

Nebraska men's golf ready to open fall season

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Senior staff writer

Nebraska Golf Coach Larry Romjue doesn't expect his team to battle first-meet jitters Friday when the Cornhuskers open their season at the Falcon Cross Creek Invitational.

The 1998 golf team is one of Romjue's most experienced and confident ever. The Huskers' top seven players from last season have returned.

"It seems like last year we had four guys who were carrying the load," Romjue said. "This season, we've got seven solid players battling for positions each week."

The Huskers will need good performances from all seven if they want to contend for the tournament title. The 24-team invitational, which begins Friday and runs through Sunday, will challenge the Huskers.

The Eisenhower Golf Course at U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo., is a par 72,

7,195-yard course. Notre Dame, Tulane, Wichita State and California are among the teams scheduled to compete.

NU returns its top seven golfers from the 1997 team, including NCAA Championship qualifiers Jamie Rogers, Steve Friesen, Josh Madden, Scott Gutschewski and Ryan Nietfeldt.

With nearly the entire team returning this season, Romjue said he hopes to build upon last year's success. And the first step is playing well at the Falcon Cross Creek Invitational.

Brown credits team for record

BROWN from page 7

Brown said. "I don't go through what the other guys go through in practice. I have to prove myself in other places, like the weight room and off the field."

"But I hope guys see that I am giving my full effort. Hopefully, they can look up to me on the field on Saturdays."

Young said Brown earned the respect of his teammates and coaches long ago. The native of Southlake, Texas, claimed the No. 1 place-kicker spot as a freshman in 1995. As one of only three true freshmen to play that season, Brown helped to break the record for the best team field goal percent-

age in school history (.813), then he broke it again the following season (.857).

"It usually takes a few years to get over the hump maturity-wise but Kris was already there," Young said. "When he had the opportunity, he stepped up and demonstrated his ability. He never went through a period of doubt."

Brown said his mental toughness is his greatest asset.

"Kicking is 85 to 90 percent mental," Brown said. "The mechanics aren't going to change. They've been in my game for seven or eight years. You have to keep your head."

Young thinks Brown's attitude could carry him to the NFL. The possibility would be a "dream come true" for Brown. The goal often seems unreachable. Then again, so did the Nebraska scoring record.

"I don't really think I understand the significance of it, and I don't really think I will for awhile," Brown said of the record. "It's just a tremendous honor to even be mentioned with the names associated with this record."

But don't be fooled by the smile that creeps upon Brown's face when he talks of the scoring record. Brown has more to smile about than a record.

"I knock on wood because everything is going so well," Brown said. "I just got engaged, and that's obviously a big part of my life. I'm having a great time with my teammates. We're improving every week as a team and things are going well for me individually. Everything is so positive right now. How could I not be happy?"

NU's Krondak a vocal leader for her team

KRONDAK from page 7

lems with that." Nepo, the team's setter, and middle blocker Megan Korver make up the rest of the Cornhuskers' senior corps.

The first thing on the Krondak's mind is setting the table for what could be NU's third trip to the Final Four in the last five years.

"Getting the team ready at the beginning of the season, where we are playing well, not necessarily exceptional, but well," Krondak said.

So far this year the Huskers have gotten off to the start the Lincoln East graduate has been talking about.

At 4-0, NU is fresh off a four game win over two-time defending champion Stanford.

This weekend, the Huskers could face another ranked team in Columbus, Ohio, when they challenge Ohio State.

The Huskers open tonight with a match against Oregon State, and they will play the winner of OSU and Xavier on Saturday night.

Unfortunately, Krondak has been nursing an injured foot, and she has seen limited play this season.

"I am hoping that we can play her," Head Coach Terry Pettit said. "I think the issue is more pain right now than the fact that she can hurt herself."

Krondak spent much of last season on the bench because of a lower back injury. She is feeling a sense of urgency because this is her last year of eligibility.

Expectations are very high, Krondak said, and anything less than a trip to Madison, Wis., for the Final Four will be a disappointment.

"I will be very pissed off if we don't get there because I am a senior. And I know the potential of this team, and it is very high."

Krondak likens this year's team to the 1995 team which included All-Americans Christy Johnson, Allison Weston and Lisa Reitsma.

At 6-foot, Krondak compares herself to outside hitter Billie Winsett, who was known as a solid all-around player.

"I'm more Billie," Krondak said. "Not in attitude, but in plays. I'm not exceptional at anything. I'm just kind of good at serving, passing, hitting. I'm just kind of there to do it day in and day out."



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