

Crawford, Meehan to lead runners in KVC battles

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

There aren't many conferences where a team can finish in fourth place and wind up as the ninth-ranked team in Michigan.

But that's exactly what happened to the Novi boys cross country team last fall. After posting a 3-3 record in the Kensington Valley Conference and a 5-3 overall mark, the Wildcats cracked Class A's top 10 at the end of the season.

No fewer than three league teams finished in the top 10. Lakeland is the defending state champ.

"It's really awesome. We are looking at the same situation this year. It's going to be one battle after another."

Bob Smith
Coach

One would think it would be difficult for the KVC to have that kind of strength again this year. According to Novi coach Bob Smith, it probably does.

"It's really awesome," he said. "We are looking at the same situation this year. It's going to be one battle after another."

Many of the league's elite lost top

runners. Smith said the KVC will still be a top conference though with the likes of Lakeland, Brighton and Milford.

"It's going to be which team can pick up the pieces going in," he said.

Although the coach isn't sure his squad can smash into the league's top group, he said Novi would be talented this year.

"We are growing," Smith said of the Wildcat program, "and doing a nice job."

Brian Molloy and Ken Fenchel are prime examples of the program's strength. Both stars at the high school level in 1991 have gone on to

college running careers as freshmen.

While those two are gone, the 'Cats have another pair of potential champion runners.

John Crawford, a senior, is a returning all-state performer. He finished seventh last year in Michigan as a junior.

Senior Vince Meehan will push Crawford for top billing on the squad.

"He's running the best I've ever seen him," said Smith. "They will have to run their best to beat each other. I think we have the best one-two punch in the KVC."

Several other runners are vying for top spots on the Wildcats.

Among that group is: Shawn Kelly, Shady Sardy, Brian Grema, Joe Leahy, Brandon Best, Jason Armstrong, Eric Kelly, Jason Everett, Jeremy Maynard and Tim O'Sullivan.

"We have 12 or 14 guys that could be in the top seven," Smith said. "You never know until that first gun goes off."

The coach predicted that runners like Crawford and Meehan could return to state competition. In all, Smith is looking for an excellent season.

"We are a good enough team to go up against anybody," he said.

THURSDAY
September 10,
1992

Runners in mid-season form — coach

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

If first meets are any indication, the Wildcat boys cross country team is ready to clean up in the Kensington Valley Conference this fall.

Novi hosted its annual scrimmage with Northville and Farmington Sept. 2 and appeared in mid-season form. Nine runners broke the 20-minute mark, a real accomplishment for the first time out, according to coach Bob Smith.

By comparison, only one runner came in faster than 20 minutes on the 1984 team. Smith said the excellent early times show that Novi will have solid depth throughout the year.

"We are probably as good as we've ever been," he commented.

That's saying a lot, too. The Wildcats were in the state finals in 1990 and last year posted even better times.

"We are right on track of being where we want to be," Smith said. "This is going to be an excellent year."

John Crawford wasted no time in showing he'll be a top runner in the KVC this fall. The senior had Novi's best time (second overall) at Northville's Hines Park at 17:34.

"John is ready to do it at any time," Smith said. "Anything over 18 minutes will be a disappointment to him."

The Kelly boys came in second and third, sophomore Shawn coming in at 18:12 while freshman Eric was next at 18:36.

"That's the fastest freshman time we've ever had," Smith said.

Brendan Best had his fastest time ever at 18:53 for the 'Cats' fourth best finish. Senior Joe Leahy was next with a time of 19:05 while Vince Meehan was sixth with a time of 19:07.

Smith explained that an injury slowed Meehan down. A sore knee cost the senior about a minute, he said.

Brian Grems came an eyelash behind Meehan at 19:08 while Shady Sardy was eighth at 19:41. Newcomer Shawn McCorty ran an impressive 19:55.

Runners win Schoolcraft invite

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Perfection.

That's almost what the boys cross country team reached last week. First, the 'Cats scored a near flawless victory over South Lyon. To top it off, the squad won the Schoolcraft Invitational Saturday over some of the area's best competition — including Walled Lake Western.

"I told the kids I would be disappointed if we didn't take second place (behind Western)," coach Bob Smith said. "I didn't give them enough credit. They didn't back down from them at all."

Novi beat out Walled Lake by a mere point, 47-48. Westland John Glenn was a distant third with 138 points. It was the first time the Wildcats have won the invite.

"It was sort of a dual meet be-

tween us and Western," Smith said. John Crawford won the race. The senior posted an incredible time of 16:29.9.

"He's state-caliber," Smith said of Crawford, who did finish seventh in class last fall. "He's as good as anybody I've seen so far."

Although Schoolcraft is noted for having a fast course, Smith said it was a great time. The 'Cats posted several other excellent finishes.

Vince Meehan put some knee problems aside to place third overall in 16:52. Sophomore Shawn Kelly wasn't far behind as he placed seventh overall in 17:27.

Shady Sardy was Novi's fourth best of the day (17th overall) with a time of 17:56.

"He's coming into his own," Smith said. "He has lots of

"I told the kids I would be disappointed if we didn't take second place (behind Western). I didn't give them enough credit. They didn't back down from them at all."

Bob Smith
Coach



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'Cats take invite, beat South Lyon

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potential."

Brian Grems was the 'Cats final point getter as he finished in 17:57. Erick Kelly took a 17:58 and Shawn McGoorty an 18:15.

"He gets better every week," Smith said of McGoorty. "He's doing a nice job."

NOVI 15, SOUTH LYON 47: The Wildcats missed a perfect score by three points against the Lions Thursday.

Times weren't nearly as good as Saturday. But, Smith said, the

Lions have a brand new, soft course. The coach added that he put his runners through a tough workout the day before the meet.

Crawford came out on top again with a time of 18:09. Meehan followed close behind in 18:11.

Other finishes included: Shawn Kelly in 18:46, Sardy in 19:03, Eric Kelly in 19:05, McGoorty in 19:32 and Jeremy Maynard in 20:09.

Smith said South Lyon is in a rebuilding year.

"They did a nice job of running among themselves," he said. "It was a blue-collar effort."

The Observer/THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1992

Novi boys break through with 1-point victory

By BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER

Walled Lake Western's Dennis Keeney and Novi's Bob Smith compared notes immediately following Saturday's 27th running of the Scholcraft College Invitational boys cross country meet.

And after a quick check of the scoring, Keeney was more than willing to concede victory after his Warriors fell short by one point, 47-48,

in their bid to win a third consecutive title. (See statistical summary.)

"We knew they (Novi) were the team because they had been on our backs the last three years," the Western coach said. "It's nice for him (Smith) to take home the trophy because they've been here so long."

Novi, best man to the Warriors in 1991 and '91, won it by placing three in the top 10 individually and six overall in the top 20.

Novi senior John Crawford was also the overall winner with a time of 16:29.9 in the 5,000-meter race. Western's Art Schuetzler finished second (16:41.9), while Novi's Vinco Meehan was third (16:52.8).

Rounding out the Novi contingent was Shawn Kelly (seventh), Shady Sardy (17th), Brian Grema (19th), and Erick Kelly (20th).

Schuetzler, meanwhile, was followed by Western teammates junior Trevor Keeney (ninth), junior

Frank Stevens (11th), senior Tom Menzies (12th) and junior Brian Clark (14th).

"Less than a mile to go they (Novi) had us by three places," Keeney said. "We made up one spot, but couldn't make up the last spot we needed."

"We came on strong at the end and our fourth and fifth man (Menzies and Clark) ran their best races of the year . . . that's who I was worried about. We wanted to win,

but I've got to be happy about our performance. We're on schedule."

The Warriors, who opened the season with dual meet wins over Milford, Walled Lake Central and Farmington Harrison, appear to be making up for four key graduation losses — Bill Crosby, Jim Sweetman, Chris Crosby and Matt Wright.

Western was also missing Brandon Keeney, who has been out the past two weeks with an arch injury.

CROSS COUNTRY

**SCHOOLCRAFT INVITATIONAL
CROSS COUNTRY MEET
Saturday at Schoolcraft College**

BOYS TEAM STANDINGS: 1. Novi, 47 points; 2. Walled Lake Western, 48; 3. Westland John Glenn, 138; 4. Livonia Stevenson, 146; 5. Redford Thurston, 178; 6. Redford Union, 192; 7. Livonia Franklin, 193; 8. Northville, 194; 9. Garden City, 229; 10. Livonia Churchill, 230; 11. Lincoln Park, 235; 12. Walled Lake Central, 244; 13. Trenton, 255.

Boys individual finishers: 1. John Crawford (Novi), 16:29.9 (5,000 meters); 2. Art Schuetzler (Western), 16:41.9; 3. Yince Meehan (Novi), 16:52.8; 4. Brian Mockendge (RU), 17:05.6; 5. Jason Grzywacz (Thurston), 17:17.1; 6. Scott Creehan (Stevenson), 17:25.3; 7. Shawn Kelly (Novi), 17:27.3; 8. Henry Honeycutt (John Glenn), 17:29.6; 9. Trevor Keeney (Western), 17:30.4; 10. Lee Devers (Franklin), 17:31.3; 11. Frank Stevens (Western), 17:32.1; 12. Tom Menzies (Western), 17:35.2; 13. Tony Bacon (Lincoln Park), 17:36.0; 14. Brian Clark (Western), 17:39.8; 15. Jeff Tapper (John Glenn), 17:41.9; 16. Jeff Zwiesle (Northville), 17:50.1; 17. Shady Sardy (Novi), 17:56.4; 18. Mike Wainwright (GC), 17:56.7; 20. Enck Kelly (Novi), 17:58.7; 21. Jason Reith (GC), 18:03.8; 22. Dan Boynton (RU), 18:11.4; 23. Tim Kulhanek (Lincoln Park), 18:12.6; 24. Steve Warner (Stevenson), 18:14.0; 25. Chris Smith (Northville), 18:15.0; 26. Shawn McGoorty (Novi), 18:15.7; 27. Jason Hayward (Stevenson), 18:16.2; 28. Corey Mangan (RU), 18:16.4; 29. Mark Lawrence (John Glenn), 18:16.4; 29. Mark Lawrence (John Glenn), 30. Mark Pierzecki (Thurston), 18:20.3.

THURSDAY
September 24,
1992

Lakeland runners whip Novi 15-45

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Last week's 15-45 drubbing at the hands of defending state champion Lakeland has brought the Wildcat cross country team back down to earth.

Novi was flying high after winning the Schoolcraft Invitational Sept. 12. But reality came crashing quickly back in as the Eagles took the top five places to nearly whitewash the 'Cats.

"They ran well and we ran poorly," said Novi coach Bob Smith. "We were maybe a little overconfident.

"They didn't have their racing

minds together."

The coach said two factors cost his team the dual meet.

First, he noted, Lakeland was simply in better physical condition having trained harder over the summer. Smith added that the Wildcats failed to start the race quickly and were subsequently left in the dust.

"We had to die trying (for a fast start)," he said. "That's the only way to beat them."

Smith said the team studied the race afterwards and should actually benefit in the long run. At any rate, he said if his team was going to lose, it might as well do it in style.

"If we are going to lose I'm glad we

lost big time" and to a big time school," Smith said.

Lakeland's Jeff Clark won the race. The Eagle posted a time of 17:18.

The Wildcats' Vince Meehan placed sixth overall and was the team's top finisher with a time of 18:20. John Crawford was close behind at 18:22.

Shawn Kelly was ninth overall with a time of 18:39. Brandon Best and Brian Grems came in at 18:52 and 19:33 respectively.

Eric Kelly was Novi's sixth finisher at 20:08 while Tim O'Sullivan cracked the top seven with a 20:54.

Crawford leads runners past Hartland

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Behind the leadership of John Crawford, the Wildcat cross country team scored an easy 23-36 victory over Hartland on Sept. 22.

The senior runner finished Northville's Cass Benton course in 17:02. According to coach Bob Smith, Crawford is one of the Kensington Valley Conference's best runners.

"Crawford showed he's one of the best in the KVC," he added.

The coach said Novi did a good job as a team against the Eagles.

"We ran like we are capable," Smith said. "When we do that we will do well."

Vince Meehan ran nearly as well as Crawford. He was third overall with a time of 17:48.

Shawn Kelly also broke the 18-minute mark with a 17:55. Brendan Best was seventh overall in 18:25 and Brian Grems was close behind in 18:34.

Novi's five top finishers had an average time of 17:57, which Smith termed as very good. The coach described the win as "satisfying" because Hartland had taken the 'Cats to a tiebreaker last year before falling.

BRIGHTON 21, NOVI 41: Smith said his team ran even better against the Bulldogs Thursday, but had little to show for it.

"We ran extremely well," he said. "But they beat us soundly."

The coach added that Brighton almost certainly will be among the state's top teams at the end of the season. Smith predicted they would knock off defending state champ Lakeland.

Crawford was again first for Novi (second overall). The senior ran an amazing 16:39. Brighton's Brandon Daulton was just a shade better to win the race in 16:37.

Meehan ran his best time ever at Cass Benton Thursday with a time of

17:23. Grems improved by 20 seconds from the Hartland meet and posted an 18:14. Kelly was 17th overall and ran an 18:22.

WESTERN INVITE: Novi closed the week Saturday with a pair of good performances at the Walled Lake Invitational.

The Wildcats placed second in the junior-senior division with 53 points. Host Western won with a total of 53.

Crawford placed second overall with a time of 17:19 while Meehan was fourth in 17:35. Best continued his good running last week with an 11th place showing in 18:15. Joe Leahy cracked the top five Novi finishers (17th overall) in 18:36 while Grems placed 18th overall in 18:42.

In the freshman-sophomore race, Novi took fourth place with 126 points. Belleville was first with 82.

Freshman Eric Kelly was 17th overall and ran an 18:54 race. Shawn

McGoorty took 19th in 19:08 and Jeremy Maynard finished in 19:25. Rob Mutch and Ryan Keys were the 'Cats final two runners and posted times of 19:52 and 20:29.

Runners finishing in the top 20 of either division took home medals.

Thursday, October 8, 1992

Runners hand Howell 19-41 loss

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Novi High's cross country team got back on the winning track Sept. 29 with a 19-41 win over Howell.

The 'Cats last Kennington Valley Conference meet was a loss at the hands of Brighton on Sept. 24.

"I was pretty confident that we could walk away with a win," said coach Bob Smith.

The win moved Novi to 3-2 in the KVC.

Novi got the victory on the road. Smith said Howell's course is one of the less challenging in the league.

"The biggest hill there is the curb," he joked.

John Crawford won the race for the 'Cats. The senior ran a 17:08 while teammate Vince Meehan was second overall with a time of 17:35.

Shawn Kelly placed fourth overall with a 17:49 while Brian Grems was next at 17:51. Shady Sardy placed seventh overall with a time of 18:11. Novi's final two runners broke the 19 minute barrier as Shawn McGoorty and Eric Kelly with times of 18:13 and 18:29 respectively.

PIONEER INVITE: Novi closed the week Saturday with a fourth place finish at the Ann Arbor Pioneer invitational.

Smith said his team ran well, but were also feeling the affects of heavy training in practice. The coach said his team runs as much as seven miles per day.

"I don't want them to have fresh legs at this point," Smith said. "We will have fresh legs at regionals."

Host Pioneer won the event with a team total of 37. The Wildcats had 82 points for fourth place.

Crawford paced Novi with a time of 17:15 (9th overall). Meehan was 13th with a time of 17:33.

Despite a still sore calf muscle, Shawn Kelly was able to finish in 17:58. Brendan Best was 20th with a time of 17:59 and Grems finished in 18:25.

Joe Leahy was Novi sixth fastest runner with a time of 18:39 while Sardy finished in 19:25.

The 'Cats got some good performances on the junior variety side. McGoorty was second overall in 18:54 and Eric Kelly was fourth in 18:59.

THURSDAY
October 15,
1992

Thinclads place fourth against tougher teams

By SHARON CONDRON
Staff Writer

The Novi boys cross country team faced a tougher challenge at the Oakland County meet this year, but with John Crawford's first-place finish the team ran circles around its competition at the Redford Union Invitational last week.

Coach Bob Smith said he was pleased with the team's fourth-place finish at Redford Tuesday and its 16th-place tie with Clarkston Saturday at the county meet.

Crawford showed he had the home course advantage at last Tuesday's Redford Union Invitational which was run on the 'Cats own Cass Benton trail. He took first place at the meet and broke his own record.

Crawford crossed the line at Cass Benton with a personal best time of 16:38. But Smith said while Crawford set the pace for the pack, the remaining six Novi runners were close behind, and all finished with outstanding times.

"He did outstanding," said coach Bob Smith. "We had superior times, but Crawford obviously led the race.

"He took charge of the race right away and put on the surges to take the lead."

Smith said the team's top three senior runners ran strong races against talent they hadn't seen before.

The Wildcats' second man, senior Vince Meehan, finished fourth overall with a 16:58, putting two of Novi's seven in the top 10. Brian Grems took 19th with 17:42.

"It's rare a team can get two men

in the top 10 on that course," Smith said. "It just shows that our one-two punch is coming along."

Sophomore Shawn Kelly held strong through the 5,000-meter race, finishing 31st with a time of 18:16 despite a back injury. Shawn McGoorty finished 35th with a time of 18:35. Freshman Erick Kelly finished sixth on the team at 19:03 followed by senior Tim O'Sullivan, who crossed the line in 47th place at 19:24.

Smith said his runners' times were a tad slower at the county race where the Wildcats faced 38 teams at Marshbank Park in West Bloomfield on Saturday.

"At the county race we didn't make a whole-hearted effort to put our best foot forward," he said.

Plagued with injuries, the team used the county meet as a practice run, Smith said, and eyed future competition. Chilly temperatures, dampness and breezy winds all added obstacles and contributed to the team's slower times.

Crawford ran a slower, but well run race finishing 16th overall at 16:53.

"Out of 246 runners, he did a real nice job out front for the first mile but then slipped back."

Meehan finished second for the team, 46th overall at 17:26; Shawn Kelly ran 85th at 18:03; Erick Kelly took 134th at 18:47; and McGoorty finished in 144th place at 18:57; Grems placed right behind him at 18:58; and O' Sullivan anchored the team with a 19:16 time.

With the invitationals and injuries aside, the team will face Kensington Valley Conference rival Milford High on Tuesday.

THURSDAY
October 22,
1992

Runners place seventh at invite

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Keeping priorities clearly in sight, the Wildcat cross country took a seventh place finish at the Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard Invitational Saturday.

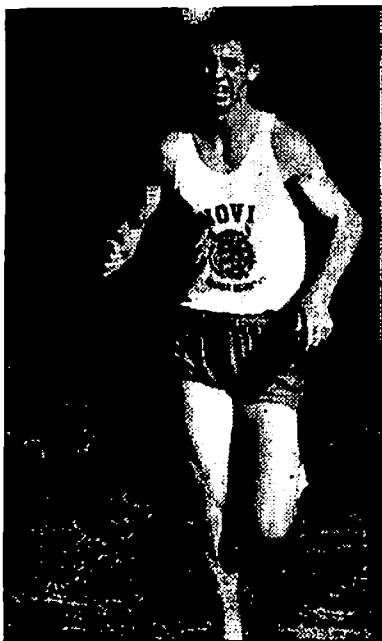
According to coach Bob Smith, Novi has bigger fish to fry than the annual invitational. By running his team upwards of 10 miles a day in practice last week, he said it would have been unfair to expect the 'Cats to win.

"We did things you only do if you are willing to sacrifice performance," Smith said.

The runners went through "hell week" in preparation for the Kensington Valley Conference meet and regionals next week. So finishing seventh at the invitational was of little consequence, Smith said.

"All the guys know to get to the state finals we have to do whatever we can," he added. "There will be no excuses for the league meet. We've

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John Crawford

Runners take seventh

Continued from 7

trained and worked very hard."

The extra mileage and different kind of work, such as "hill rushes" and track running, will help come regional time, Smith said. In the meantime, however, his runners are being depleted of energy for invitational and dual meets.

"When you run on Sunday, you know it's hell week," Smith joked.

Despite the energy-draining practices, senior John Crawford took fifth overall in Ann Arbor Saturday with a 16:43 run. Vince Meehan was the Wildcats' second-fastest runner (15th overall) at 17:10.

Shawn Kelly showed the signs of the hard training and finished 35th with a time of 18:07. Erick Kelly wasn't too far behind his brother in

18:33.

Brian Grems was Novi's last point-winner with a time of 18:38. Shawn McGoorty was sixth for Novi with an 18:44.

Ann Arbor Pioneer won the race with 44 points while Berkley was second with 70. The Wildcats were seventh with 175 points.

"I thought they could tangle with

the lead runners for awhile and then tail off," Smith said of the race. "But it was exactly the opposite. They couldn't get started."

The coach is optimistic his team will do well in the regionals.

"If we don't make it to the state finals it won't be because they weren't dedicated and didn't work hard," Smith said. "They give 100 percent."

Milford hammers Wildcat runners 21-40

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

If only John Crawford's teammates liked cold weather as much as he does.

The senior cross country runner easily won the Wildcats' race with Milford Oct. 20. The Redskins won the battle, however, by taking second through fourth positions en route to a 21-40 victory.

Some Kensington Valley Conference observers said Milford isn't as competitive as years past. But don't tell that to Novi coach Bob Smith.

"They are definitely a quality team," he said. "We didn't run parti-

"They are definitely a quality team. We didn't run particularly well."

Bob Smith
Coach

cularly well."

As for Crawford, he had no trouble adjusting to 35-degree temperatures and sloppy conditions at the Cass Benton course in Northville.

"He loves it," Smith said. "I'm hoping that regional Saturday is horrible."

The Milford dual meet closed the regular season for Novi. The KVC meet was scheduled for Tuesday and state competition begins Saturday with regionals at Marshbank Park in West Bloomfield.

Crawford took control of the 'Cats final dual meet from the start. Smith

said. The senior finished the race with an outstanding time of 16:48.

Vince Meehan was the Wildcats' next finisher (sixth overall) in 18:28. Smith said Meehan and the rest of his runners were slowed by the muddy Cass Benton course.

Brendan Best was 13th overall with a time of 19:13. Brian Grems was next for Novi with a time of 19:17 while Shady Sardy closed the meet in 19:25 (17th overall).

Smith said aside from course conditions, his team was less than a 100 percent because of hard weeks of training.

"I think we (were) feeling the effects of hell week," he said.

SALINE INVITATIONAL: Novi competed in the junior varsity meet Saturday and took a fourth place finish.

Host Saline won the meet with 45 points. Novi had 79.

Although it was a JV meet, many of Novi's runners had competed on the varsity level.

Shawn McGoorty was the 'Cats' top finisher (seventh overall) in 19:46. Junior John Streit ran a 19:52 race while Jeremy Maynard was 16th in in 20:05.

Rob Mutch just missed a medal at 21st with a time of 20:25. Jason Everett was the Wildcats' fifth best runner in 20:38.

Crawford, Meehan head to state finals

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

Saturday's regional cross country meet at Marshbank Park in West Bloomfield was a case of good news, bad news for Novi High.

Although the Wildcats didn't advance as a team, John Crawford and Vince Meehan did qualify individually. Both runners eclipsed the 17:00 minute mark to make the state cut, Crawford with a time of 16:44 and Meehan with a personal best of 16:48.

Meehan overcame a large deficit near the end of the race to qualify. With about 1,000 yards to go, the senior began a mad sprint to the finish line. Meehan passed five runners in that final distance to go to state competition for the second time in his career.

"It was outstanding," coach Bob Smith said. "(It was) his best run by far."

The Novi duo will travel to Flint this Saturday for state finals. Smith said he believes Crawford and Mee-

han have excellent chances to place high.

"They won't overreact," he added. "They know how to run in big races."

The Wildcats didn't miss by much going to finals as a team. Redford Catholic Central, Ann Arbor Pioneer and West Bloomfield did advance. Novi finished sixth.

Shawn Kelly was the 'Cats third finisher at West Bloomfield. The sophomore was 52nd overall with a time of 18:05.

Erick Kelly was 60th in 18:14 and Brian Grems was 62nd in 18:15. Brendan Best was 64th in 18:19 and Shawn McGoorty was 112th in 19:39.

KVC MEET: The Wildcats raised some eyebrows in the league with its third place finish Oct. 27.

It was, in fact, Novi's highest finish ever in the Kensington Valley Conference. It was also the first time the 'Cats finished ahead of Milford.

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Crawford, Meehan qualify for finals

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Not bad for a group that had its sights set on regionals.

"I knew physically we would be pumped," Smith said. "Emotionally we were gunning for Saturday."

The coach was happy to get revenge against Milford, which whipped Novi in a dual meet during the regular season.

"It was really satisfying," Smith said. "They beat us good (but) we beat them when it counted."

Brighton was crowned league champ with 33 points. Lakeland was second at 49 and the 'Cats totaled 93.

Crawford placed fourth overall, thereby taking a first-team All-KVC honor, with a time of 17:22. Meehan was second-team All-KVC with an eighth overall finish at 17:43.

Shawn Kelly was 22nd overall with a time of 18:39 while Grems took 26th at 18:52. McGoorty ran a 19:12, good for 33rd place. Erick Kelly was Novi's sixth finisher in 19:33 and Shady Sardy closed the race with a time of 19:41 (37th).

Wildcats of the Week



JOHN LAHTI



JOHN CRAWFORD

Thursday, November 5, 1992—THE NOVI NEWS—11B

JOHN LAHTI: Lahti's four-yard touchdown run with seconds remaining Friday night gave Novi High its first Baseline Jug over Northville. The senior quarterback engineered a fourth-quarter comeback against the Mustangs in his final game for the Wildcats.

JOHN CRAWFORD: Also a senior, Crawford qualified for state competition this weekend with a great run at regionals. It will be Crawford's second finals appearance.

1992 BOY'S KVC CROSS COUNTRY FINALS

Place	Team	Dual Meets	League Meets
1	Brighton	6-0	33
2	Lakeland	5-1	49
3	Novi	3-3	93
4	Milford	4-2	105
5	Hartland	2-4	100
6	Howell	1-5	158
7	South Lyon	0-6	207

LEAGUE MEET RESULTS

First-team All-KVC

Place	Name	School	Time
1	Branden Dutton	Brighton	17:09
2	Shelby Baecker	Lakeland	17:09
3	Jeremy Towne	Brighton	17:36
4	John Crawford	Novi	17:22
5	Ryan Valik	Hartland	17:33
6	Chris Jordan	Brighton	17:36
7	Jeff Rutkowski	Milford	17:43

ALL-AREA:
Novi places two
on our second team/8B

SWIMMING:
Davis qualifies
for regional/9B

HEALTH:
Panic attacks
are common/12B

HAYRIDES:
See where you
can hitch a ride/12B



John Crawford (left) made all-state honors while Vince Meehan just missed.

Crawford named all-state

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

For the fourth year in a row, the Wildcat boys cross country team has an all-state runner.

John Crawford earned that honor Saturday by finishing seventh at the Class A final in Flint. The senior ran a career-best of 16:16 in his final Novi performance.

It was Crawford's second time as an all-stater. Ironically, he finished seventh last fall in the individual final.

Novi coach Bob Smith said the run puts Crawford among the school's all-time elite.

"I think John has crested at the top," he said.

Vince Meehan finished 23rd, just missing all-state honors, with his career-best of 16:36. Smith said both of his runners put in their dues for their excellent finishes.

"They are willing to pay the price," he said. "I'm happy that it paid off for them."

Lake Orion's Clint Verran won the race with an incredible time of 15:54. The top 25 finishers, from the team and individual races com-



BOB SMITH

bined, are automatically named all-state.

Races were held at Brookwood Golf Course in Flint. Smith described the rolling, scenic course as the "best in the state."

Although temperatures hovered

near 40 degrees, Smith said conditions were ideal for Crawford and Meehan. Because of the Wildcats elaborate warm-up routine, he said, his runners often have an advantage in cold weather.

"He was beaming from ear to ear (about the conditions)," Smith said of Crawford. "Both of our guys took advantage of it."

As might be expected, the race started quickly. Crawford, who likes to jump out to an early lead and hold it down the stretch, stayed with the pack and actually took turns leading the race over the first mile.

Smith said Crawford lost his rhythm three times during the second mile but was able to regain it. Meehan stayed near the front as well, holding the 18th position.

The fast pace began to take its toll in the third and final mile. Crawford fell back to 13th. In the last 100 meters, the senior found whatever energy he had left and sprinted to the finish line for seventh.

"He finished like I've never seen him finish before," Smith said.

The coach said Crawford showed his maturity in the race. In years past falling behind would have rattled him. But not this time.

"He's come a long way in 18 months," Smith said. "He didn't fall apart when kids passed him. He's put that to rest."

Meehan has also come a great distance, Smith added. As a sophomore, he was running in the 20 minute range.

"He's got to be an inspiration to all of the kids," Smith commented.

The two seniors closed their careers running brilliantly. Crawford averaged 5:13 per mile and Meehan 5:20.

"They were both spent," Smith said. "Their shoulders were drooping."

For all that agony, the duo will go down as two of Novi's very best.

"The pain is only temporary," Smith added. "Their times and places are permanent."