

# Lady harriers head for Pitt Invite with full strength

By STEVE NAYOWITH  
Daily Collegian Sports Writer

Most teams that were undefeated this far into the season would be more concerned with their opponents than with themselves. But that will not be the case as the Lady Lion cross country team travels to Pittsburgh for the Pitt Invitational Sunday to try to put in its best performance of the year.

The Lady Lions, who are 4-0 on the season, have yet to have their fastest runners in one meet. Due to injury, top runner Kathy Mills missed the first three meets. And in last week's meet Peggy Cleary did not run and Penny Fales was forced to drop out because of injury.

Fortunately, all the runners should be competing Sunday, since the meet will be the team's last competition before the Eastern AIAW Championship in Vermont.

"Maybe this'll be the weekend," Coach Chris Brooks said. "This is it before Easterns. It's critical to get everyone together to see how we stand."

Brooks was not sure what schools would be competing but assumed teams from Ohio would be there as well as Maryland and Virginia. Maryland is the only team in the East that Brooks believes will give Penn State some competition at Easterns, but the Lady Lions already beat them at home in the first meet of the season.

The fact that Penn State is running in the invitational reflects this year's performance of the team.

"Last year we had a good season," Brooks said, "We didn't go (to Pitt) in order to rest up. But this year we haven't looked as good."

What the Lady Lions will be doing is trying to close the gap between the second and fifth runners. The reason for that is to prevent other teams that run in packs from bunching their runners in those gaps. Iowa State, who won the Nationals last year, did just that, resulting in Penn State settling for the number two spot.

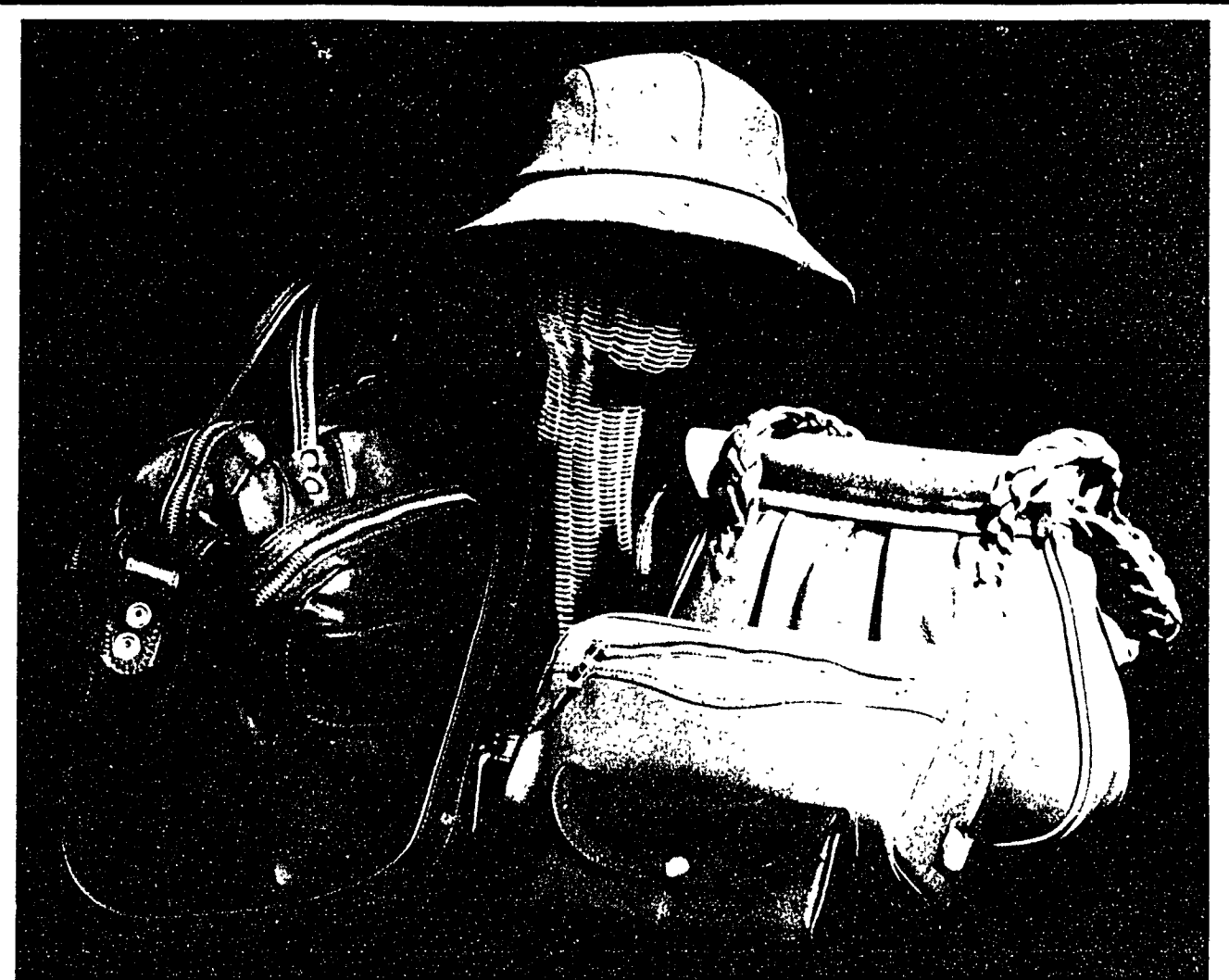
"We're still waiting for the gap to close," Brooks said. "The gap is a little bit larger than what I want."

Though wanting the third, fourth and fifth runners to move up, Brooks said she is not going to push the runners too hard.

"Staying healthy," she said, "is a main concern. We're starting to key down as much as possible. We'll concentrate on staying in the shape we're in, not trying for anything sharper than we are now."

If all goes well, the Lady Lions will win another meet and go into the Easterns with momentum. The team originally planned to run next week in the Maryland Invitational, but no word has come concerning the meet.

Running Sunday will be Kathy Mills, Liz Berry, Peggy Cleary, Patty Murnane, Mary Rawe, Penny Fales and Donna Gardner.



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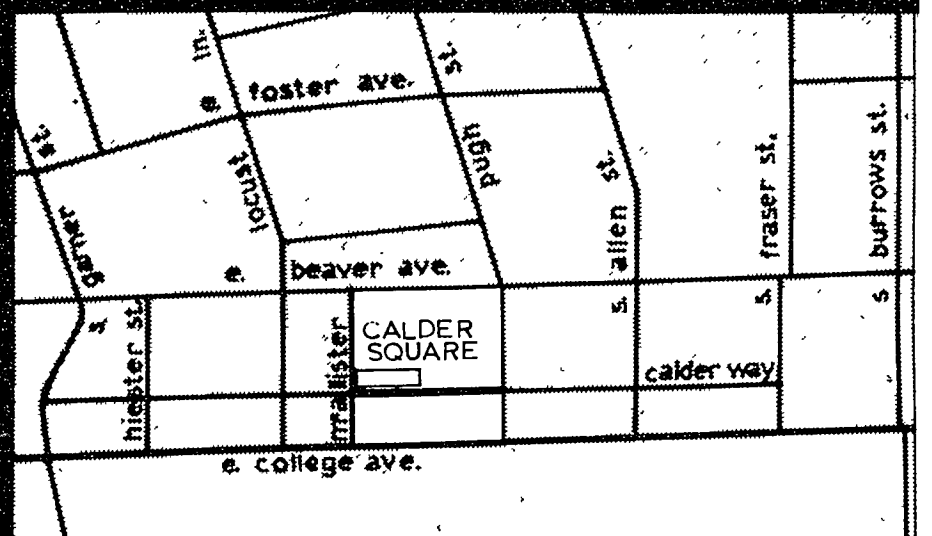
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