA Championship appearance, the Nebraska men's and women's cross country teams kick off the season this weekend at the Bearcat Distance Classic in Maryville, Mo.



Dirksen

Coach Jay Dirksen said he sees the race as a good tune-up for the team, which has a grueling schedule ahead.

Three of the top five men and five of the top six women will be held out of this weekend's competition in order for the team to be ready for the Woody Greeno Invitational at Pioneers Park Sept. 19.

The absence of these runners will allow for some of the younger team members to get their first taste of collegiate-level cross country.

"I was injured for the past six months, and I'm ready to get back out there and run."

JEROEN BROEKZITTER
NU cross country runner

"This weekend we're just trying to see where we are, and see how the younger runners perform," Dirksen said.

Some of the runners expected to step up this week for the women's team are two-time letter winner Melinda Mohr, a junior, and freshman Jeanette Zimmer.

Men expected to run well include All-American sophomore Jeroen Broekzitter and sophomore Aaron Carrizales.

Broekzitter is considered the top runner on the team and one of the best in the Big 12.

Last season, Broekzitter finished 20th at the NCAA Championships, the highest finish of any freshman in the competition. Broekzitter also finished sixth at the Big 12 Conference Championships.

"I'm looking forward to this race as much as any other race,"

Broekzitter said. "I was injured for the past six months, and I'm ready to get back out there and run."

Mohr, the most experienced runner participating in the tournament, is hoping her experience and leadership will help her young teammates run well.

"I have the most experience," Mohr said, "and since it's not a race that is important to be competitive in I'll help a few freshmen out -- show them the ropes."

By participating in the Bearcat Classic, the Cornhuskers were allowed to start practice before school started. Dirksen hopes this extra practice will help the team down the road at the Big 12 Championships to qualify for the NCAA Championships.

"Hopefully it should be a good start for the season," Mohr said, "with the best yet to come."

Hingis wins at U.S. Open

U.S. Open players
Hingis and Rosset, both of Switzerland, express grief and fear after crash of Swissair Flight 111.

NEW YORK (AP) — Winning was an afterthought for Martina Hingis as she moved one step closer to successfully defending her U.S. Open title Thursday. Her thoughts were dominated by the nature of tragedy.

Hingis moved into the third round with a 7-6 (7-4), 6-0 win over Iva Majoli a few hours after hearing about the crash of Swissair Flight 111 off the Canadian coast, killing all 229 people on board.

Hingis, a national heroine in Switzerland, said she knows many Swissair flight attendants.

"It was terrible to hear it," Hingis said. "It's the airplane I fly the most. When I heard, I was like, 'No way. Swissair seems very safe.' It's terrible to know you don't have any chance up there."

Marc Rosset, the top Swiss male player, had been set to return to Geneva on Flight 111 Wednesday night after losing in the first round at the U.S. Open. Instead, he stayed an extra day to practice with players still in the tourney.

"It was a strange feeling when

you know -- you just realize -- that for just changing your mind, you are still alive," he said. "I think I am a little afraid, when you realize you were close to dying."

Joining Hingis in the third round were No. 2 Lindsay Davenport, No. 4 Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, No. 5 Venus Williams and No. 13 Amanda Coetzer.

Williams served at up to 117 mph while winning 6-1, 6-3 over qualifier Anne Kremer, a Stanford student.

Hingis was inconsistent in the first set, bringing back memories of her loss to Majoli in the 1997 French Open final.

"I was very nervous in the beginning," Hingis said. "It was very strange coming from last night not having played and having to play the next day."

Majoli was the aggressor in the first set, moving Hingis from side to side and slamming groundstrokes past the defending champion. Hingis sighed loudly in exasperation as she netted a forehand late in the first set, and her soft second serve was pummeled by Majoli.

After taking 45 minutes to win the first set, Hingis swept through the second set in 20 minutes.

"I loosened up and everything started to go in," Hingis said. "I was strong and I didn't let her back in the game."

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