

# Gazette Classic 10k attracts top field of runners

By **WARREN ROGERS**  
Gazette Sports Editor

One of the better wheelchair athletes in the world and most of the top runners in Montana will give the Gazette Rimrock Classic 10k State Championships a successful debut on Sept. 18.

Race director John Devitt and his committee have designed a 10k course which begins and finishes in downtown Billings and is new to runners.

The Classic also includes a 5k run/walk, a non-competitive kids 1k race and a toddler trot.

"We already are getting entries from people from all over Montana, Wyoming and even Seattle," said committee member Tony Banovich, 1993 Governor's Cup 5k champion.

"I'm confident this is the best field of Montana runners for any race in the last five years."

Billings native Mike Layman, who now lives in Hamilton and runs a limited schedule, has said he will run in the Classic. In 1993, Layman has finished first in the Beartooth Run and Missoula's Bank Run.



Tom Raunig of Bozeman, Bill Brist of Kalispell, Mark Lingle of Columbus, Dave Coppock of Billings, George Heron of Cody and Jim Holden of Billings are other top runners already entered.

Karen Gall heads up the women's field.

The 1993 Governor's Cup 10k champion ran in the marathon trials for the 1992 Olympics.

Others are Billings runners Kathy Aragon, Renee Moomey and Becky Clairmont; and Suzie Kaluza of Butte.

Billings wheelchair racer Joe Tedisco has used his contacts to bring in top athletes. Tedisco raced in the Barcelona Games. He made the finals in the 200. In the marathon, Tedisco was 35th overall and the eighth fastest American.

Craig Blanchette, who trains in Eugene, Ore., has held world records in the 10k. He was the bronze medal winner in the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Bozeman athletes Keith Davis and Lucinda Klakken and Ted Ernst of Bigfork also are entered. Tedisco said that Davis has earned a full-ride scholarship to the University of Illinois, which has the top wheelchair athletic training program in America.

Klakken has raced nationally and internationally. Ernst, 14, has several gold and silver medals from national competitions.

Tedisco also feels there is a possibility that

Kenny Carnes of Las Vegas will compete. He has competed nationally and internationally and has been member of all the U. S. teams.

The course for the Classic has been sanctioned and certified by both the Road Runners Club of America and USA Track and Field.

"This is the first ever combined state championships in Montana in any event," said Banovich. "We've never had any RRCA state championship events.

"Over the last year, there has been a real effort between the two organizations to pull together and act more cohesively. Both parties have been real receptive to us."

Devitt heads up the RRCA organization in Montana and Brist is the Montana long distance running chairman for USA Track and Field.

There will be a purse of about \$2,500 for the running events and \$1,200 for the wheelchair race. The men's and women's 10k winner will receive \$400. There will be money awards for the top 10 finishers. The wheelchair winner will get \$500.

About 100 volunteers are needed for the event. Anyone interest in working as a volunteer or competing, should call 248-3554.