

By DICK BOYD

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New head coach George Rossi's Norton Community High School girls and boys cross country teams will open the 2009 season by hosting the annual Norton Invitational Cross Country Meet on Thursday at the Prairie Dog Golf Course south of Norton.

The meet will begin at 4:30 p.m. with the junior varsity race and will continue with the girls varsity race at 5 p.m. and the boys varsity race at 5:30 p.m.

The boys will run 3.1 miles and the girls will run 2.5 miles.

Team medals will be awarded to the top three boys and girls teams. Individual medals will go to the top 15 varsity boys and girls and the top 10 junior varsity boys and girls.

Teams from Northern Valley, Ellis, Oberlin, Phillipsburg, Trego Community and Wheatland will compete in addition to Norton.

The Norton girls have won the championship of this meet the past three years and the Blue Jay boys placed second two years ago and third last year after having won three years in a row.

Coach Rossi has 11 boys and 6 girls on this year's roster.

Returning boys lettermen are Chris Maddy, senior; Troy Bainter, Zach Porter, Kegan Vanover, juniors; Zach Hartwell, Bryan Henry, sophomores.

Other boys runners are: Grant McClymont, Matt Miller, seniors; Cole Archer, junior; Ryan Bainter, John Renner, freshmen.

Returning girls letter winners are Kaylen Rossi, Dustyna Sprigg, juniors; Abby Bainter, sophomore.

Other girls runners are: Kamilla Jones, Julia Kent, Regan Simpson, freshmen.

Lindsey Bailey has been coach-

Cross Country Schedule

Thurs., September 3 - Norton Invitational Here 4:30 p.m.
Sat, September 12 - Wamego Invitational There 9 a.m.
Thurs., September 17 - Hays Invitational There 3:45 p.m.
Thurs., September 24 - Hill City Invitational There 5 p.m.
Tues., September 29 - Oberlin Invitational There 5 p.m.
Thurs., October 8 - Phillipsburg MCL Meet There 4:30 p.m.
Thurs., October 15 - Lakeside Invitational There 4 p.m.
Sat., October 24 - Regional Meet TBA
Sat., October 31 - State Meet in Wamego TBA

ing junior high track in Norton and is coach Rossi's assistant coach this season.

Both Norton girls and boys cross country teams were Mid-Continent League champions last season. It was the fifth straight league championship for the boys!

The Blue Jay boys placed fourth in the regional competition in Cimarron, missing qualifying as a team for the state meet by two points. The Norton girls were the regional champions!

The Lady Jays placed fifth in the state meet in Wamego last season.

Coach Rossi is in his first year as the Norton high school cross country coach but is no stranger to Blue Jay athletics. He has coached junior high football and track in Norton for the past 21 years and has been the assistant girls basketball coach at Norton Community High School for the past 19 years.

Coach Rossi has a bachelor's degree in geology from Mesa State in Grand Junction, Colo. and his teaching certificate from Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colo.

"We graduated Laura Lee Baird, KaraJo Jones and Taylor Rossi from our girls team last season but have three returning runners from the team in Abby Bainter, Kaylen

Rossi and Dustyna Sprigg," said coach Rossi.

"Senior Amanda Ray is a returning letter winner but is our student manager this season..

"Our three freshmen, Kamilla Jones, Julia Kent and Regan Simpson, will compete at the varsity level.

"Our girls must avoid injury or sickness because of the low numbers but we are looking for a strong finish in both the league and regional races.

"Zach Bainter and Josh Galentine graduated from our boys team but we return the bulk of our fourth place regional squad.

"Top returning runners are Zach Hartwell, Troy Bainter, Kegan Vanover and Bryan Henry.

"Competing for the remaining varsity positions will be Zach Porter, Matt Miller, Cole Archer, John Renner, Grant McClymont and Ryan Bainter. Senior Chris Maddy is recovering from an ACL surgery and we hope to have him back before regionals. Our boys could be in the hunt for a state berth if we run well and avoid injuries.

"Both our girls and boys teams have been working very well in practice.

"Several of our team members logged many miles in the summer on their own to prepare for this season."



Senior libero Ashlie Stewart was digging the volleyball when this photo was taken during the Food Drive Scrimmage for the Norton Community High School volleyball team on Friday evening in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium. Also pictured are freshman Juliana Miller (No. 26) and freshman Teslee Nickell (No. 44).

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

*Practice makes perfect!
Shots of Blue Jay pre-season
workouts show lots of
promise for the 2009 season.*

Tennis opened at WaKeeney

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton Community High School tennis team opened the 2009 season in the Trego Round Robin on Saturday in WaKeeney and was competitive in some areas but not enough to escape a seventh place finish.

Tribune won the team championship with 32 points, followed by Trego, 25; Phillipsburg, 17; Osborne, 15; Plainville, 14; Colby, 11; Norton, 9; Russell, 8.

"With this first meet of the season, we found out how good our competition is going to be," said head coach Jim Green, a veteran coach who guided the Lady Jay tennis team for 25 years and returns this year after a two-year absence.

"The teams playing Saturday at WaKeeney will be the same teams we will see each week.

"As a team, we did a lot of positive things but there are a number of things that need to be improved."

Norton junior Vanessa Danesan was the bright spot for the Lady Jays. She compiled a 2-1 record and placed third in No.2 singles. She defeated Chelsey Edwards, Phillipsburg, 8-3, outpointed Taylor Funk, Russell, 8-4 and lost to Kaylie Schneider, Tribune, 8-1 in pool play.

In the finals, she defeated Aubrey Geist, Osborne, 8-4 to place third.

"Vanessa had a great day in winning the third place medal," said coach Green.

Junior Morgan Baumann played No.1 singles for Norton and lost 8-5 to Malorie Witmer, Phillipsburg; lost 8-2 to Brittney Rohr, Russell and lost 8-1 to Shalee Myers, Tribune. In the finals, she

lost 8-3 to Katena Harter, Colby, to place eighth.

"Morgan was playing No.1 singles and playing varsity for the first time and met the best players from the other teams," said coach Green. "She played well and was very competitive."

The Lady Jays' No.1 doubles team of senior Allie Corbin and junior Meaghan Peterson did not win any pool contests but won their finals match to place seventh.

They lost 8-3 to Brooke Lawyer and Ember Ward, Phillipsburg; lost 8-7 (7-4) to Tia Brunswig and Beth Hafliker, Trego, who were playing for Russell and lost 8-1 to Haylie Greeson and Kelli Crittenden, Tribune. In the finals, they outpointed Plainville's Jade Collins and Mandi Diaz 8-2 to place seventh.

"Allie and Meaghan are learning to play together as a team," said coach Green.

"They have moments of outstanding play."

Senior Emily Juenemann and junior Kyra Fulton played No.2 doubles for the Lady Jays and placed seventh by winning one match in pool play and winning their finals match.

They lost 8-2 to Kim Nguyen and Sage Ratliff, Phillipsburg, lost 8-7 (7-3) to Allison Carr and Kylie Dunn, Trego, who were playing for Russell and defeated Courtney Nemecheck and Kelcy Crittenden of Tribune 8-7 (8-6). In the finals, they outpointed MacKenzie Cameron and Jenna Dibble, Osborne, 8-2 to place seventh.

"Emily and Kyra defeated the eventual first place team from Tribune in a tiebreaker in pool play and that was good to see," said coach Green. "Kyra does an excel-

lent job of getting to the net."

Next action
Norton will compete in the Hays High School Varsity Tennis Invitational on Thursday at Hays High School, beginning at 3 p.m.

Competing, in addition to Norton and Hays, will be teams from Colby, Plainville, Russell and Victoria.

The No.1 players from each school will compete at the City Courts at Third and Main Streets and the No.2 players will compete at the Hays High Courts at 2300 East 13th Street.

On Saturday, the Lady Jays will play in the Colby Varsity Tournament, beginning at 9 a.m.

Teams competing, in addition to Norton and Colby, will be from Garden City, Liberal, Osborne and Plainville.

Matches will be played on courts at Fike Park and Colby Community College.

Northern Valley football ready to go

By TOM DREILING
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The Northern Valley football Huskies will kick off the new season on the road at Palco at 7 p.m. on Friday.

2009 could produce a good season.

According to coach Chuck Fessenden, practices are going well and the kids are working hard.

"We are looking forward to a good season. We feel like our



Under the watchful eye of Norton Community High School head football coach Lucas Melvin, junior Caleb Laughlin kicked a field goal during the Food Drive Scrimmage at Travis Field on Saturday morning.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

interior line and backs are pretty solid. We need someone to step up at an end position," he said.

The coach said that defensively, "we hope to be pretty solid. Even with 24 players out for football, depth at certain positions will be a concern if we start taking some injuries."

The remainder of the football schedule looks like this:

Sept. 11, at Stockton, 6 p.m.
Sept. 18, at home vs. Thunder

Ridge, 7 p.m.
Sept. 25, at home vs. Southern Cloud, 7 p.m.

Oct. 2, Cheylin at Bird City, 7 p.m.

Oct. 9, at Weskan, 3:30 p.m.

Oct. 16, at home vs. Golden Plains, 7 p.m.

Oct. 23, at home vs. Wheatland-Grinnell, 7 p.m.

Oct. 29, at home vs. Wallace County, 6:30 p.m.

Nov. 3, Bi-District

Nov. 7, Regional
Nov. 13, Substate
Nov. 21, State

Junior varsity schedule:
Sept. 14, at home vs. Stockton, 6 p.m.

Sept. 21, Heartland Christian at Colby, 4 p.m.

Sept. 28, at Hill City, 6 p.m.

Oct. 5, at home vs. Cheylin, 5 p.m.

Oct. 12, at home vs. Palco, 5 p.m.

Vs. Tipton Cardinals

The Northern Valley Lady Huskies opened the 2009 volleyball season on the road (which is where they will be for all matches except one home date) at Tipton to battle the Cardinals and the Lakeside Knights.

"We opened the season with mixed reviews — now, we won both the games — we just didn't win with the type of play the coaches are going to expect each and every night out of this group of players," said coach Chuck Zimmerman.

"We played host Tipton first and struggled to win the first set 25-23 as our passing was not crisp and our serving, which should be

a strength this season, was not strong.

"This evidently gave the Cardinals some confidence as they came back and won the second set 18-25 by hustling after every attack we hit to them and returning the ball back to us until we made the mistake," he said.

The coach continued: "In the third set we served much better, passed much crisper and hit with authority and good placement to take the set 25-17.

"Our junior varsity got their feet wet also on this first night of competition and in a 30 minute 'game' defeated Lakeside 25-13, 22-17 with the ladies actually playing very well.

Vs. Lakeside Knights

The varsity came back out for the next game and played Pike Valley league nemesis Lakeside. "We have not defeated Lakeside in anything since I have taken over the programs. If we are to be a team that other teams 'talk' about we needed to defeat Lakeside," coach Zimmerman said.

"Well it didn't start out well at all — 22-25 was the opening score and we didn't win. We didn't look good at all. We did not look like the team that has been practicing and pounding holes in the floor with our spikes.

"So, I told the girls too start playing like they have been practicing and — thank goodness —

they did," he said.

"We started, #1 — serving very well. The Knights couldn't handle our serves. #2 — our passing was very good and as a result our sets were great."

This led to the power game that we have to display each and every game and with everything working we did. The final two sets were won by the scores of 25-12, and 25-17," the coach said.

"So, we open this season with a sweep of the first night's competition and will prepare for our only home date in which we will host Western Plains and conference foe Thunder Ridge which will be the first conference game of the season for us," he said.

Make sure the family
buggy is ready to safely
take the gang to the
games at Norton,
Almena and Logan
this season!