Cross country teams to run UTC Invitational

Teams last meet before conference championships

October 16, 2009 · Christian Lemon

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee's cross country teams will conclude their regular season Saturday at 1:00 p.m. at the UTC Frontrunner Invitational in Chattanooga, Tenn., on the Moccasin Bend race course.

The Frontrunner Invitational is a shorter 5,000-meter men's race and a two-mile women's course that is useful in developing speed that will be crucial in the latter parts of the longer Sun Belt Championships race in two weeks.

"We like this race because it is shorter race before the conference championships," said head coach Dean Hayes. "There are some other 8,000 meter and 5,000 meter races we could go to, but we like this one."

Festus Chemaoi and William Songock should lead the men's team this weekend. Chemaoi won the UTC Opener meet earlier this season on the same 5,000 meter course in a time of 15:30 and will be favored among the top runners to take first place at this meet as well. Songock placed third overall, 14 seconds behind Chemaoi, at the previous event on the course.

For the women's team, top runner Zamzam Sangau will look for her first victory of the season.

Sangau won the 2008 UTC Frontrunner Invitational and finished second on the two-mile course earlier this season at the UTC Opener.

One question that still remains for the women's team will be the four and five finishing positions as the Blue Raiders head into the conference championships. With Sangau, Marla Bailey and Jackie Serem firmly in control of the top-three spots, two of the team's five newcomers will have to step forward in order to claim a team victory.

"Alissa Ruggle and Amber Kassuba have done well and could have an impact. We are still trying to get Stephanie Smith back from injury."

Full results and coverage for the meet can be found post race at goblueraiders.com and gomocs.com.

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