



Photo by BRYAN MITCHELL

They're off

Novi High School sports teams were off and running as the Fall sports season started last week. Above, the Wildcat cross

country team is pictured at the start of its meet against Northville High School.

Runners face uphill climb in conference

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

The old saying, "can't tell the team without a scorecard" is certainly a propos for the Wildcat cross country squad this fall.

Only one of Novi High's top 10 runners returns from a year ago and less than half of the 26-man squad has cross country experience. Coach Bob Smith made no bones about it, 1993 will be a difficult fight for the 'Cats in the Kensington Valley Conference.

"It'll be rough for a while," he commented. "But with our attitudes and the kids we have, it won't be long until we are back."

Top runners like John Crawford, who was an all-stater, Vince Meehan, Shady Sardy and Sean Kelly have graduated or declined to return to the team. Other seniors like Joe Leahy, Brian Grems, Tim O'Sullivan and Brandon Best provided depth.

Novi finished third in the KVC last year with a 5-3 overall record. Crawford finished seventh in the state to earn all-state honors and Meehan

just missed.

"It's a whole different ballgame," said Smith. "It's a whole new team." Indeed.

Where last year's squad was dominated by seniors the Wildcats top runner this fall may be a freshman. Scott Shepley has been impressive in workouts this summer, Smith said.

"He's as good a freshman as I've seen," he added.

Junior Sean McGoorty is one Novi's best as well. Smith McGoorty and Shepley battle continually for the team's top spot in practice.

A quartet of juniors will vie for other varsity slots.

Tony Kozadinos "shows promise," according to Smith, while Jeremy Maynard, Rob Mutch and Willie Arkles have made improvements as well.

Trackmen Ryan Henderson and Mike Quinn have joined the squad, too. Henderson will be under 20 minutes consistently and Quinn should make the transition to cross country well, Smith said.

Jason Armstrong, a senior, could crack the top seven.

Runners get experience in exhibition with Mustangs

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Bob Smith's boys' cross country team acquired something it was in desperate need of Sept. 1: experience.

Novi High ran its annual scrimmage against Baseline rival Northville and Farmington of the Western Lakes Activities Association. Smith said many of his Wildcats were running their first race.

"It was really good for us," he said. "We have so many young people that needed to get familiar with cross country."

A total of 16 Novi athletes partici-

pated. A dozen of them, Smith said, had no previous cross country experience.

"Our goal was to get experience," he added.

Although the Wildcats have a youthful roster, the coach said he believes it won't take long for his runners to perform like veterans.

"I'd like to think we're weeks away from being an established team," said Smith. "These kids have been practicing like seasoned veterans. I think we can beat South Lyon."

Novi opens its regular and Ken-

Continued on 6

"He's been running very hard," Smith said of Mutch. "It's paid off for him. I think he'll be able to run in our top two or three."

Ryan Henderson, a sophomore, closed out the top five in 21:33. Other Novi finishers included: Mike Girard, Adrian Snow, Chris Duprey, Dave Walle, Joe Liu, Doug Householder, Joe Blackmore, Pat Cleary, Peter Wickman, Ryan Brooks and John Scherger.

"They got beat (by Northville)," Smith said of his team. "But the first time you race, you're bound to make mistakes."

The coach said most of his runners believe they will do better.

"I think it was good to have a scrimmage," Smith said.

Continued from 5
ington Valley Conference seasons today against the Lions. The Wildcats run at Northville's Cass Benton park at 4:30 p.m.

The squad raced Northville High at the park last week.

Scott Shepley was Novi's top finisher (seventh overall) in 19:19. Anthony Kozadinos, a junior, was the Wildcats second fastest runner in 20:23.

"It was a real nice run for Anthony," said Smith. "He wasn't on the varsity last year. But I think he'll fit right in there now. He's a hard worker this year."

Mike Quinn ran a 21:02 race while Rob Mutch finished just behind in 21:09.

Runners compete at Schoolcraft College

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Saturday's Schoolcraft Invitational provided a lesson in punctuality for the the Wildcat boys' cross country team.

Novi High finished ninth out of 10 schools. Coach Bob Smith said he took responsibility for the showing because the team didn't arrive soon enough to warm up properly.

The Wildcats top finisher, Shawn McGoorty, was a prime example. Although he ran an 18:18, good for 20th overall, Smith said the junior would have gone even a little faster under normal circumstances.

"He had a problem getting

started," the coach commented. "He was a little stiff."

McGoorty did earn a medal for his performance.

Scott Shepley was 34th overall with a time of 18:48. Smith said the freshman's performance at Schoolcraft was comparable to former Wildcat stars like Brian Molloy and John Crawford at the same age.

"He's a good runner," Smith said of Shepley. "He'll be in the 17s by next month."

Jeremy Maynard was 39th overall in 19:13. Mike Girard was Novi's fourth-fastest finisher in 19:20.

In 47th place was Ryan Henderson with a 19:43. Freshman Chris Duprey was sixth for Novi in 20:24 and

Dave Walle rounded out the top seven in 20:32.

In the junior varsity race, Adrian Snow grabbed fourth place overall and a medal with a time of 19:13. Smith said that performance will move Snow onto the varsity roster.

NOVI 24, SOUTH LYON 35
Mission accomplished.

The Wildcats opened the season Thursday by beating Kensington Valley Conference rival South Lyon at

home. For Smith, it was a chance to keep bragging rights from his brother, Lions' coach Scott Smith.

"The troops were ready," said Bob Smith. "We looked like a bona fide team."

The coach said his team's scrimmage with Baseline rival Northville in early September paid off.

"You could tell they were racing instead of just getting experience," he said.



Rob Mutch races at Cass Benton park.

Photo by BRYAN MITCHELL

Lakeland

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

The Wildcats ran up against one of the state's best squads in Lakeland Sept. 14 and were skunked 15-50.

The Eagles took the top seven spots in beating Novi High. Coach Bob Smith said he knew his young runners stood little chance against Lakeland.

"We knew going in what the score would be," he added.

The coach said his team focused on other goals during the race. Working on uphill and downhill running techniques were among them.

Smith also instructed his runners to keep pace with Lakeland for as long as possible. Scott Shepley and Mike Girard stayed with the Eagles for about the first mile of the race before falling back.

"If they can do it for a mile now," Smith said, "maybe it'll be two or three miles later (this season)."

Shepley was Novi's top finisher at ninth overall in 19:29. Girard was next at 19:59. Smith is proud of the sophomore.

"Mike has come miles," the coach said. "He started off a journeyman runner. He'd be good for anybody's program now."

Adrian Snow placed 14th in 20:26. Other finishers included: Ryan Henderson (20:59), Jukes Namm (21:00), Cameron Chipponeri (21:19) and Chris Duprey (21:34).

Novi is at the Walled Lake Western Invitational Saturday.

Western Invite

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

The freshman and sophomore Wildcat boys also ran well Saturday by taking third place at the Walled Lake Western Invitational.

Three young Novi runners took medals. Mike Girard (19:27) was 14th, Ryan Henderson (19:32) 16th and Scott Shepley 17th (19:33).

Two other Wildcats competed in the race. Chris Duprey was 23rd (20:20) and Mike Quinn was 31st (20:42).

In the junior-senior race Novi finished eighth.

Adrian Snow led the older group with a time of 19:24 (38th). Rob Mutch came in at 20:12 (46th), Anthony Kozadinos ran a 21:38 race (60th), Doug Householder 23:21 and John Scherger 27:00.

Sean McGoorty and Jeremy Maynard were unable to race at the invitational.

"We felt their absence," coach Bob Smith said.

Novi fell to KVC rival Hartland 15-45 on Sept. 21.

An injured hamstring slowed McGoorty. Smith said the meet would have been a bit closer with the junior at full speed.

Even though the 'Cats lost, the coach said his team is improving.

"Times are getting better," said Smith. "We had seven guys under 20 minutes. Not bad."

Times included: Shepley finished in seventh place (18:33), Snow eighth (18:48), McGoorty ninth (19:02), Girard 10th (19:10), Henderson 11th (19:15), Duprey 14th (19:47) and Mutch 15th (19:41).

Runners finish last at local invitational

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

A wise person once said the road to success is never easy.

The Wildcat boys cross country team encountered a little bump in that road Saturday at the Redford Union Invitational. An extremely young Novi High squad finished last (180 points) at the meet several furlongs behind winner North Farmington (47 points).

"The score was a little deceptive," said coach Bob Smith. "The time differential wasn't that great. It's nothing a year won't fix."

"We won't be last next year."

Five of Novi's seven runners were either freshmen or sophomores. Smith said his team ran about as good as it could've expected.

The Wildcats top three runners all had personal bests. Scott Shepley ran an 18:34, which, incidentally, moved him into fifth place on Novi's all-time freshman list at Cass Benton Park. Mike Girard keeps improving and ran just behind Shepley in 18:48. Ryan Henderson finished in 18:58, Sean McGoorty a 19:14, Jeremy Maynard 19:28, Rob Mutch 19:32, Chris Duprey 19:42 and Cameron Chipponeri a 19:43.
NOVI 21, HOWELL 37

The Sept. 28 meeting with the Highlanders was crucial for the Wildcats, Smith said.

"The score was a little deceptive. The time differential wasn't that great. It's nothing a year won't fix."

Bob Smith
Coach

"We've been gunning for them," he added, "and we did exactly that."

Novi had to get a good packing time to beat Howell, Smith said.

"We knew they had one good runner," he commented, "but that there would be a hole between one and two. We had to exploit that."

The Wildcats did and took the second, third, fourth and fifth spots.

"It all fell into place," said Smith. "The kids were really happy."

Adrian Snow was second overall in 19:12. Shepley finished third in 19:15, Henderson fourth in 19:18 and Girard fifth in 19:23.

Novi runners must finish together to be successful.

"That will be the secret," said Smith.

McGoorty was seventh in 19:44. Jukes Namm was ninth in 19:50 and Jeremy Maynard was 11th in 19:56.

Bulldogs bite harriers 15-50

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

The Wildcat boys' cross country team closed a tough week Saturday by finishing 30th at the Oakland County championship in West Bloomfield.

Novi was unable to place any runners in the top 100 at Marshbank Park. Coach Bob Smith described the meet as a learning experience but made no excuses for his team's performance.

"We took it on the chin," he said.

Scott Shepley was the first Novi runner to cross the finish line. He was 129th in 19:24.

Mike Girard was next in at 20:03 while Ryan Henderson ran a 20:07 race. Closing out the day were Chris Duprey in 20:13, Sean McGoorty 20:18 and Rob Mutch at 20:42.

Novi got some good performances in the junior varsity race. Mike Quinn was the top Wildcat finisher in 20:41. Dave Walle finished in 21:05 and Joe Blackmore in 21:18.

BRIGHTON 15, NOVI 50

The Wildcats were shut out Oct. 5 against one of the state's premier cross country squads. Smith said he knew his team was in for a long day against the Bulldogs.

"Brighton is just really good," he said. "There's no ifs, ands or buts about it. They were far superior."

Smith said he was proud of the Wildcats' effort nonetheless. Injuries depleted an already young lineup.

"We are like the walking wounded," the coach said. "I think it's to our credit that we ran injured. We didn't make a joke of (the meet). We're still a proud program."

Smith described Brighton as an awesome team.

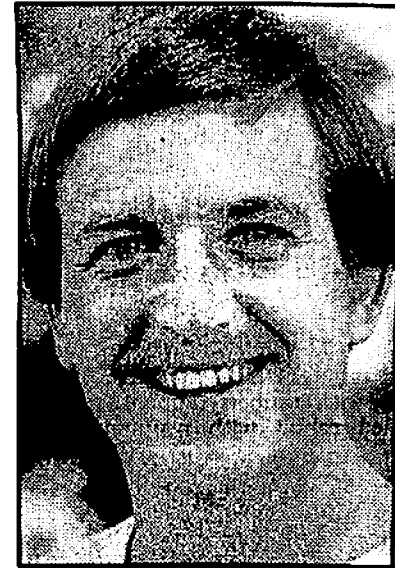
"Many teams have a few good runners," he said. "They have a dozen. They're just incredible."

McGoorty was Novi's top finisher in 18:56 (22nd) with Jukes Namm right behind for a personal record of 18:59. Smith said many of his runners have yet to peak this season.

"They haven't realized their poten-

"We are like the walking wounded. I think it's to our credit that we ran injured. We didn't make a joke of (the meet). We're still a proud program."

Bob Smith
Track Coach



tial yet," he said. "When we put it all together we're a pretty good team."

Shepley was 26th in 19:15 while Henderson was 27th in 19:30. Gir-

ard's 19:31 was 28th and Durpey was 31st in 19:57. Anthony Kozadinos closed the race and finished 32nd.

Runners ninth at invite

By SCOTT DANIEL
Sports Editor

Wearied legs couldn't keep four Wildcat cross country runners from setting personal bests at Saturday's Gabriel Richard Invitational.

Cameron Chipponeri, John Streit, Mike Quinn and Dave Walle all knocked seconds off previous best times. And with a week of extremely difficult practices that's saying a lot.

According to coach Bob Smith, the Wildcats have been going through rigorous workouts in preparation for league and regional competitions. Runs of up to a dozen miles, hill work and sprinting have all been incorporated into recent practices.

"Our conditioning level is about 95 percent of the way there," said Smith. "We can't run any harder, we can't do anything more."

Despite Novi High's individual improvements, the Cats finished ninth

"Our conditioning level is about 95 percent of the way there. We can't run any harder, we can't do anything more."

Bob Smith
Coach

out of 10 teams at Gabriel Richard. Ann Arbor Pioneer won the invitational with 39 points while Pinckney was second and Notre Dame was third.

A number of runners missed the meet with a college preparation test. They included: Shawn McGoorty, Adrian Snow, Jeremy Maynard, Ryan Henderson, Rob Mutch and Anthony Kozadinos.

Scott Shepley was Novi's first finisher Saturday. The freshman was 42nd overall in 18:47.

Mike Girard ran a solid 18:56 to finish 46th. Chipponeri's 19:35 was good for 55th. Streit took 56th in and Quinn was 59th in 19:41. Walle placed 60th with a time of 19:42 and Chris Duprey finished in 20:57.

Smith said the meet was good experience for many of his younger runners.

"It will pay off in the long run for us," he added. "The experience of running in a varsity race you can't duplicate in practice or a J.V. meet."

Runners third at Saline

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Novi High's top seven boys cross country runners set personal records Oct. 19 but league rival Milford took a 15-50 victory at Kensington Metropark.

Improvements ranged from 20 seconds to a minute for the Wildcats. Coach Bob Smith said he was very happy with the performance but added that the Redskins were just too tough.

"We ran well," he commented. "But no matter how well we ran I knew Milford was just too tough."

The loss closed the Wildcats Kensington Valley Conference dual meet season. Novi finished with a 2-4 record.

"Considering our graduation losses and with the people that didn't comeback," said Smith, "we went

past my expectations."

As well as the Wildcats have performed this fall, the coach said beating Milford wasn't in the cards. The Redskins finished as Oakland County's fifth best team this season and may very well have one of the state's better teams. Smith said Milford will continue to be strong for years to come.

"They don't have a lot of kids," he said. "But their top runners are young."

Speaking of sparkling futures, Novi's Adrian Snow might just have one of his own. The junior sliced a minute from his previous best time and finished in 17:48 for eighth place.

"He's turning into quite a runner," said Smith.

Freshman Jukes Namm was 10th with a time of 18:09, a 50-second improvement. Ryan Henderson took 12th in 18:20, Mike Girard 13th in

18:25, Chris Duprey 14th in 18:49, Anthony Kozadinos 16th in 19:08 and Jeremy Maynard ran a 19:12 race.

SALINE INVITATIONAL

The Wildcats took third place in the junior varsity race Saturday.

Smith said the meet gives his younger runners experience while giving him the opportunity to look at some of the area's other top teams.

"It's a benchmark for the future," he added.

Duprey was Novi's top finisher. He was 11th overall in 19:35. John Streit took 14th in 19:46 while Dave Walle was 20th in 20:00. All three received medals for their effort.

Rob Mutch just missed a medal with a time of 20:05 (22nd). Other Novi runners included: Cameron Chipponeri 20:20, Joe Blackmore 20:29 and Ed Quinn 20:39.

THURSDAY
November 4,
1993

Wildcats compete at regionals

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

The education of Novi High's boys' cross country team continued Saturday. Title it, "Regionals 101."

Only the future will decide if the Wildcats passed the exam. Ann Arbor Huron, Ann Arbor Pioneer and Detroit Catholic Central were at the head of the class Saturday and will move on to this weekend's state finals in Grand Rapids. Novi finished a distant 16th.

"We were hoping for a little better," said coach Bob Smith. "But we ran well and our times came down. It was an exercise in experience."

Adrian Snow was Novi's top fi-

nisher at West Bloomfield's Marshbank Park. The junior ran an 18:35 race for 60th place overall.

Mike Girard improved by almost a minute at Marshbank to take 74th in 18:56. Chris Duprey was a fraction behind in 18:59 for 75th place while Ryan Henderson was 82nd in 19:03. Scott Shepley placed 89th in 19:20.

"He led (Novi's runners) for a while then tightened up and dropped back," said Smith. "He ran admirably."

John Striet was 94th in 19:27 and Cameron Chipponeri was 105th in 20:00.

KVC FINALS

The Wildcats took sixth at the league meet on Oct. 25. Smith said

Novi held its fifth place overall KVC standing despite the league meet.

"We didn't run the best of meets," the coach commented.

Smith blamed himself for Novi's finish. He said a little lineup tinkering didn't pay off.

"It blew up on me," Smith added.

Lakeland won the league meet. The Eagles and Brighton ended up co-champions of the league.

Shepley was Novi's top runner. The freshman was 30th overall in 19:18.

Jukes Namm, also a freshman, was 32nd in 19:26, Henderson 34th in 19:38, Girard 35th in 19:42 and Snow 39th in 20:28. Jeremy Maynard ran a 20:40 race and Shawn McGoorty 20:59 for 44th.

Boys ALL AREA CROSS COUNTRY

FIRST TEAM

PLAYER	GRADE	SCHOOL
SHELBY BAECKER	SR	LAKELAND
JEFF CLARKE	SR	LAKELAND
JEFF RUTKOWSKI	JR	MILFORD
LANCE BINONEMI	FR	LAKELAND
BRYAN BETTS	JR	MILFORD
DAVE COLLIE	SR	LAKELAND
BOB SHARP	JR	LAKELAND

SECOND TEAM

KORY KRAMER	JR	MILFORD
BRIAN LUTZ	SR	MILFORD
MAX DIETRICH	SOPH	MILFORD
FRED WILKINSON	JR	SOUTH LYON
NATE KIRMIS	JR	NORTHVILLE
ADRIAN SNOW	JR	NOVI
R.C. EDWARDS	JR	LAKELAND

RUNNER OF THE YEAR:

SHELBY BAECKER, LAKELAND

HONORABLE MENTION

NORTHVILLE: MARK RITTER, JEFF ZWIESLER, SCOTT LLOYD

NOVI: JUKES NAMM, SCOTT SHEPLEY, SHAWN MCGOORTY

MILFORD: CRAIG DEGENFELDER, JOE LEHNING

SOUTH LYON: CAMERON CIPPONERI, SCOTT WALLACE

LAKELAND: TODD MENNA

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THURSDAY
December 2,
1993

Runners to compete in national event

By **SCOTT DANIEL**
Sports Editor

Although the season ended weeks ago, many of Novi High cross country runners are continuing to compete.

The group, known as the Novi Sunset Striders, will represent Michigan in a national meet Dec. 10 in Rhode Island. According to team spokesperson Bob Smith, the Striders will do well at the United States Track and Field Association meet.

The Striders are led by Jenny Hampton. A Wildcat freshman, she earned all-state honors this fall.

Novi High's other two state qualifiers this year, Lorna Camp and Katie Zimmerman are also running. Rounding out the roster is Michelle Harrison, Lauren Rice and Angel Root — all Wildcats. White Lake middle schooler Lindsey Shelters is also running for the Striders.

The Novi squad qualified for the Rhode Island meet by winning a regional competition in Cleveland last month. The Striders beat out a Cleveland squad by seven points to take the victory.

Smith said the meet was held at golf course which featured gently rolling hills. While high school runners race over a 3.1 mile course, the USFPA competition was 2.4 miles.

Camp easily outdistanced the field. The Wildcat freshman finished in 15:39, some 10 seconds ahead of the field.

"She pulled away from the field at about three-quarters of a mile," said Smith. "She was flying."

Hampton was fourth overall in 16:06 while Zimmerman was ninth in 16:31. Shelters finished 10th in 16:32, Harrison was 16th in 16:45, Rice was 17:17 and Root was 31st in 17:31.

Novi won a state competition in Ann Arbor as well.