

The Final Score

Sports Wrap Up 2001

Novi High School

Fall: Boys' XC "only" second in the state

Basketball

Not many teams can expect to have a good year when they lose their top six players, so as expected the 2000 Novi girls' basketball team had its struggles during a 4-16 season.

It took some time for the girls to gel, and for much of the season the team had problems producing enough offense to win games. Breakdowns in team defense cost the Wildcats as well, and couple all that with the fact they were playing in a very tough KVC conference, you have the makings of a down year.

Throughout the hardships, the team never quit, and always battled no matter the score. Perhaps that was a reflection on senior Karen Edwards. Although she didn't put up gaudy numbers — five points and three rebounds per game — she possessed the intangibles of a true leader both on and off the court, and for that she won the team's most improved player award. She was truly the heart and soul of the team. Also making big contributions to the team were Megan Coligan, Kate Rose, and Jaime Sabol.

Cross Country

There isn't enough room in this tab to cover the many achievements of Novi's boys' cross country team in 2000. Although it failed to win its third-straight state championship by coming in second to Rockford, the Wildcats swept through all opponents at the league and regional level.

Senior Chris Toloff was the best of the best from start to finish in 2000. Toloff set a course record against Lakeland, set another one when he won the Detroit Invitational, won again at the Shamrock Invitational. Toloff shattered yet another course record when he won the Oakland County Meet with a time of 15:38.

Most of the time the only thing keeping Tim Moore from winning races was Toloff. The junior was nearly as impressive as his teammate, finishing third at the states, and taking a host of first and seconds throughout the season. Other runners like Mark Avenius, Tim Kava and Todd Foren gave Novi the deadly combination of being one of the best, and deepest teams in the state of Michigan.

Losing Toloff to Michigan State University will hurt, but with Moore and friends waiting in the wings for their chance at glory, Novi should again find

themselves running for glory in the fall.

Football

A controversial call late in the fourth quarter against Northville helped to end the 'Cats football season a bit earlier than they would have wanted. But the tough loss doesn't take anything away from a phenomenal 8-3 2000 season.

First year coach Tab Kellepourey found replacing a legend to be pretty easy in the early going, as his powerful offense busted out for 82 points in two opening season wins. The Wildcats bounced back after being demolished by Brighton to win their next five games. A loss to Northville ended that streak, but in the playoffs a win over Portage Northern set up that controversial finish.

There certainly wasn't a lack of talent on the Novi team, as the Wildcats earned 8 eight spots on the All-KVC team. Highlighting the selections were the amazing backfield of quarterback Matt Gorman, and backs Blake Myers, and Jake Ray. Other KVC selections were Tim Stefanson, Courtney Byron, Tyson Frantz, Scott Kortlandt, Aaron Marion, and Chase Chandler.

With a huge bulk of their talent coming back next season, the Wildcats should be well equipped to challenge

Brighton for the KVC title again in the fall.

Golf

A lot changed from the time the Novi boys' golf team finished fourth at the Pre-KVC to when it won the Post-KVC. Perhaps the change that had the most impact was the insertion of freshman Eric Aytes into the starting rotation. Aytes didn't compete in the Pre-KVC, mainly because his talents were still somewhat hidden, but eventually coach Brad Huss realized his potential and the team took off from there, going on a lengthy winning streak, that eventually yielded a share of the KVC championship with Brighton.

Despite their terrific play in the KVC, the Wildcats faltered a bit in the regional, finishing only in eighth place. Aytes on the other hand, had himself a fine day, as he became the first Novi freshman to ever qualify for the boys state tournament when he shot a 76 at the regional.

Other top performers on this championship quad were juniors Matt Peurach, and Pete Kobyalarek. Peurach sported a 38.0 average in duals, and a 77.2 2 in 18-hole tournaments to become a first team All-KVC selection.

Novi cross country eager for conference challenges

Boys team know taste of victory, want more

By **SAM EGGLESTON**
Sports Reporter

The Novi Wildcats boys cross country team will be looking to repeat their performance from last season — even with the loss of three All-American runners.

The Wildcats, who will be led by senior Tim Moore, are coached by Bob Smith in his 21st season at the helm of this cross country program.

"This team has had the taste of success," Smith said. "In 98 and 99 we won the state championship. It was the first state title in the history of Novi and we are proud to carry that moniker and hope to keep it going."

And keep it going they might. The Novi program will be carried by the swift pace of Moore, Todd Foren, junior Tim Kava, Mitch Erickson and sophomore Eric Joseph.

"Those five guys are running really well," Smith said. "Every team in this sport will be going for the state title and though we lost a few good runners we have a good, solid program again."

Smith said that some of the tougher teams that Novi will be facing in the Kensington Valley Conference are Milford, who was

fifth in the state last season, and 2000's seventh place team in Lakeland. Smith also noted that South Lyon's running program is up and coming and will be one of the teams to watch out for.

"I am pretty confident and I know we are not going to concede anything to anybody," Smith said. "I don't like to make predictions about the season because when you do the best you can hope to do is obtain them and if you set them to high you might not be able to even do that."

Smith said one of the goals the team has set for itself is to be prepared.

"Our first goal is to be prepared fully," he said. "If we are totally prepared and if that is our goal then we will be ready for anybody. As a team we have set the goals to be undefeated in the season and to be county champs again, that is a real honor down here. Oakland county is a real hotbed for great cross country teams."

But even if the Wildcats can't reach all of the goals they have set for themselves not all will be lost.

"Even if we trip and fall in those three goals it doesn't really matter," Smith said. "What really

matters is what happens in the first week of November. If you don't do anything else but do good then, everything will probably work out."

Smith said that almost every team in the KVC is a competitor when it comes to cross country.

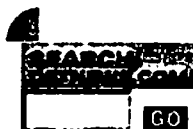
"When it comes to cross country the KVC is far superior to other leagues," he said. "Over the last three years it was pretty much a given that we were going to the states. It's not a given this year. As good as we are it is not a given."

According to Smith, from what he has seen so far this season's team is on pace with the best teams he has coached.

"From what I saw this weekend and in practice today, they are running s good as any team I have coached during this time of the year," Smith said. "Including the last three teams."

The one thing that will always keep Smith's team working hard is the motto they practice by each and every day.

"The harder we work, the luckier we get," Smith said. "These kids pride themselves in working hard and it shows when they compete."



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Wednesday, September 12, 2001

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Cross Country: Preview Novi's Moore now leads

By Bev Eckman / *The Detroit News*

NORTHVILLE --

Novi senior Tim Moore is following in the strides of strong runners before him -- Mark Avenius, his brother Kevin Avenius and Chris Toloff, all of whom led the Novi team at states over the last few years.

They've graduated, the baton has in effect been passed, and it's up to Moore to lead the way this season in the pack of 23 that turned out.

Novi won states in 1998 and '99. Rockford won last year, behind Dathan Ritzenhein, who set every distance record in the state and will run for Colorado.

The Wildcats are practicing at Tim Pope Park on this morning, beating the heat of the day. Their home course is Cass Benton Park.

"He's practicing better than ever, he's fine-tuned every aspect of his game," Coach Bob Smith said of Moore. "He's still an average kid in his demeanor, but as far as cross country is concerned, he's training like a collegian."

Last season, Smith noted, Novi, Rockford and Catholic Central were the teams to beat. "This year I'm amazed how wide-open it's going to be. Rockford graduated everybody, but they always have a lot of boys," Moore said.

"There's Saline, Grand Ledge, Milford. And Novi and C.C.



Morris Richardson II / *The Detroit News*

Novi's runners took the state title in 1998 and 1999, and they finished second last year.

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There are 10 teams that could win it."

Last season, the top 10 in Division 1 finished like this at the state final at MIS: 1. Rockford, 56 points; 2. Novi, 89; 3. Detroit Catholic Central, 100; 4. Saline, 221; 5. Highland Milford, 229; 6. Traverse City Central, 242; 7. White Lake Lakeland, 243; 8. Portage Northern, 267; 9. Grand Blanc, 324; and 10. Lake Orion, 336.

That once again shows how tough the Kensington Valley Conference is in cross country -- Novi, Highland Milford and White Lake Lakeland are members, three of the top seven finishers.

Novi returns four who ran at states: Moore finished third in 15 minutes, 6.10 seconds, behind Ritzenhein's record 14:10.40 and teammate Toloff's 15:05.30. Toloff will run for Michigan State.

Now-junior Tim Kava was 48th in 16:14, now-senior Todd Foren 86th in 16:29 and now-senior Mitch Erickson was 109th in 16:36.

"The placing is deceptive, because runners were coming in like three a second," Smith said.

Moore said his goal is "to win states, win the championship as a senior. That's been my goal since freshman year."

Sure, Ritzenhein and Toloff have graduated, but "There are always going to be runners you don't know about," Moore said. "Winning is tougher now, because because people are training harder, and that leads to faster times. You can tell that from looking at the state results, the top 50 times are faster than they used to be.

"What our team has is commitment to win the state title."

Kava, who ran his personal best 16:14 at states, said his goal is "to show Novi is not going to slump, and make it three titles in four years."

*** Top 10 teams, listed alphabetically**

Selected by Bev Eckman.

Detroit Catholic Central: Finished third overall last year in Division 1. Returns seniors John Krawiec, No. 15 at the state meet in 15:46.60, and Ryan Lowry (28th). Lost five. Krawiec has a stress fracture in his left leg. "Without him, it will be a very long season," Coach Tony Magni said. "He's on a bike now. If he comes back, we could be top 10." Senior Kyle Jekot is in second year. Junior Chris Kuneman "will have to step up."

Grosse Pointe South: Finished 15th in state, second in Macomb Area Conference Red. Returned seniors Pat Dantzer, 27th in 16:44; junior Andy Visger, 17:13; and seniors Robert Hanrahan, 17:13; and, up into top seven, seniors Matt Jasin and Alex Mackenzie. "We're looking for

the second half of the season to be successful," Coach Tom Wise said. Dantzer (school records at 16:08 in cross country; 9:44, 3,200 meters; and 4:26, 1,600 meters) should be a front-runner.

Highland Milford: Finished fifth at states. Coach Brian Salyers returned six of his top seven. "It's a very balanced, very deep group. We look to excel through strength in numbers," he said. Senior Nick Kopczyk, 14th overall, is the No. 2 returning runner behind Tim Moore, Sophomore Dan DeRusha finished 80th "but has progressed significantly." Junior Pat Miller was 39th. Senior Casey Barnes was sick finals day and finished No. 160.

Lake Orion: Finished 10th at states, first in Oakland Activities Association Division 1. Coach Stan Ford returned three senior varsity letter winners: Michael Colt, Justin Dew and Chris Johnson. "Those three guys coming back is a plus for us," Ford said. He'll fill in with sophomores Shawn Wilsher, Keith Magic and Ryan Dahl, and freshmen Billy Peterson and Kevin Comstock. "If they can jell, we hope to put it together by crunch time," Ford said.

Livonia Stevenson: Finished 18th in Division 1. Coach John Gores returns five of his top seven. "They're young, but we plan to go to the state meet again, win the Lakes Division title and the Western Lakes Conference," he said. Juniors Matt Gillespie and Sean O'Halloran, seniors Chris Furlong, Dan Gruszka and Pat Case return. Junior Doug Novack, a track miler, and sophomore Steve Armstrong left football for cross country.

Novi: Won two of last three state Division 1 team titles, finished second to Rockford last season. Coach Bob Smith has four back from that team, led by senior Tim Moore, who was third overall in 15:06. Other top returnees are junior Tim Kava, No. 48, 16:14; senior Todd Foren. No. 86 in 16:29; and senior Mitch Erickson, 109th in 16:36.

St. Clair: Finished second in the state in Division 2. "We're probably two months ahead of last year in our training," Coach Jon Davidson said. "We're injury-free and hungry. Our goal is to win the state meet." He returns six of his top seven, including: junior Larz McElory, 17th in 16:07; and seniors Jesse Arnold, 33rd, 16:24; Matt Neiman, 63rd, 16:46; and Jason Neiman, 42nd, 16:35.

Sterling Heights: Won Macomb Area Conference Red, won Macomb County meet. Coach Harold Arft returns his No. 1, junior Jeff Draggich, 21st in 15:51; junior Jason Arini, who had a separated clavicle before states, personal-best 17:11; and junior Chris Lieblang, personal-best 17:15. "A lot depends on how new kids come in and fill a spot. We should be tough in the county," Arft said.

U-D Jesuit: Finished 21st in Division 1. Coach Joe

Beldyga returned six of his top seven. "We have our best team in a long time on paper, but we have to stay healthy and peak at the right time," Beldyga said. Three of the team were all-regional runners -- seniors Greg Haapala, Jim Hageman and Mike Schuchardt -- and "are improved."

White Lake Lakeland: Finished No. 7 at states in Division 1. Coach Randy Wilkens returns four of his top seven. "We'll be better than people think we're going to be," Wilkens said. Returning are senior Brian Theut, 30th in 16:00; juniors Chris Welch, 62nd, 16:30, and Adam Craig, 104th in 16:49; and senior Ryan Rys, sophomore Eric Labar juniors Scott Kern, Eric Fadie. Eric Black. **Also to watch:** Brighton.

*** Top 10 individuals, listed alphabetically**

Andrew Bauer, Bloomfield Hills Lahser, sr.: Finished fifth in Division 2 in 15:37. Undefeated during the season. "Andrew's dedicated to the sport, he works hard and when it comes to the races, he's prepared, he's trained hard," Coach Nick Stration said.

Jeff Draggich, Sterling Heights, jr.: Finished 21st in 15:51 at states, won the Macomb County meet in 16:28. "He's able to maintain his pace, he doesn't jump right out but he in position at the mile and takes command in the second half of the race," Coach Harold Arft said.

Jake Hammerle, Woodhaven, sr.: Finished 23rd in 15:54.50. "He's very talented, hard-working and very coachable," Coach Mike Dennisuk said. "You map out a plan with him, for training or a race, he tries to implement it, put it into action. He's good to have around."

Nicholas Kopczyk, Milford, sr.: Finished 14th in 15:46, second-highest underclassman. "Nick is a fearless competitor who has the ability to extract every ounce of energy in every race," Coach Brian Salyer said. "He's the captain, and he's looking to compete in his fourth state final and lead his team to another top-10 finish."

Matt French, Howell, sr.: 18th in Division 1 in 15:47.60, voted Livingston County runner of the year. "He works real hard and has a fair amount of talent, obviously," Coach Paul Webster said. "Basically, he just can't stand losing, he works that much harder. He's a front-runner, we're working on tactical racing."

John Krawiec, Detroit Catholic Central, sr.: Finished No. 15 at the state meet in 15:46.60. He is coming back from a stress injury to his left calf. "Once the gun goes off, he doesn't let pain bother him," Coach Tony Magni said. "He's on a bike and swimming now. If he doesn't come back, we'll be really hurting. We're counting on him to be one of our leaders again."

Ryan Lowry, Detroit Catholic Central, sr.: Finished

30th in 15:59.60. He ran all summer with John Krawiec before Krawiec's injury. "He enjoys running against the top runners and staying with them as long as possible," Magni said. "He's focusing on his own running ability right now, pulling other runners with him and making them better."

Tim Moore, Novi, sr.: Finished third overall at states last season in 15:06.10, behind record-setter Dathan Ritzenhein, Rockford, and teammate Chris Toloff. "He's training like a collegian," Coach Bob Smith said. "He's practicing better than ever, he's fine-tuned every aspect of his game."

Ben Salvette, Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood, sr.: Finished ninth in Division 2 in 15:54.90. He won the Metro Conference championship and set course record at Cranbrook, 16:51. "Ben is dedicated both in terms of physical commitment and study of running," Coach Greg Miller said. "He'll run with the leaders and work to take the lead."

Brian Theut, White Lake Lakeland, sr.: Finished 30th in 16:00, was all-league first team in the KVC, sixth overall. Three who beat him were All-Americans. "He's been in the program four years, he has a lot of speed and experience," Coach Randy Wilkens said. "He's a front-runner, he ran well in track season in the 1,600 relay, the open 800 and the open 1,600."

Also to watch: Kevin Gienapp, Brighton.

You can reach Bev Eckman at (313) 222-2392 or at beckman@detnews.com.

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TOP 10 BOYS CROSS COUNTRY TEAMS

Redskins return talent plus a lot of experience

By MARVIN GOODWIN
Of The Oakland Press

Few high school leagues have matched the success of the Kensington Valley Conference in boys cross country. In the past six seasons the conference has produced five state champions with Novi and Lakeland combining for four of those crowns.

While Lakeland may need more help to join the state's elite teams, Novi, which took second at state last season, may still be a state contender. But another KVC rival, Milford, could top them all.

1 Milford — With six of its top seven runners returning from a team which took fifth at state last season, the Redskins are poised to rise higher among the state's elite teams.

"We are incredibly deep," Milford coach Brian Salyers said. Nick Kopczyk is expected to lead the charge with junior Pat Miller, seniors Tyler Van Acker and Casey Barnes and sophomores Dan DeRusha and Kyle Harris, each with solid track seasons, all contributing. Help should also come from a strong junior varsity squad. "The goal is this team is to bring everybody to the top (and) rise together," Salyers said.

2 Novi — The defending KVC and Oakland County champion Wildcats lost three-fourths of a national champion four-mile relay squad — all are in Division 1 programs in college — but perhaps the best of the group, Tim Moore, returns. Moore was third at the state meet last year and had the state's second fastest time in the 3,200-meter run (9:01) in track. He'll be supported by Mitch Erickson, Tim Kava and Todd Foren. The team's success, though, will depend on how close they can run to Moore.

"They're experienced," coach Robert Smith said, "and it's their turn and they know it. We're not conceding anything to anybody."

3 Troy — If the Colts stay healthy, they could be one of the area's top teams. "I had so many of my top seven injured (at sometime last season)," coach Kevin Spencer said. The Colts were 1-4 in the OAA 1 and should improve dramatically. Nick and Andy Gillett lead the returnees — Nick was 25th at state last year — with Mike Carroll, Nikhil Kawlra,

Paul Mattis and Matt Scapini also expected to help the Colts, who could challenge for the league title.

4 Lakeland — After nearly 20 straight seasons of qualifying for state, the Eagles missed the cut two seasons ago by the slimmest of margins. But they started another streak last year — they finished seventh at state — and hope to keep going this season. Senior Brian Theut should be the lead runner with Chris Welch and Adam Craig also expected to contribute.

5 Lake Orion — If the Dragons are to win their third straight regional and second straight OAA 1 crown, they'll have to compensate for the loss of four of their top seven runners to graduation. Returnees Michael Colt, Justin Dew and Chris Johnson each has big meet experience and support could come from a young group which includes sophomore Shawn Wilsher.

6 South Lyon — The Lions could improve and still finish fifth in the KVC meet, just as they did last year. "It's incredibly difficult (in the KVC)," coach Scott Smith said. "(But) we're a much better team from doing battle in the KVC week after week." Seniors Brian Lee, Nick Pearce and Andrew Lapham should be the leading runners with support coming from any number of candidates. Smith said there's more depth than in the past, which could pay dividends late in the season. "We're going to be competitive with anybody in the league," Smith said. "Where we're going to shake out, we won't know that until November."

7 Rochester Adams — The Highlanders won't have a front runner but their senior-laden team has experience. Andrew Baalarude returns along with co-captains Jon Hopkins and Chris Reimann. Dave Cullen, Keith Kelley, Jake Matrilie and Ian Patterson will contribute along with junior Jon Holtz and sophomore Mike Moreland, an aggressive runner. "The fact that they don't have a front runner might be good," coach Budd Ciccirelli said. "They could mature into a good team."

8 Brother Rice — The Warriors lost several quality runners to graduation but return Dan Murray, who was 36th at the Division 1 state



Oakland Press file photo/PAULA ARTMAN

Novi senior Tim Moore was third in the state at last year's Division 1 meet and will lead the Wildcats into the tough Kensington Valley competition

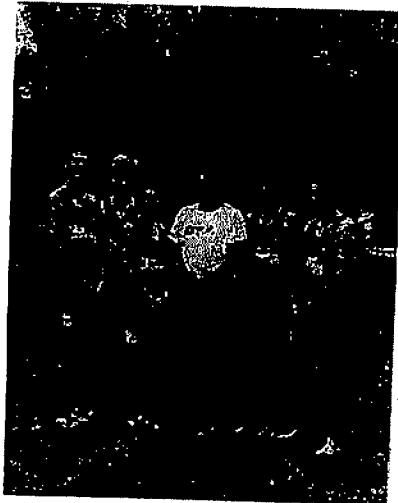
meet last season. "Beyond that we've got a lot of young kids," Warriors coach Bob Stark said. Still, senior Alex White has experience and Ryan Gregory, a sophomore, could also help Rice, which was Catholic League runner-up and regional champion before taking 19th at state. "We're not going to be very good early," warned Stark. But the Warriors could be ready the final weeks of the season.

9 Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood — The Cranes return six of their top seven runners which competed and placed 14th at the Division 2 state meet. Ben Salvette should be among the county's top runners — he finished ninth at state last season — and he'll have help from seniors John Davis and Sam Hyde. Juniors Steve Miller and Greg Goodman will contribute and sophomore CG McClure will beef up the Cranes.

10 Walled Lake Western — The Warriors went through a distance running drought during the late 1990s but could be on their way back. Senior Kevin Naughton, who was seventh at the Oakland County meet and 34th at the Division 1 state meet last season, will lead Western.

■ **Best of the rest:** Bloomfield Hills Lahser's Andrew Bauer, Mike Barton of Birmingham Seaholm and Steve Mance of Madison Heights Bishop Foley should be among Oakland County's top runners.

Novi runners win Adidas Nationals



Autographed photo of Novi's first National Champs. The group is seen here with Coach Robert Smith.

by Liz Stevens
Staff Writer

Rarely have Novi athletes had the chance at national recognition and in just one weekend, Novi received nine All-American awards.

This summer, Novi's own track athletes Mark Avenius, '01, Tim Moore, '02, Dan Stevens, '01, Chris Toloff, '01, and Eric Walle, '01 traveled to Raleigh, North Carolina for the Adidas Track Nationals. The boys ran in the four-by-mile, the two mile, and the Distance Medley Relay (DMR).

The first night of the competition, Tim Moore took fourth place in the two mile with a time of 9:03. The next morning, Walle, Avenius, Toloff, and Moore ran in the four-by-mile event. They faced local arch rivals and defending four-by-mile champs from Rockford, MI. The team beat Rockford and finished the race in 17:20, the tenth fastest time ever recorded by a high school team. The boys continued their success in the DMR. They finished in third place with a time of 10:05 and ended up with a total of nine All-American titles.

Novi's alumni continue their running careers at the college level. Toloff is running at Michigan State University, Stevens at Lansing Community College, Avenius at the University of Michigan, and Walle at Vanderbilt University. Tim Moore is a senior captain on Novi's track and cross country teams. As they move on, the All-American titles they earned will always be remembered.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

2001 Novi Cross Country team members head out on a run during practice at Cass Benton Park.

Moore leads harriers to victory

BY STEPHEN BELL
HomeTown Newspapers

The Novi Wildcats continued their cross country domination behind the spectacular running of Tim Moore.

The Wildcats pulled out a 26-31 victory over Kensington Valley Conference opponent Lakeland Thursday as the Eagles were first-hand witnesses to the ability the Wildcats possess — especially at their

home course at Cass Benton.

"That was a tough one," Eagles coach Randy Wilkins said. "The meet could've gone either way ... it just didn't go our way. We didn't get as much warm-up time as we would've liked."

Novi senior Tim Moore is one of the best runners in the country. He's going to medal, that's a given. But Lakeland was able to pack it in behind him with Brian Theut finishing

second, Adam Craig third, Ryan Reis fifth and Chris Welch seventh.

"Our first four were as good as anybody there," Wilkins said. "Now we're looking for reinforcements."

The Eagles were also first-hand witnesses to the crowded nature of the Cass Benton course.

"There were a number of teams using the course and it was kind of first-come, first

serve," Wilkins said. "We got there and they kind of rushed us. On their home course, when it went to crunch time, they were able to get us. But we could've beat them. And I know this — we're gonna get better."

Stephen Bell is the sports writer for the Milford Times and the South Lyon Herald. He can be reached at (248) 685-1507 or by e-mail at sbell@homecomm.net.

Fall 2001 Varsity Sports

Girl's Basketball - Head coach Dennis Cichonsky has led the team to a 2-2 record. They've beaten Walled Lake Central and Farmington Harrison, and they lost to Northville and Ann Arbor Huron. Megan Colligan and Brittany Barrett are the captains of a team that includes four underclassmen. This year's team should have a good shot at winning the KVC.

Boy's Cross-Country - Seniors Tim Moore and Mitch Erickson, and juniors Tim Kava and Alex Harsha-Strong are this year's captains. Coach Robert Smith's team is 3-0, winning against Lakeland, Northville, and two invitationals. In one invitational they took first in the 9/10 section, and second in the 11/12 section. The other invitational was unscored, but they did well. We expect that they will do very well the rest of their season.

Girl's Cross-Country - Norm Norgren's team also beat Lakeland at their first meet and has a 1-0 record. Seniors Bethany Kittle, Emily Cross and Lindsey Broadwell lead the team. The team also swept the Walled Lake Western Invitational, winning the 9th and 10th grade division with 22 points and winning the 11th and 12th grade division with 28 points. "I think our team has a lot of potential, and by the end of the season hopefully we can get our pack time down and do some good things," Kittle said. We predict that they will have a good chance of winning the KVC and go to states.

Equestrian - The team is led by senior captains Nicole Doss, Lesley Cartwright and Liz Dean. They scored 34 points in their first meet. All points are cumulative and will be counted toward their season total. There is no KVC spot for equestrian teams, they only have three meets and then states. We predict that they will make states.

Football - Tab Kellepourey's squad is led on the field by senior captains Drew Doll, Brian Doyle, Matt Gorman and Jacob Ray. The team has a 3-1 record, beating Farmington, Lakeland and South Lyon and losing to Brighton. 29 seniors, 15 juniors and 1 sophomore make up this year's varsity team.

Boy's Golf - This year's team consists of 17 members including senior captains Derek Cole, Matt Peurach, and Pete Kobylarek. Brad Huss has coached the team to a 5-1 record so far this year, beating Lakeland, Farmington Harrison, Farmington and South Lyon twice. The team lost to Northville and we predict Novi will win the KVC this year.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Novi's Tim Moore leads the pack at a recent dual meet against Milford at Cass Benton Park.

Novi boys, girls harriers victorious

By **SAM EGGLESTON**
Sports Reporter

The Novi Wildcats boys cross country team continued being successful as they walked — or rather ran — away with wins.

The Wildcats dominated all of their races in the past week except in the Shamrock Invitational that was open to many first-time varsity runners. Novi came in 14th of 17 schools in the Shamrock but topped Brighton 24-33 and beat South Lyon 22-39.

"Our Brighton meet was a very big meet for us," Coach Robert Smith said. "On paper, we were actually the underdog. It was our first real test and the guys really came through."

The Wildcats had Tim Moore finishing first against the Bulldogs in a time of 16 minutes and 18 seconds, just four seconds ahead of the nearest Brighton competitor.

"Our top five guys were assigned a man to race against and try to beat," Smith said. "In every case, they succeeded. Their focus is right on target. Getting through this meet, yet still able to concentrate on the big picture of what is still to come."

According to Smith, cross country can drain an athlete in more ways than one.

"Running cross country is as much mental as it is physical and our guys are on top of their game in both departments," he said. "They are training very smart right now, knowing when to step it up in meets, when to practice hard and when to take necessary rest and recovery periods."

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

The Novi girls cross country team recorded a win against South Lyon before falling to the Bulldogs of Brighton and notching a third-place finish at the Shamrock Invitational.

The Wildcats beat the Lions 15-40 as Nina Schmitt took first in 19:24, a new school record at Cass Benton while Bethany Kittle came in second with 20:23. Tae Kono was third with 20:50; Laine Williams was fourth with 21:00; Margo Wolowiec was fifth in 21:09; Pattie Ramos finished sixth in 21:38; and Jenny Thomson was 10th in 22:18.

Schmitt notched another first against Brighton in 19:13 with Kittle finishing close behind in 20:22.

Another first-place finish was awarded to Schmitt at the Shamrock Invitational with a time of 19:45.

Sam Eggleston is the sports reporter for the Novi News/Lake Area Times. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at seggleston@ht.homecomm.net.

Novi harriers continue to look strong

According to Norgren, there is still some room for improvement in the Novi ranks.

"The Novi girls must work on pack times," He said.

Jenny Thomson finished 10th in the contest with a time of 21:20 while Emily Cross rounded out the Novi runners and notched an 11th-place finish in 21:27.

The Wildcats will run against Milford Tuesday at Cass Benton (after the *Novi News* went to print).

The Milford girls will be a tough foe for the Novi Wildcats to defeat with stellar runner Lisa Canty leading the way for the Redskins, who are undefeated in the Kensington Valley Conference.

WILDCATS BOYS 19, EAGLES 40

The Novi Wildcats boys cross country team followed the speedy lead of Moore as he raced to a first-place finish against Hartland in 15:38 while teammate Tim Kava finished third in 16:56, Eric Joseph was fourth in 16:56. Todd Foren notched a fifth-place finish in 17:21, Mark Moore came in sixth with 17:22 and Mitch Erickson rounded out the top-10 Novi runners in eighth in 17:23.

"The guys ran real smart today," coach Robert Smith said. "There were several occasions where two guys were shoulder to shoulder near the finish. No pulled muscles trying to be a hero."

Spencer Ornes was 11th (17:45),

Amol Huprikar was 12th (18:02), Scott Bergeson finished 14th (18:04), Justin Namm collected a 16th-place finish (18:07), Matt Harsha-Strong was 18th (18:14), Mark DuFresne finished 19th (18:20) and Marc Kalina came in 20th (18:25).

"The five man average of 16:50 and a seven man average of 16:54 shows that we are getting much better," Smith said.

Finishing out the Wildcat harriers was Derek BuWalda in 21st (18:31), Mark Andrews in 22nd (18:34), Nick Preketes was 23rd (19:20), Eric Tingwall finished 24th (19:21), Christopherson was 26th (19:49), Mike Pitcher was 27th (19:52), Suraj Ramachandran took 28th (19:56),

Nathan Quay collected a 29th-place finish (19:57) and Neil Cox rounded out the Wildcats in 32nd (21:30).

The Wildcats will have had the chore of hosting Milford Tuesday (after the *Novi News* deadline.) The Redskins were ranked first in the state of Michigan behind the running of Nick Kopczk and Dan DeRusha.

"We need your support next Tuesday," Smith said. "Milford is ranked number one in the state of Michigan right now."

Sam Eggleston is the sports reporter for the Novi News and the Lake Area Times. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at seggleston@ht.homecomm.net.

Young runners lead Wolves to girls title

■ Milford wins boys title

By MARVIN GOODWIN
Of The Oakland Press

MILFORD — With a youthful squad, Clarkston's girls cross country team lacked the experience of other teams Saturday at the Oakland County Cross Country meet.

But youth served the Wolves well as a trio of freshmen led Clarkston to the girls team title at Kensington Metropark. Clarkston scored 63 points, dethroning defending champion Rochester Adams, which finished second with 102. Birmingham Marian was third with 144 and Milford fourth with 148.

Meanwhile Milford's boys, with depth perhaps unmatched by any other team in the state, placed five runners among the top 26 finishers to capture the meet crown. Novi was second with 132 and Walled Lake Western (153), Brother Rice (177) and Lakeland (201) took the next three places.

It was the fourth straight year Novi has either taken first or second and senior Tim Moore, who blazed the five-kilometer course in 15:37.9 to take

first, was on all those squads.

Moore, one of the top high school runners in the nation, set a torrid pace from the start. Only Andrew Bauer of Bloomfield Hills Lahser was able to stay close for about mile before Moore extended his lead. Bauer finished in 16:12, nearly 200 meters behind Moore and more than 120 meters ahead of third-place finisher Dan Murray of Brother Rice (16:34).

"I didn't have too much of a strategy, just (to) go out and run hard," said Moore. "My form held up pretty well, but I was tired (at the end)."

Milford's Dan DeRusha (16:41) and Nick Kopczyk (16:42) were fourth and fifth respectively with Pat Miller (11th in 16:59), Tyler Van Acker (21st in 17:18) and Mila Anderson (26th in 17:24) completing the team scoring. It was Milford's first county title since 1990.

"This means a lot to our kids," coach Brian Salyers said. "This is kind of the beginning of the championship season. We wanted to run well here today and we wanted to win. The kids were very under control and they really hung tough."

Clarkston lost a close dual meet to Adams earlier in the



The Oakland Press/VAUGHN GURGANIAN

Novi's Tim Moore added to an already great senior season with a first-place finish in the boys Oakland County meet, while Lahser's Andrew Bauer (right) placed second in the race at Kensington Metropark

week but the Wolves rebounded with freshmen Liz Mengyan (third), Anne Oltman (ninth) and Gillian Nordquist (11th) leading the way. Mo Kuhta was 19th and Carla Delvecchio (21st) rounded out the Wolves' scoring.

"We thought we had a chance to win it," said Clarkston coach Jamie LaBrosse, whose squad had top-five finishes in three major invitationals. "We've run well all year and we just haven't gotten over the hump. Today, it all came together."

Oakland County Cross Country Meet

Girls

Year	Team Champion	Individual Champion
2001	Clarkston	Shannon Stanley (Adams)
2000	Rochester Adams	Katie Boyles (Adams)
1999	Rochester Adams	Katie Boyles (Adams)
1998	Troy Athens	Katie Boyles (Adams)
1997	Milford	Katie Boyles (Adams)

Boys

Year	Team Champion	Individual Champion
2001	Milford	Tim Moore (Novi)
2000	Novi	Chris Toloff (Novi)
1999	Clarkston	Todd Mobley (Walled Lake Central)
1998	Novi	Ben Evans (Brother Rice)
1997	Lakeland	Nick Gow (Lakeland)

Moore breaks County CC record

By SAM EGGLESTON

Sports Reporter

The Novi Wildcats girls and boys cross country teams continued to improve their excellence and impressiveness as they ran against Milford and in the Oakland County Cross Country meet.

The Wildcats boys notched a second-place finish out of 41 teams in the Oakland meet behind the always stellar running of senior Tim Moore but fell to the number one ranked Milford Redskins 24-33.

The girls took a fifth-place finish in the Oakland meet and topped the

Redskins as well behind the top-notch running of Nina Schmitt.

"Tim set an Oakland County cross country record today," boys coach Bob Smith said. "He ran a 15 (minutes), 37 (seconds), beating the old mark set last year by former Wildcat Chris Toloff (15:38)."

Mitch Erickson stepped up for the Wildcats, running in second place in Novi's finishing order in 17:19 with Tim Kava finishing in 17:30. Eric Joseph continued to improve for the Novi harriers, finishing in 17:40 while Todd Foren completed the run in 17:42.

NOVI GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

The Novi girls ran to a fifth-place finish in the Oakland County meet as Schmitt collected a 10-place finish in 20:31 with Bethany Kittle close behind in 24th with 21:09.

Tae Kono collected 43rd place in 21:43 while Pattie Ramos was 49th in 21:56, Laine Williams was 66th in 22:21, Margo Wolowiec was 70th in 22:29 and Laura Brunner finished 95th in 22:53.

The Wildcats will have resumed action when they visit Pinckney Tuesday (after the *Novi News* went to print).

Wildcat cross country running personal bests

By SAM EGGLESTON
Sports Reporter

The Novi Wildcats cross country teams notched nice runs as the girls took first-place over Pinckney and the boys collected a first-place in the Gabriel Richard Invitational, as well as a win over the Pirates.

The Novi girls took first as Nina Schmitt continued her top-flight running, finishing in a time of 19 minutes, 32 seconds as the 'Cats ran away with a 19-42 Kensington Valley Conference victory.

The Novi girls were running without Laine Williams or Pattie Ramos, both being out with injuries but coach Norm Norgren said he "hopes to have both girls back by the end of the season."

The Wildcats rounded out their running as Bethany Kittle finished in

CROSS COUNTRY

second place in 20:23 with Margo Wolowiec taking fourth at the 20:43 mark. Tae Kono was fifth in 20:54 while Emily Cross finished seventh in 21:49, Jenny Thompson eighth in 21:58, Laura Brunner ninth in 22:09 and Angela Buchard was 10th in 22:13.

Norgren also said the Wildcats had good runs by Hayley Gigurich and Lauran Kava, who finished 14th (22:37) and 15th (22:41) receptively.

The Wildcats (5-1 in the KVC) will have resumed action when they visit Howell with Norgren still looking for improved pack times from his harriders.

Continued on 3

Moore, Nina Schmitt running very strong

Continued from 1

Novi boys

The Wildcat cross country team continued to show what they are made of as they trampled the Pinckney Pirates 21-40 in a Kensington Valley Conference run Oct. 9.

The 'Cats were once again led by tri-captain Tim Moore, who ran a 15:40 to lead the way for all runners. The Pirates only managed to squeeze in two runners to break Novi's dominating front-running pack.

"Out of the top-10 we came in first, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and 10th," Novi coach Robert Smith said. "I am pleased with that."

Smith noted three of his runners turned in personal best times with Amol Huprikar breaking into the 17-minute mark at 17:55 while Mike Pitcher turned in a time of 19:48 and Isaac Lee finished his run in 23:37.

Todd Foren ran a season personal record in 17:18 for the 'Cats.

"He is on his way back to top form and will be ready to step up to his position of battling for second man with Tim Kava, Mitch Ericson and Eric Joseph, all of who are running great right now," Smith said.

Overall, Smith said he believed his runners are ready for the rest of the season.

"The guys are dedicated to the season and I suspect that they will be ready when it counts," Smith said. "They are making the neces-

sary sacrifices during the 21 hours away from practice each day as they do during our time together."

The Cats continued their tradition of winning the Gabriel Richard Invitational for the third year in a row.

The 'Cats scored 89 points to defeat a field of 19 teams as Moore led all runners with a 15:10 — his fastest time of the year.

"It would have been in the 14s if the course wasn't so soggy from all of the rain we have been having," Smith said. "He looked very strong."

Another runner who looked good on the course was Kava.

"Tim Kava chopped a bunch of time from his season best too," Smith said. "He ran a 16:36 compared to 17:13 at the same meet last year."

Another runner who had a good outing was Foren, who took his season personal best of 17:18 to a 16:36.

Smith said the reason his squad took the win was because the Wildcats' fourth and fifth place runners could beat everyone else's fourth and fifth.

"In fact, Joseph (the Wildcats' fifth-place runner) beat everyone else's fourth," Smith said. "Another highlight of the day was Amol Huprikar. He is a freshman on our team. He won the JV race in a time of 17:34. That was quite a sight to see."

The Wildcats will head over to run in the Kensington Valley Conference championship meet Oct. 19 in Kensington.

Novi senior Tim Moore is no longer
overshadowed by other runners.
He is undefeated and the Division 1 favorite

CHAMPION IN WAITING

By MICK McCABE
FREE PRESS SPORTS WRITER

Tim Moore has been patient, oh, so patient.

When he first joined the cross-country team at Novi he had to contend with teammates Kevin Avenius, now a junior at Notre Dame, and Dan Christopherson, who went on to run for two seasons at Michigan State.

In the class just ahead of him were Eric Walle, now a freshman at Vanderbilt, Mark Avenius, a freshman at Michigan, and Chris Toloff, a freshman at Michigan State.

And then there was that guy at Rockford, Dathan Ritzenhein, the greatest distance runner in state history, who is now a freshman at Colorado.

So for three years Moore has quietly bided his time. He has been an exceptional runner, helping Novi to state championships in his freshman and sophomore years and a second-place finish last year.

As a freshman, Moore finished 27th at the state meet. As a sophomore and junior, he finished third. Still, people didn't put Moore in the elite class with some of his teammates and Ritzenhein.

"That didn't really bother me," Moore said. "I knew my senior year would be my year to show what I can do."

This fall, Moore is undefeated, including a 15:37 clocking at the Oakland County Invitational this month. He finally may be the one leading the pack at the state finals Nov. 8 at Michigan International Speedway.

Moore has come a long way since the fifth grade, when he began running four to five miles a day.

"My dad thought it would help me with my soccer," Moore said. "He said I wouldn't get tired and you can play soccer better when you're not tired."

Soccer?

Novi cross-country coach Bob Smith first noticed Moore when the youngster was in the seventh grade. After Moore won his age-group race at the Howell Melon Run in the eighth grade, Smith approached him about running cross-country for the Wildcats.

"He told me he was going to play soccer in high school," Smith said. "My heart stopped for a minute."

Yours would, too, if you had just learned a potential all-stater wasn't even going to give your sport a chance.

"He was a blue-chip kid right off the bat," Smith said. "The sell was the virtues of our sport. He knew the older kids and the success we've had and how much fun our sport is."

Fun? Cross-country? Yeah, right.

A midweek Novi practice last week was a good example of the *fun* the cross-country athletes have if they are serious about their sport.

After a warm-up, the runners did three sets of four 400-meter runs with a one-minute rest between each 400. Between the sets, the runners had a five-minute rest. During that rest, the runners jogged to the football bleachers and ran up and down the steps of each aisle, and then jogged back just in time for the next set of four 400s, which, incidentally, had to be run faster than the set before.

Sounds like big *fun*, doesn't it?

"I was thinking about this workout in school today," Moore said after finishing practice with an extended cool-down run. "But I forgot about the bleachers. I almost puked the second time on the bleachers."

But Moore easily won each of the 400s and led the way up and down the bleachers. He said he began to work harder after he finished third to Ritzenhein and Toloff at last year's state

MOORE | Novi runner at head of pack

From Page 9D

meet. He finished second again to Ritzenhein in the Foot Locker regional at Kenosha, Wis., qualifying for the nationals in Orlando, where he finished eighth.

The track season also fell into place. Moore placed third in the 1,600 meters and second in the 3,200 at the state meet. He accompanied Novi to the national championships in Raleigh, N.C., where he finished fourth in the two-mile, third in the distance medley and ran the anchor leg of the 4-by-mile relay that set a meet record.

Moore thus became inspired to work even harder last summer, when weeks of 80 to 90 miles became routine.

"I increased my mileage a lot from what I did in previous years," Moore said. "There was a little more focused running, not so much lazy running. Once a week I'd do some pace work on the track or some tempo runs."

The time spent running on the track instead of trails turned Moore into an elite runner.

"He always had tremendous endurance," Smith said. "The last component was leg speed. In his sophomore year his 800 time went from 2:07 to 1:57, and he did that in one season. His ability to run on oxygen debt is special."

Many things about Moore are special. He is a perfect 4.0 student who is considering Stanford, No-



KATHLEEN WAYT/Special to the Free Press

Novi's Tim Moore takes a minute to stretch and to chat with teammate Scott Bergeson, who is icing a sore ankle. They've beaten hills together, but the hills can beat back.

tre Dame, Wake Forest, Michigan and Duke. This quarter he is taking advanced placement courses in biology, calculus and U.S. history and a psychology class.

And he has learned a lot about training in the past year. As Moore finished behind Ritzenhein in cross-country and in the 3,200 meters, Moore grew to admire his adversary and learned from him.

"He's a great kid and it was cool to see him accomplish so much," Moore said. "I didn't learn racing tactics from him, but I

knew to achieve complete success I had to work very hard. It had to be complete dedication to the sport."

"I always ran in the off-season, but I wasn't fully dedicated in all aspects like diet and rest."

Moore began putting it all together when he trained for the Kenosha race. He knew he had to finish in the top eight to make the national finals, and he began running workouts at a faster speed. By the time he reached Kenosha he knew he was ready to run the

race of his life.

"I was really relaxed the whole time during the training," Moore said. "I really wanted to qualify. I got in the race and the first two miles I was waiting for my time to pull away from the pack. With 600 yards left I took off."

Moore ran a terrific 15:08 and was second behind Ritzenhein. Moore's eighth place at Orlando — Ritzenhein was first again — earned him All-America honors.

"I was just relieved to be there," Moore said. "I continued to prepare hard, but I knew whatever I did would be good. I knew it would fall into place."

Almost a year later, Moore remains motivated. He enjoys the strenuous work in the classroom and out.

"I'm really happy with the phase of training I'm entering," Moore said. "Before, we did a lot of miles and strength work. Now we still have the miles, but we're doing track work, too. It's quite a confidence builder I can take with me into the race."

And when Moore finally arrives Nov. 3 at MIS, he will be there without the other great Novi runners and without Ritzenhein.

"I trained all summer," Moore said. "I knew there would be a time and it would be just me training and hopefully winning a lot of my races."

Make that *all* of his races.



Photos by KATHLEEN WAYT/Special to the Free Press

Novi senior Tim Moore, who is undefeated this season, trains on the wooded trails at Maybury State Park. But he says the key to his improvement lies in the track workouts the Wildcats do. "He always had tremendous endurance," coach Bob Smith says. "The last component was leg speed." At left, Moore relaxes with his teammates after a run.

Wildcats cross country runs KVC

Thursday, October 25, 2001—NOVI NEWS/LAKE AREA TIMES—

Novi boys take third

By Jason Schmitt
SPECIAL WRITER

As runners began to pour across the finish line at Monday's Kensington Valley Conference league meet, something just wasn't right.

There were far more maroon jerseys crossing the line than green ones. That's not how things have went at the league meet the past handful of years.

But that's the truth of it. Milford had two of the top four finishers and had another three-some finish all conference as the Redskins ended Novi's three-year run as KVC champions. Milford scored 49 points, easily defeating both Lakeland (2nd with 83) and Novi (85).

But Tim Moore kept another string intact.

The senior dominated the field, finishing first overall and giving the Wildcats its fourth individual title in the past five years. He, Chris Toloff (2000) and Kevin Avenius (1997-98) have dominated the conference scene in recent years.

"It feels great, knowing all of the guys who have won it in the

past," Moore said following the race. "And it's good to continue the tradition we've had here at Novi in what is the best conference in the state."

Moore's time of 15:46 was nine seconds slower than his Oakland County time but was still 23 seconds faster than second-place Matt French of Howell.

Milford's Nick Kopczyk and Dan DeRusha were third and fourth. Kevin Gienapp of Brighton, Adam Craig of Lakeland, Scott Assenmacher of Hartland and Matt Tidman of Pinckney rounded out the KVC's first team.

Lakeland's Brian Theut was the first member of a second-team KVC squad that also included Wildcat Todd Foren. The senior finished 16th in a time of 17:16.

Novi had a pack of five runners finish from 21st to 29th. Mitch Erickson was 21st in a time of 17:30. Eric Joseph (17:46), Tim Kava (18:01) and Mark Moore (18:02) finished 23-25. Spencer Ornes was 29th in 18:17.

Despite finishing third in the

Continued on 2

Tim Moore continues stellar running

Continued from 1

race. Novi finished runnerup to Milford in the final league standings. Lakeland finished fifth in the dual portion of the league standings.

"We knew that this was Milford's home course and that they really had something to prove today," Novi coach Bob Smith said. "Our guys understood that we were locked into second

place overall. Looking at that, we knew we had another objective in mind — the regional."

As for Moore continuing in the footsteps of other great Novi league champions, Smith said he "knew (Moore's) time was coming. It's good for Tim. It's another feather in his cap."

Howell finished fourth at the league meet (120 points), followed by Brighton (128), South Lyon (136), Pinckney (142) and

Hartland (160). The final league standings were pretty much the same as the league meet, except that South Lyon was fourth, Brighton fifth and Howell sixth overall.

The Wildcats compete at the Holly regional in Davisburg Saturday. All of the teams at the KVC meet will be competing along with seven other teams for a chance to advance to the state finals. Only the top three teams

will move on.

"We knew what we wanted to do today," Smith said. "Too many teams burn themselves out at their conference meets. They can't see the trees from the forest. We have bigger fish to fry."

Jason Schmitt is a special writer for the Novi News/Lake Area Times. Comments can be directed to the sports department at (249) 349-1700, ext. 104.

HIGH SCHOOLS

Milford boys win KVC cross country title

By MARVIN GOODWIN
Of The Oakland Press

MILFORD — Milford entered Monday's Kensington Valley Conference cross country meet seeking a clean sweep as both boys and girls squads had title aspirations at Kensington Metropark.

And although the boys took the conference title with 49 points, only a few points separated the girls from duplicating the same feat.

Brighton won with 47 points, Milford was second with 49 and Novi was third with 81.

On the boys side, Lakeland, led by Adam Craig's sixth-place and Brian Theut's ninth-place finish, was a surprising second with 83, edging out Novi, which had 85. Tim Moore of Novi won the meet title in 15 minutes, 46 seconds.

For the girls, Brighton, Novi and Milford each had one dual

meet loss, meaning the conference meet winner would land the KVC crown.

Milford had three runners finish ahead of Brighton's first runner — Lisa Canty (second), Colleen Johnson (fourth) and Kristin Granroth (fifth) led the Redskins— but the Bulldogs had six runners from places eight through 15 as their depth prevailed.

"You come into this situation and you want it all," Milford coach Brian Salyers said, "(but) I couldn't be prouder with the way they raced. We gave everything we had today."

Novi's Nina Schmitt led from start to finish in capturing the girls individual title in 19:43 for the five-kilometer course. "Mentally, it's hard," Schmitt said of leading the way, "but I think you have to run your own race and you'll be fine."

On the boys side, Milford had five runners among the top 15 finishers as Nick Koczyk (third), Dan DeRusha (fourth), Casey Barnes (13th), Chad Murray (14th) and Tyler Van Acker (15th) comprised the team scorers.

Milford has been favored in nearly all its meets this season, but the Redskins just stuck to a familiar game plan as it lives up to its lofty rating in high school distance running.

"I guess we were thinking make sure we stick together as a team and make sure we get five in before everybody else gets five in," said Koczyk, who clocked 16:31. The senior finds himself on the perhaps the strongest squad of runners in his four years at Milford.

"I love it," he said. "For me it's been four years of hard work. Not everybody gets a chance to

be on a team that's come together so well."

"This is our first league title since 1990 for the boys," said Salyers, who noted that Milford had five top-five finishes in the state during the span. "This league title definitely holds some value."

Moore, who has rarely been challenged this season, added his name to a number of former meet champions, including Milford's Tom Greenless and Novi's Chris Toloff and Kevin Avenius, all current Division I runners in college.

"I knew if I ran like I can, I wouldn't have any problems," he said.

Most of the same teams compete at Saturday's Division 1 regional at Holly. The boys state champion has come from the KVC conference in five of the last six years.

HIGH SCHOOLS/COLLEGES

Novi's Moore smiling all the way to state

By MARVIN GOODWIN
Of The Oakland Press

The championship cross country season has already begun for Novi's Tim Moore — and he's loving every minute of it.

Moore has already won the Kensington Valley Conference and regional titles in the last week and as he looks to Saturday's state cross country meet at Michigan International Speedway, he expects the same results.

"For me it's a lot of fun," said Moore. "I love the big meets. It's my favorite time of the year."

But the big-time meets won't stop at state.

Moore will also begin his quest to get to the Foot Locker Cross Country national meet in Orlando, Fla., which will be held in December. Last year he placed eighth in the nation.

But first there's the state meet, where Moore has taken third the past two seasons. He's lost only to

Rockford's Dathan Ritzenhein, a two-time national high school champion now at Colorado; former teammate Chris Toloff, one of Michigan State's top runners; and former Walled Lake Central standout Todd Mobley, now a solid contributor at Notre Dame, during that span.

Now Moore has the stage to himself as perhaps the state's top high school cross country athlete.

Moore is easy to spot on the course. He's always in front as his long, flowing locks are whipped back in the wind while he runs. His form appears rather awkward, perhaps laboring, but no one has caught him this season.

He has mowed down all challengers, winning by sizable margins in a manner which sees him gradually pull ahead of his competition and extend the lead throughout the race.

But if there's someone close by, Moore welcomes it.

"He's not afraid to race and (he) wants to race," Novi coach Robert Smith said. "He's got a big reputation right now. He relishes that (and) he relishes competition. He wants to train so hard it's my job to back him off. I have to keep him in check."

Since he was a freshman, Moore has had the benefit of having several high-quality teammates as training partners. He trained



The Oakland Press/CHARLIE CORTEZ

Tim Moore has finished third in the state for the past two seasons, but the Novi runner hasn't lost a race this season

this season since that group had graduated.

"It's definitely tougher doing the workouts on my own," he said, "but I really don't mind it. I knew it was going to be a different year than in the past, but I was prepared for that mentally and physically."

Smith said Moore has handled running on his own admirably.

"He has a really good ability to run at the speed that I want him to run," Smith said. "(In doing intervals), if I say do a 400 in 63 seconds, he can hit it every time. If I say 68, he runs 68. He has an internal clock that is really good."

Moore said the quality of his training has increased. He averaged from 50-60 miles of training last year and he's averaged from 75-80 miles this year.

As the state meet approaches, and expectations rise, Moore is feeling no pressure.

"I know a lot of people expect me to win, but I don't feel any pressure from that," he said. "I put pressure on myself because I want to win."

"I definitely want to finish out the season not losing, (but) no one knows what's going to happen."

And then there's the matter of the Foot Locker nationals, another important meet on his agenda. All the runners who finished ahead of Moore have graduated. But that doesn't mean Moore will have an easy time.

"There's a whole lot of guys (who could win)," Smith said. "The difference between Tim and a lot of the other runners is very, very small. He beat some of those guys by a second or two. (But) Tim is considered one of favorites."

The Kensington Valley Conference has won five of the last six boys state cross country titles and should contend again this year with Milford posing the biggest threat. The

Running for a state title

- What: MHSAA Cross Country Championships
- Where: Michigan International Speedway, Brooklyn
- When: Saturday
- Times: Boys Div. 4, 10 a.m.; Boys Div. 3, 10:30 a.m.; Girls Div. 4, 11 a.m.; Girls Div. 3, 11:30 a.m.; Boys Div. 1, 1:30 p.m.; Boys Div. 2, 2 p.m.; Girls Div. 1, 2:30 p.m.; Girls Div. 2, 3 p.m.
- Admission: \$5 (includes parking)

Novi harriers running states

Tim Moore may be tops

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Thursday, November 1, 2001—NOVI NEWS/LAKE AREA TIMES

And they are off to the races — the state finals race to be more precise.

The Novi Wildcats boys cross country team will be making the trek to the Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn Saturday, Nov. 3, as will top girls runner Nina Schmitt.

The 2001 season marks the fourth year in a row the Wildcats have earned the right to compete in the Michigan State Finals Cross Country meet.

Coached by Robert Smith, the Wildcats will have the advantage of experience, wisdom and — of course — speed on their side.

The Novi harriers, as well as many other runners, will follow the lead of senior stellar runner Tim Moore as they take to the course.

No doubt you can expect a tough run from this season's Wildcats, they have been running their hearts out all season long and there is nothing that is going to stop them from running to their fullest potential Saturday.

The 'Cats have a slew of talent at their disposal including Todd Foren, Mitch Erickson, Eric Joseph, Mark Moore, Tim Kava and Spencer Ornes. The single girls runner, Schmitt, will no doubt give everyone a tough run to compete with.

The dedication these runners have to their sport is unrivaled by much of the sporting world.

They are out in the cold rain, the harsh winds and, if need be, they will be out in the depth of snow to run the sport they love so much.

Expect the Wildcats to put on quite a show for their fans, their friends and the Novi faithful in their quest to bring home the state championship.

There is no doubt that a few teams — like Milford — are going to give the Wildcats a run for their money but with the heart and the dedication this team

**GAME
OF THE
WEEK**

**Novi
Wildcats**

at

**Cross Country
State Finals**

Saturday, 1:30 p.m. at MIS

brings to the course, expect the race to be closer than many might think.

Smith has this team prepared for this race - there is no doubt in my mind and there shouldn't be any doubt in anyone else's either.

He is a determined coach who strives to see his runner succeed in every aspect of cross country — something they have not let him down in yet.

The race is on a Saturday so those looking to cheer the Wildcats on in their chance to bring home the state title should make their way to Brooklyn to cheer these harriers on.

If heart and dedication have anything to do with who comes home the victors, the Novi Wildcats are practically a shoo-in.

I expect the Wildcats will not let their faithful down and am making my guess a Novi state title while Schmitt will no doubt make some noise representing the Novi green and white.

HIGH SCHOOLS

•• Friday, November 2, 2001 | The Detroit News 3H

+ **Cross Country:** *State Finals Preview*

Novi, Moore ready

By Bev Eckman
The Detroit News

NOVI — A lot of people are expecting Novi senior Tim Moore to win the Division 1 individual title Saturday at Michigan International Speedway.

After all, he was third as a sophomore in '99. He was third last year as a junior in a personal record 15:06, and those who beat him both years have graduated. He won the Oakland County meet in 15:37.

"I don't feel the pressure from anyone but myself," Moore said. "I feel like I've put in a lot of hard work, and now we're backing off to be ready for the state finals."

That's part of Coach Bob Smith's strategy: Don't leave the race on the training trails. The team has backed off from 70-80 miles a week during the season to 50-60 miles a week now.

It worked in 1998 and '99, when Novi won the title, and last year, when the Wildcats beat everybody except Rockford.

Rockford has "a really good coach and a really good program," Smith said. What it doesn't have this time is Dathan Ritzenhein, the fastest high school distance runner in Michigan history, who is at Colorado after leading Rockford last year.

A lot of people aren't expecting Novi to win the team title, despite Rockford's graduates.

Novi's only regular-season loss was to Milford. Coach Brian Salyers' Milford team is ranked No. 1 in Division 1, followed by Portage Northern, Grand Ledge, Detroit Catholic Central and Novi.

Cross country state finals

What: The Michigan High School Athletic Association championships. There are four divisions with 3.1-mile races in each for boys and girls.

When / where: Saturday / Michigan International Speedway, Brooklyn. From Detroit, take I-94 west to US-23 south to US-12 west, right to the track.

Who: Approximately 1,900 athletes and coaches will participate, making it the largest one-day high-school event in the state.

Schedule: 10 a.m.— Boys Division 4. 10:30 a.m.— Boys Division 3. 11 a.m.— Girls Division 4. 11:30 a.m.— Girls Division 3. 12:15 p.m.— Division 4 and 3 awards presentation. 1:30 p.m.— Boys Division 1. 2 p.m.— Boys Division 2. 2:30 p.m.— Girls Division 1. 3 p.m.— Girls Division 2. 3:45 p.m.— Division 1 and 2 awards presentation.

Admission/Parking: \$5 per person, which includes parking. Entrance opens at 7:30 a.m.

Information: On-line at mhsaa.com.

Bev Eckman

CROSS COUNTY

State champs: Novi's Moore, Groves' Walter

■ Milford boys take second in Division 1; Marian girls place third in Division 2

By MARVIN GOODWIN
Of The Oakland Press

BROOKLYN — Tim Moore of Novi and Rebecca Walter of Birmingham Groves ran carbon copy races Saturday at the state cross country championships at Michigan International Speedway as each produced winning efforts.

Walter led from start to finish to win the girls Division 2 title as she joined the front-running Moore who won the boys Division 1 crown.

Meanwhile, Milford's boys finished second in Division 1 and the girls from Birmingham Marian placed third in Division 2 to highlight a strong effort from Oakland County schools. They included runner-up finishes by Adams' Shannon Stanley in Division 1, Megan Young of Detroit Country Day in Division 3 and Andrew Bauer of Bloomfield Hills Lahser in Division 2.

Catholic Central won the boys Division 1 title with 186 points, Milford had 205 and Traverse City West had 221 for third. Lakeland was fifth with 250, Novi 10th with 329, Birmingham Brother Rice 12th with 335 and Lake Orion 13th with 337.

Rockford won its fourth straight girls Division 1 crown with 76 points, Sterling Heights Stevenson was second with 121, Ann Arbor Pioneer had 136 for third and Rochester Adams was fourth with 218. Clarkston, sixth with 251, and Milford, seventh with 261 were also top 10 finishers.

Walter clocked 18:40 for the five-kilometer course, winning by 36 seconds as she found herself all alone and delighted at the finish line.

"I was like, I can't believe this, this really happened," said Walter. "Last year I was fifth and three of the four girls (ahead of me) had graduated so it (winning) was on my mind all season long."

Walter followed Groves coach George Browne's plan almost to perfection. "We had decided we were going to go out in a 5:30 to 6-minute mile," he said. "We figured if she could go out in 11:30 for two miles, we'd leave everybody behind."

Marian's Jennifer Waters (sixth) and Colleen Duff (13th) led the Mustangs to their highest finish ever at the Division 2 state meet, a mere point behind Stevensville Lakeshore, who scored 205 points for second. Middleville Thornapple Kellogg won with 156 points.

"Last year we were 18th (so) we're certainly very proud," said Duff, who watched Waters pick up seven places in the last mile.

"About halfway through the race, I wasn't sure how I was going to do," Waters said, "(but) when I got on the track (last straightaway), I just felt really good."

In Division 1, Nikki Bohnsack of Rockford outdueled Stanley, winning in 17:40. For the second straight year, Stanley was second in 18:08, but relieved the season was over.

"I've got two Charlie Horses in both of my calves, so I'm kind of wobbly," said Stanley, whose teammate Andrea Moreland placed 18th. "I tried to stay with her (Bohnsack) the best I could. I think I gave her a little bit too much distance. Next year we'll see what I can do."

Young was in fourth place at the two-mile mark, but began reeling in runners, moving into

second with less than 200 meters left and pushing toward first. Wyoming Kellogg's Nicole Bush's lead, though, was too much to overcome.

"I went out too slow," lamented Young, "but besides that, it was a good race."

Lahser's Andrew Bauer came in at 15:41 as the Knights were a surprising fourth with 223 points. Big Rapids won with 81.

"I was about fifth at the 800 and then I put in a surge and got into second," said Bauer. "I started to feel the burn (but) I just tried to hold it as long as I could."

Tim Ross of Caledonia won in 15:03, the fastest time of the day, as he won his second straight Division 2 title.

For Moore, it was business as usual. He hasn't been challenged the entire season as he won in 15:11, nearly 25 seconds ahead of his Woodhaven's Jake Hammerle. "I knew if I ran my race, wouldn't have any problems," he said. "I was just trying to win today."

Troy's Nick Gillett (seventh), Brother Rice's Dan Murray (eighth), Milford's Nick Kopczyk (16th), Walled Lake Western's Kevin Naughton (19th), Lakeland's Adam Craig (20th) and Lake Orion's Michael Colt (22nd) also had top efforts in Division 1.

In Division 3, Steve Mance of Madison Heights Bishop Foley was 23rd in the boys race.

Milford's Lisa Canty (eighth) and Kristin Granroth (10th), Novi's Nina Schmitt (ninth), Clarkston's Liz Mengyan (11th) and Anne Oltman (24th), and Lake Orion's Ashley Patton (12th) were also among the leaders.

In Division 4, Justin Joyner of Oakland Christian was 28th in the boys race and Emma Czarnecki from Royal Oak Shrine was 22nd in the girls race.

HIGH SCHOOLS

+ Cross Country: Boys State Meet

Novi's Moore, C.C. win

By Bev Eckman
The Detroit News

BROOKLYN, Mich. — Novi senior Tim Moore seemed to be all alone as he came into Michigan International Speedway Saturday for the finish of the Division 1 boys state cross country final.

Not another runner was in sight with three-quarters of a mile to the finish line.

Moore finished more than 20 seconds ahead of the next runner, senior Jake Hammerle of Woodhaven.

Moore had a time of 15 minutes, 11.30 seconds, Hammerle 15:35.60.

Macomb L'Anse Creuse North senior Justin Zanotti was third in 15:41.50.

Detroit Catholic Central won the boys team title with 186, edging Highland Milford, which had 205.

"I couldn't hear any runners behind me, and I tried not to look back," Moore said.

"I'm happy to win, it's been my goal since I was a freshman."

He was thwarted last year by Dathan Ritzenhein in a track-record 14:10 and teammate Chris Tolloff.

But his team faltered and finished 10th, after two championships and a second.

"I don't know what happened," Moore said. "Maybe there was a little too much pressure on us for our reputation as Novi."

"I couldn't have asked for much more from my teammates, they ran as hard as they could."

Catholic Central won its first team title since 1989 despite the loss of its No. 1 runner, senior Ryan Lowry, out since the regional because of a broken foot.

"The tough part was keeping focused on the team concept, but we had nothing to lose and everything to gain, we had to go from there," C.C. Coach Tony Magni said.

"Having Lowry would have helped," senior John Krawiec said. He was the top finisher for the Shamrocks, fifth overall in 15:47.50.

More than 1,900 runners and their coaches were at MIS for the Michigan High School Athletic Association's biggest one-day event.

Division 2

Bloomfield Hills Lahser senior

Andrew Bauer finished second in 15:41.10, behind the fastest time of the day — a 15:03.60 victory by **Tim Ross** of Caledonia.

Lahser was fourth in the team race with 223, behind defending champion and winner Big Rapids, 81; Fremont, 130; and Flint Powers Catholic, 168. St. Clair was fifth with 239.

"I started fourth and after 800 meters I was second, and I stayed there," Bauer said. "I'm very happy. I wanted to improve from fifth (last year) and second is a major improvement."

Division 3

Hemlock won the team title, led by junior **Steven Czymbor**, who was third overall in 16:03.20, Stockbridge senior **Brandon Grybas** won in 15:57.40.

Division 4

Lawton won the team title with 143 points to 213 for Bear Lake. New Buffalo senior **Mike Putzke** was first in 15:48.70.

You can reach Bev Eckman at (313) 222-2392 or beckman@detnews.com.

Milford has highest Division 1 finish ever

By MARVIN GOODWIN
Of The Oakland Press

The big prize Milford's boys cross country team sought Saturday eluded them.

Milford had won regional, Kensington Valley Conference and Oakland County meet titles and was a solid contender for the Division 1 title at Michigan International Speedway.

But Milford didn't have its best day at the worst time. One of their top runners, Dan DeRusha, finished some five minutes slower than usual.

"He faded," coach Brian Salyers said, "but he finished. He entered the stadium in about 30th place and he just locked up. I'm not sure what happened. (But) we don't make excuses. What we attained was what we deserve.

"This is our highest Division 1 finish ever and we've got to savor that and appreciate the type of season we've had."

The mood before the meet was different for Milford since Ross Arnold, a teacher and former track coach close to the school's running program, suffered a possible heart attack Friday in class, according to Salyers, and was still hospitalized as of Sunday morning.

"We kind of put that in per-

spective," Salyers said. "We're fortunate to do what we like to do. You appreciate life. We had a good season (and) we've had some good times."

■ Lakeland's Adam Craig (20th), Brian Theut (28th) and Chris Welch (30th) led the Eagles to a fifth place finish with 250 points, affirming coach Randy Wilkins' guarantee of a top 10 finish if they qualified for state.

■ Novi's 10th place finish gave the Wildcats four straight years of top 10 finishes. Along with Milford and Lakeland, the KVC landed three teams among the top 10 at state.

■ Among the girls, Clarkston's Liz Mengvan (11th) and Anne Oltman (24th) were the highest finishing freshmen in the Division 1 meet. Clarkston finished sixth with 261 points.

"I didn't know what to expect," Clarkston coach Jamie LaBrosse said, "being I only had one girl with (varsity) cross country experience. I just wanted them to give an honest effort ... and have some fun. We finished on a good note, something to build off next year."

■ Lake Orion's Ashley Patten's 12th place finish in the Division 1 meet was impressive considering this was her first season of cross country.

Boys cross country

Division 1 state meet

(Saturday at Michigan International Speedway)

TEAMS — 1. Catholic Central 186; 2. Milford 205; 3. Traverse City West 221; 4. Grand Lodge 249; 5. Lakeland 250; 6. Portage Northern 257; 7. Grand Blanc 258; 8. Temperance Bedford 271; 9. Traverse City Central 284; 10. Novi 310.

INDIVIDUALS — 1. Tim Moore (Novi) 15:11; 2. Jake Hammerle (Woodhaven) 15:35; 3. Justin Zanotti (L'Anse au Loup North) 15:41; 4. Matt French (Howell) 15:42; 5. John Krawiec (Catholic Central) 15:47; 6. Justin Hajduk (Plymouth Salem) 15:49; 7. Nick Gillett (Troy) 15:50; 8. Dan Murray (Birmingham Breiter Rice) 15:53; 9. Lance Vanderberg (Muskegon Mona Shores) 15:54; 10. David Lucas (Catholic Central) 15:56; 11. Chris Catton (Grand Blanc) 15:57; 12. Corey Howitzke (Monroe) 15:57; 13. Jason Shoener (Grand Blanc) 15:58; 14. Troy Terry (Utica Eisenhower) 15:58; 15. Dana Imer (Okemos) 15:59; 16. Nick Kocpczyk (Milford) 15:59; 17. Andrew Thomson (Grand Lodge) 16:00; 18. Kevin Giannapp (Brighton) 16:01; 19. Kevin Naughton (Walled Lake Western) 16:02; 20. Adam Craig (Lakeland) 16:03.

Novi runner's pace changes race

Saline sophomore Dustin Voss says early charge cost him at end of Division 1 race at MIS.

By BILL CZAJA
NEWS SPORTS REPORTER

STATE MEET NOTES

THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2001

BROOKLYN – No one runs in a vacuum.

Setting a pace is fine, but when the leader skews the grade curve, the plan can go to pieces.

Novi's Tim Moore opened with a huge lead at Saturday's Division 1 Lower Peninsula Championships. Moore led by 20 seconds after a mile, dragging along anyone who wanted a piece of him at the risk of burning out.

Dustin Voss said that's what happened to him.

"The adrenaline. Wanting to do good. Guess I just wasn't mentally prepared," Saline's sophomore front-runner said.

Moore finished in 15 minutes, 11 seconds, 24 seconds ahead of Woodhaven's Jake Hammerle. Howell's Matt French (15:42) was fourth and Plymouth Salem's Justin Hajduk (15:49) was sixth.

Voss said his downfall began at a downhill with 1,200 meters left. Several runners kicked past him, and Voss finished 21st, in 16:04, in a pack that included Brighton's Kevin Gienapp (18th) and Pioneer's Jim Naughton (23rd).

"Once we got inside the (auto racing) track, I just died," Voss said. "Stupid race on my part."

Voss ran the best time by a freshman in last year's race and is the area's best male prospect. He had gone out with a top-10 finish in mind after winning last weekend's regional.

PREPS EXTRA

THURSDAY
Nov. 8,
2001

DETROIT FREE PRESS

MICK McCABE

Novi's Moore takes his time to savor state championship



When the starter's pistol sounded at the Division 1 boys cross-country race at Michigan International Speedway, Novi's Tim Moore must have thought he was

competing in the 400-meter dash, not a 3.1-mile race.

Moore came barreling out of his chute and sprinted to the front of the 238 runners.

"I started off way too fast," Moore said. "After 200 yards I was in the lead. I usually don't do that. I was too aggressive. It was something my body wasn't used to."

The strategy could have been disastrous for Moore. In fact, less than a third of the way through the race, Moore realized he had made a mistake by beginning so quickly.

"I wasn't feeling too good," he said. "After about a half-mile my legs were feeling really dead. I was worried. I thought I could hold off my competition, but I knew it wasn't going to be fun."

Fun?! Cross-country isn't about fun. It is more about torture. My favorite T-shirt at the finals read: "Your punishment is our sport."

That pretty much defines cross-country in a nutshell. Athletes running countless miles without the fanfare their counterparts in football and basketball receive.

But there is a deeper self-satisfaction cross-country runners enjoy that cannot be matched in football and basketball.

The ultimate satisfaction is what Moore sought last weekend when he sprinted away from the pack. It wasn't a particularly smart move, but it wasn't planned, either. You would have had to have been in Moore's shoes the past three years to understand why he instinctively took off so quickly.

Three years ago, as a freshman, Moore finished a remarkable 27th at the state meet. The past two years, Moore was third, behind winner Dathan Ritzenhein, Rockford's All-America. Now that Ritzenhein has graduated, this was supposed to be Moore's year.

"I was really anxious," Moore said. "I was eager to go out and grab my title. I paid the price."

Moore meant he paid the price during the race, struggling a bit at times. But more importantly, he paid the price on all of those lonely runs last winter and over the summer. It was just Moore and the road and those hills he ran to prepare himself for the championship.

The irony of this season is that Moore was treated like a defending champ even though he had never won a state title or a single big race. People just assumed Moore would win the Division 1 title, and Moore had to live with that throughout the fall.

After all, after finishing third last year, Moore was a surprising second at the Foot Locker regional in Wisconsin and then finished an impressive eighth at the national finals in Orlando, earning All-America honors.

People assumed that since he was the nation's eighth-best runner as a junior, he should be Michigan's best as a senior.

"Yeah, there was a lot of pressure," he said. "But I put a lot of pressure on myself. I wanted to get it done."

Moore did get it done, finishing in 15:11, almost 25 seconds ahead of his closest competitor.

It was a wonderful moment for Moore, and one he savored with his teammates after the race. He splurged and ate pizza and had a glass of pop. Both have been no-nos for Moore this season.

"The pop didn't taste so good," he said, "so I drank water. It's healthy to kick back for a couple of days."

Actually, Moore kicked back for all of one day. He was back running distance on Monday and Tuesday, and then he was on the track for some speed work. The Foot Locker regional is later this month and the national championship is next month.

"There's no pressure at Foot Locker," he said. "I run those for fun. But I didn't want to lose the state championship in Michigan."

That may be why Moore wasn't coming down the straightaway with his eyes fixed on the finish line.

"I was looking around, trying to enjoy it," he said. "I was looking forward to this moment since my freshman year. I wanted to look around and take it all in."

Contact MICK McCABE at 313-223-4744 or mccabe@freepress.com.

Novi's Tim Moore wins Regional, State meets

By Jason Schmitt
SPECIAL WRITER

Move over Kevin Avenius.
You too Chris Toloff.

With all due respect to the marvelous achievements the above two garnered in their days at Novi High, Tim Moore one-upped them Saturday afternoon.

The Novi senior captured the 2001 Division I state cross country individual championship, crushing the field of 238 runners in a time of 15 minutes, 11.3 seconds.

Runnerup Jake Hammerle of Woodhaven was second in 15:35. Justin Zanotti of L'Anse Creuse North was third, Matt French of Howell fourth and John Krawiec of Detroit Catholic Central rounded out the top five. Catholic Central won its first team state title since 1989. Milford, which was on pace to win its first-ever state title, stumbled to a second-place finish.

Traverse City West finished third, while Grand Ledge and Lakeland rounded out the top five. Novi, which scored 310 points, finished 10th overall.

Moore's individual title was the first in school history.

"It feels real good, I've been looking forward to this for a long time," Moore said, moments after the race. "I knew that if I could run my own race I'd be able to win. And that's what happened today."

Moore said he planned on going out hard in the first mile and testing his competition. That plan worked as the senior was able to build a 150 yard lead on the rest of the field.

He maintained that lead throughout the race, until he extended it to over 300 yards in the last quarter mile.

"I knew everyone was expecting me to win," Moore said. "If I didn't win, I wouldn't really care if the whole state was upset with me. I'd be upset with myself."

He didn't have to worry about that. The race commentator kept the entire crowd at the Michigan International Speedway informed throughout the race. As he entered the speedway, the crowd began to give Moore a champions' reception.

"It felt good. I took a second to look around at the crowd and enjoy the

moment," he said. "It was great."

Novi coach Bob Smith, who has two team state championships to his credit, felt relieved for Moore.

"We've had a few seconds, a few thirds, but this was our first state champion," he sighed. "What a pleasure, what a relief to get that milestone out of the way."

Smith said Moore deserved the spotlight after working so hard to accomplish this "grand" feat.

"He's such a team player," the coach said. "He's not feeling the joy that he should right now. He's feeling the pain of his team finishing a little lower than it would have liked. He should be enjoying this."

After a runnerup finish a year ago and state titles in 1998-99, the 10th-place finish seemed to take backstage to the day's champion.

"I was hoping for something a little better than 10th," Smith said. "I'm sure this team's a little disappointed with it. But every year it seems to be a reputation game. We've got a name for ourselves. Sometimes we're deserving of our reputation and sometimes we're not."

Todd Foren was Novi's second man on the day, finishing 103rd overall and 70th in the team race in a time of 16:55. Freshman Mark Moore and junior Tim Kava finished back-to-back in 113th and 114th overall. Both eclipsed 17 minutes, Moore in 16:59.6 and Kava in 16:59.9.

Eric Joseph and Mitch Erickson weren't far behind, finishing 122nd and 126th respectively. Freshman Spencer Ornes had a 165th-place finish in 17:24.0.

"I really thought we could do some great things this season," Moore said. "But I know our guys ran their hearts out and gave everything they had and I couldn't expect anything more out of them."

Smith said the race will be a confidence builder for some of those returning, including Mark Moore.

"He came charging at the end, probably 8-10 spots," his coach said. "It was a break out race of sorts for him. It's not the only breakout race he'll have, but it's definitely a confidence builder for him."

Milford suffered a big loss when arguably its best runner, Dan DeRusha, went down late in the race. With about 600 yards to go, DeRusha became light headed and was forced to stagger the last 500 yards before crossing the finish line. He finished last in the race.

State finals

— look out Nationals

By Jason Schmitt
SPECIAL WRITER

As Tim Moore crossed the finish line — 15 minutes, 11.3 seconds after he began the race — at Saturday's state finals, there was a noticeable change from years past.

The overwhelming applause coming from some 500 fans lining the finish line was directed at him. In any big race, the cheers for the race champion seem to be a decibel or two higher than those for the other finishers.

And there's only one winner.

Anytime a champion clips the tape 24 seconds ahead of the runnerup, there's cause for a loud ovation. He had time to look back, back towards Woodhaven senior Jake Hammerle, who was nearing the finish line. Justin Zanotti of L'Anse Creuse North and Howell's Matt French were seconds behind Hammerle.

Although he's experienced winning before, this was another first for the senior sensation.

Tim Moore? A first at this point of his career?

As hard as that may seem to believe, it's true.

The senior captain is also among the favorites to capture the Footlocker National Title in December. He's the top returnee from last year's race.

Yet every time he wins a big race (Oakland County, KVC, regional) it's all been new to him. The championships, that is, not the pressure of it all.

"Being the front runner on the team doesn't have too much of a different feel then those years in the past because I am still doing the same things that have worked for me in the past, just now I am the best on the squad," Moore said. "As far as the pressure goes, for me it doesn't come from anyone else besides myself. I am the one who sets the goals and tries to achieve them."

And achieve them he has. He finished the 2001 season undefeated, yet to be challenged in a race.

The last time he was seriously challenged in a high school race, in the state of Michigan, was at last year's state finals. Rockford's Dathan Ritzenhein dominated a talented field of runners which included former Novi star and cur-

rent Michigan State runner Chris Toloff (2nd) and Moore (3rd).

Their times were among the four best in all divisions.

Ritzenhein and Toloff are now starring at the collegiate level, as are several other hurdles Moore has had to battle the past few years.

Being a great runner in a great program such as Novi's is much different than being the lone star on any other team. Moore has had to wait his turn.

His patience has paid off. So too has his intense training with so many high caliber runners.

"He has exuded more confidence this year," coach Bob Smith said. "Not a bragger's confidence, though. He knows what it takes to be successful. You would never know he's a star athlete. He's just a popular kid who happens to run fast."

Moore has always been a great runner, not that he always liked it. He was your average Novi youth, interested in soccer and baseball. Two key components to those sports were running.

He was pretty darn good at it too.

"I knew that distance running was for me pretty much right from the start," the senior said. "It took me until the fall of eighth grade to fully accept that I wasn't going to play baseball or soccer ever again and concentrate on running."

Having the opportunity to compete in a program "on the rise" made his decision all the more easy. Novi cross country was a program coming into its own.

Kevin Avenius, now a junior on the Notre Dame Cross Country team, was coming off a fourth-place finish at the state meet. He finished in a time of 16:20, just three seconds behind state champion Jason Hartmann of Rockford.

He was now joined by a trio of sophomores (Toloff, Eric Walle and Mark Avenius).

As an incoming freshman, Moore was also expected to make an immediate impact.

The key, however, was the addition of a pair of seniors who had defected from the soccer program. Dan Christopherson and Mike Burns, along with the aforemen-

Tim Moore continues his winning ways

Continued from 1

tioned five, were going to truly make a difference.

"Kevin was really the pioneer of our success," Smith said. "But by the end of the season, he had a tough time fighting off Dan Christopherson."

Smith said he was a late believer that year (1998), but his kids knew how good they were.

"They already felt they were the elite team," he said.

Avenius and Christopherson finished seventh and eighth at the finals, leading the Wildcats to their first-ever state championship. Moore (27th) and Toloff (29th) also earned all-state medals.

"If you look strictly at times, maybe I was a pioneer. But I wouldn't have been able to do it without the rest of the team pushing me every day," Avenius admitted. "Tim was running outstanding as a freshman. Toloff, my brother (Mark) and Walle were probably the best sophomore trio in the state - if not the nation - and then there were Dan and Mike to round out the top seven. We definitely had the best team Novi has ever seen."

Toloff, and now Moore, have had the same pattern of success. Toloff and Moore were among the top seven at the 1999 finals, where Novi picked up its second-straight state championship. Mark Avenius and Walle finished all state as well.

In 2000, Toloff took top honors throughout most of the season. Moore was a close second.

The two of them, along with their all-state teammates Avenius and Walle, once again led Novi to conference and regional championships.

This time, however, Rockford took home its first-ever state team title.

The 2001 Novi team has a different look to it. Over the past three seasons, Novi has returned anywhere from 2-4 all-state runners.

This year, only Moore returned with all-state honors. Novi qualified for its fourth-straight state final and took home a top-10 finish. Smith credits his recent teams for instilling the work ethic that can currently be seen in his kids.

"They know what it takes and they think that's how things are

"Tim's extremely dedicated and when he wants something, he's going to go after it."

Chris Toloff

former Novi Cross Country runner

run," Smith said. "The younger guys have always looked to the older guys for leadership."

Those older guys now are named Moore, Mitch Erickson and Todd Foren.

"Tim's extremely dedicated and when he wants something, he's going to go after it," Toloff said about his understudy. "The one race he's really waiting for is the Footlocker National, and when it comes, he's going to be at his best. I can't wait for the day where I can race him again."

That will come in due time. Moore, a perfect 4.0

student in the classroom, is weighing his college options.

He's deciding between Michigan, Notre Dame, Stanford, Duke and Wake Forest.

Like many of the greats who have come before him, Moore is looking only at the present and not at the legacy he'll leave when he graduates.

"We are working for our own set of goals, not to uphold the standard," he said. "Basically, we never really talk about the season in a sense of strong tradition and upholding it."

But come Saturday, whether he likes it or not, Moore will leave Novi with a legacy unmatched in school history.

That is, until the next great runner comes along.

Jason Schmitt is a special writer for the Northville Record, Novi News and the Lake Area Times. Comments can be directed to the sports department at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104.