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## Boys Cross Country: *Top teams and individuals*

By *Bev Eckman* / The Detroit News

### TOP TEAMS

**Birmingham Brother Rice:** Rice finished 12th in Division 1. Coach Bob Stark needs a front-runner to have a Catholic League contender. Sophomore John Black was 84th in 16 minutes, 44 seconds, at the state meet last season but suffered a broken right leg in hockey. Junior Ryan Gregory, 174th in 17:27, ran on the 3,200-meter relay that qualified for states, as did senior James Dowd. Junior Jason Hannawa was 108th at states in 16:58. Senior Shane Giblin, a transfer from Pennsylvania, broke 10:10 in the 3,200 meters. Other candidates are juniors Ehren Eschmann and Mike Bair, and senior Sam Klemet. "Whether we get good depends on how they improve," Stark said.

**Bloomfield Hills Lahser:** Coach Nick Stration's team was fourth in Division 2 and gets four of its top seven back, including sophomore Bruce Kaczmarek, who was 49th in 16:44. Junior Ben Raphelson was 99th in 17:10, junior Matt Rose was 138th in 17:34 and sophomore Andrew Kennedy was 194th in 18:10. There is potential for top runners in junior Eddie Cusack, sophomore Kirill Zickanov and freshman Mike Quick. A very young team should improve over the season.

**Brighton:** Four of the top seven are back for Coach Bob Ritsema's team, which got knocked out in one of the toughest cross-country regionals in the state, featuring three teams in the top 10. Depth is a concern. Senior Kevin Gienapp was 18th in Division 1 in a personal-best 16:01. It led the Kensington Valley Conference from 1994-99 and was second in 2000 and 2001. Senior Zach Castilione ran 16:20 in a dual, and junior Garrett LaFata ran 16:40 in a dual. The goal is to qualify for states. Its rivals are Huron Valley Milford, Novi and Huron Valley Lakeland.

**Detroit Catholic Central:** It is the defending Division 1 champion. Coach Tony Magni has a challenge, returning two of the top seven, and bringing the rest up from junior varsity. At the top is junior Dave Lucas, who finished 10th overall at states last season in 15:56, and senior Brian Doot, 117th in 17:01. Magni is looking for senior Trevor Step, sophomore Max Working and junior Dan Horgan to contribute.

**Huron Valley Lakeland:** It finished fifth in Division 1 for Coach Randy Wilkins. It returns five of the top seven and is more experienced. Leaders

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are seniors Adam Craig, 20th in 16:03, and Chris Welch, 30th in 16:15. Contributors include seniors Eric Fadie and Scott Kern, and juniors Alex Rickens and Josh Parr. Up from JV are sophomores Jason Sosonowski, Mitch Weiner and junior Eric Labar, who was in the top seven as a freshman. Senior Eric Black, injured last season, should contend. Freshmen Dan Welch and Brad Craig hope to join their brothers, as does freshman Steve Camilleri, whose three older brothers ran.

**Huron Valley Milford:** It was second in Division 1 to Detroit Catholic Central. Coach Brian Salyer's team has 14 of the top 17 returning, and four of the top seven. It won the Kensington Valley Conference, regional and county last season. Depth is its greatest asset, with 21 varsity-level runners, at least 15 worthy of states, Salyer said. Seniors are Patrick Miller, 31st in 16:15, and Matt Thome, an alternate last year. Junior Dan DeRusha is more talented than his last-place finish. He ran a 1:54.8 for fifth in the open 800 meters. Juniors include Kyle Harris, 16:38, for 71st; and Chad Murray (196th, 17:44). Twin juniors Kyle and Craig Morrison each have sub-10-minute times for the 3,200. Main adversaries are Brighton, Novi and Huron Valley Lakeland.

**Lake Orion:** Coach Stan Ford's team was 13th in Division 1. He returns three of eight varsity runners on a young team. Sophomore Billy Peterson finished 79th in 16:42 and had a good track season, running a 4:31 1 at 600 meters and a 9:52 in the 3,200 at regionals. The team consistently ran third during the Oakland Activities season and was second in the OAA in Division 1 to Troy. Solid juniors are Shawn Wilsher, 135th in 17:10; and Keith Magic, 175th in 17:28. Rivals include Rochester Adams, Clarkston and Troy.

**Novi:** It finished 10th Division 1 and was second in the Kensington Valley Conference to Huron Valley Milford. Coach Robert Smith has turned out five All-Americans in recent years -- Mark Avenius, Michigan; Kevin Avenius, Notre Dame; Chris Toloff, Michigan State; Tim Moore, Notre Dame; and Eric Walle, Vanderbilt. This season he returns five of the top eight. "People think we graduated the farm, but hopefully we have the farm club," Smith said. Among them are senior Tim Kava, 114th in 16:59.90, and sophomore Mark Moore, 113th in 16:59.60, Tim's brother and a talented runner. Also, there is junior Eric Joseph, 122nd in 17:04, and sophomore Spencer Ornes, 165th in 17:24. Senior Brian Gilchrist a transfer, made the New York state meet. Milford and Catholic Central are the teams to beat. Novi is young but talented and seasoned. "Our region is a bloodbath. Throw in Rockford and C.C. and it would be the state meet," Smith said.

**Saline:** It was 11th in Division 1 and should do better. Coach Tom Frederick returns five of his top seven. Overall, it was building on hard work over the summer, aiming for a top-10 finish. Saline's top five can run with anyone, Frederick said. A preseason pick to win is junior Dustin Voss, 21st in 16:04 last year. He ran a mile in 4:18 and the 3,200 meters in 9:28. No. 2 is junior Neil Atzinger, who had a personal-best 16:33 at the Southeast Conference League meet, and ran 800 meters in 1:55. Senior David Walline was 177th in 17:29. Senior Andy Strasburg didn't run states, and senior Zach Ryan ran a 16:41 last season.

**St. Clair:** It is one of the favorites to win Division 2 and challenge

Fremont. Coach Jon Davidson returns four of the top seven on a team that finished fifth in Division 2. Senior Larz McElroy finished 32nd in 16:33. Junior Mark Ellis ran a 16:43, 47th at states. Mark's twin, Will Ellis, is running 70 miles a week. Sophomore Jeff Standfest ran a 17:33 at the Portage Invitational. St. Clair won the regional. "We didn't have a good day at states," Davidson said. "Overall we're pretty solid, we've got a lot of guys working real hard. We should definitely be in the top five, we have a shot at winning."

### TOP INDIVIDUALS

Adam Craig, sr., Huron Valley Lakeland: He finished 20th in Division 1 in 16:03. "He has a real drive to be successful. He's a good trainer," Coach Randy Wilkins said. "He's looking to run for the Naval Academy." Craig finished third at the Kensington Valley Conference meet, behind Tim Moore of Novi and Matt French of Howell, each of whom graduated. He's a front-runner.

Dan Derusha, jr., Huron Valley Milford: He finished last in Division 1 in 22:18 on a day that "things just didn't go right," Coach Brian Salyer said. "He has the credentials. Derusha was fourth in the KVC meet, which featured eight all-state runners, and fourth at the Oakland County meet. He has three state track medals in two years." He has good speed and is developing into a leader," Salyer said.

Kevin Gienapp, sr. Brighton: He placed 18th in 16:01 last year and ran a 15:45 during his sophomore season. "He stays in contention and moves up as the opportunity develops," Coach Bob Ritsema said. "He was fifth in a tough regional and ran 16 flat on a tougher course, Holly. He wants to be in the top five. I think it's possible. He has a good training ethic on his own."

Justin Hajduk, sr., Salem: He was sixth in Division 1 in a personal-best 15:49, behind five seniors. He's a preseason pick to contend for the state title and was second in the Western Lakes. "He's a racer, he races well," Coach Geoff Baker said. "He's taken the challenge. He had a great summer. He's ready to go."

Dave Lucas, jr., Detroit Catholic Central: He was 10th in Division 1 in a personal-best 15:56. "Having (seniors) Ryan Lowry and John Krawiec push him last year really helped get his potential up there," Coach Tony Magni said. "He goes out slow and goes after the leaders as the race progresses. He never loses contact with the leaders. He ran a smart state meet to help us."

Larz McElroy, sr. St. Clair: He placed 32nd in Division 2 in 16:33 and ran a 16:21, finishing second in the Macomb Area Conference meet. He had a personal-best 16:07 at states as a sophomore. "He's a very talented runner who backs it up with hard work, 70-80 miles a week," Coach Jon Davidson said. "He organizes runs over the summer. He goes out with the front and tries to stay there."

Neal Naughton, jr., Walled Lake Western: He was 42nd in Division 1 in a personal-best 16:28, seventh in the Western Lakes and 11th at the Oakland County Meet. "He's a talented runner, very competitive, doesn't like to get beat," Coach Mike Formanek said. "He runs with the pack. He has a tendency to run from behind. He was sixth in the 3,200 meters at

states in 9:33."

Donnie Richmond, jr., Oxford: He took 40th in Division 2 in 16:37, a school record. He was the Flint Metro champion last season in 16:51. "He's already run 16:20," Coach Ray Sutherland said. "He's a leader, very aggressive, he tries to run with the leaders. He tries to reel them in in the beginning. His goal is 15s this year." Oxford moves to Division 1 this year.

Dustin Voss, jr., Saline: He's a preseason pick to contend for the state title. Last season, he was 21st in Division 1 in 16:04 and ran a personal-best 15:51 in the Southeast Conference League meet. He was the regional champ in 16:20. "He's a real guts runner. He can kick it up another notch," Coach Tom Frederick said. "He goes out fast in the lead and pushes the pace."

Chris Welch, sr., Huron Valley Lakeland: He finished 30th in Division 1 in 16:15. "Unbelievable talent," Coach Randy Wilkins said. "He has good leg speed. A front-runner. We'll build around him. He'll run with (Adam) Craig. He's such a good baseball and basketball player it probably takes away from running. He didn't run in the county meet because he had a baseball game."

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## BOYS CROSS COUNTRY TOP 10

By MARVIN GOODWIN  
Of The Oakland Press

Last year Milford could not have run much better, winning Kensington Valley Conference, regional and Oakland County titles. But the one title the Mavericks were poised to seize — the Division 1 state crown — eluded them as they settled for second place behind Redford Detroit Catholic Central.

Now, the Mavs are back as they plot their season with much the same goals in mind as last year. The consensus opinion is that the race is on to catch the Mavericks, who could be far ahead of the pack.

**1 Milford** — With four of their top seven returning — Dan DeFusha, Kyle Harris, Pat Miller and Chad Murray — the Mavs are already strong. But their depth borders on incredible. In all, they return 14 of their top 17 runners, including a pair — Seth Thibodeau and Craig Morrison — who've made dramatic improvements. Thibodeau ran 9:39 in the 3,200 in track and Morrison has done 9:54. Matt Thome and Mike Anderson will also be factors. "I've never seen a team as deep as this one," coach Brian Salyers said, "(and) I'm not talking about Milford, I'm talking about anywhere." Indeed, Salyers said he has 17 runners who can run 4:52 or better in the 1,600. "Our biggest challenge is to provide opportunities for all the kids to excel," said Salyers, who will split his squad for different meets as often as possible. Opponents aren't likely to see Milford's strongest squad until the state meet, but it won't matter because the Mavs' depth will keep them afloat and make them contenders in every competition.

**2 Novi** — Four runners with state meet experience — Tim Kava, Eric Joseph, Mark Moore and Spencer Ornes — return for the Wildcats, who placed 10th at state last year. Kava is the last holdover from the Wildcats' last state championship team in 1999. Novi also will be helped by Brian Gilchrist, a transfer from New York with big-meet experience. "I'm cautiously optimistic," coach Robert Smith said, "if we can stay healthy. But we're in the hotbed of competition." With defending state and national champion Tim Moore now at Notre Dame, "we're going to be pretty much a pack team," Smith said.

**3 Lakeland** — After a lethargic start, the Eagles finished strongly last year,

taking fifth in the Division 1 state meet. Lakeland lost one of its top runners — Brian Theut — to graduation, but returns a solid one-two punch in Adam Craig and Chris Welch, both top 30 finishers at state last year. Eric Fackie, Josh Paar and Alex Rickens should also help a team that is annually one of the best in the area.

**4 Bloomfield Hills LaSser** — The Knights are poised to continue their momentum from last year's fourth-place finish at the Division 2 state meet even though they lost Division 2 state runner-up Andrew Bauer to graduation. Five of the top eight return, including sophomore Bruce Kaczmarek and juniors Ben Raphaelson, Matt Rose and Eddie Cusack. Sophomores Andrew Kennedy and Kiril Zikanov should help, along with freshman Mike Quick, who has national meet experience. The Knights were regional runner-up and OAA II champs last year and will be in the hunt for more titles this season. "The kids definitely realize if they work hard some good things can happen," coach Nick Stratton said.

**5 Birmingham Brother Rice** — Even with their potential top runner playing football, the Warriors will still be competitive. John Black and Shane Giblin could be the leading runners with Ryan Gregory, Mike Bair, James Dowd, Jason Hanawa and Aaron Eschmann providing support. "I'm going to miss that guy who's going to be in the top 3 or 4," said coach Bob Stark, who won't have enough strength to challenge defending state champion Catholic Central in the league. But they could be strong enough to duplicate their fourth-place finish in the Oakland County meet and second place in the league.

**6 Clarkston** — In a league where several teams could compete for the title, the Wolves will be in the mix. Their top returnees, Jared Eimore and Mark Sisco, are state qualifiers and should be among the best in the OAA I. But they'll need support. "I don't know if I have any guys to go with them," Clarkston coach Mike Taylor said, "but I've got a lot of contenders." That includes juniors Jack Kinsey, Evan Schneider and Scott Linville, along with Brad Parks, and some possibilities from the freshman group.

## Best of the rest

■ **The rest:** 11. Walled Lake Central; 12. South Lyon; 13. Troy; 14. Farmington Harrison; 15. Troy Athens; 16. North Farmington; 17. Berley; 18. Birmingham Seaholm; 19. Birmingham Groves; 20. Waterford Kettering  
■ **Individuals:** Orchard Lake St. Mary's Brenden Godvin, Avondale's Mike Frisch and Farmington Harrison's Brian Coats have potential to be among area leaders.

**7 Lake Orion** — The Dragons are annually in the OAA I league race despite graduation losses the past several seasons. Sophomore Billy Peterson, the second-highest finishing freshman at the Division 2 state meet last year — he was 79th — could be one of the league's top runners. He'll get help from juniors Keith Magic, Shawn Wilsher and Ryan Dahl.

**8 Walled Lake Western** — The Warriors finished fifth in the Western Lakes league last year but hope to make an upward move with Neal Naughton heading the key returnees. Naughton was sixth at state in the 3,200 in track last season and has put in more mileage over the summer. "He's ready to step in and run against the good guys," coach Mike Formanek said. Jesse Brodak and Peter Kounovsky should help but, "we've got some younger guys who'll have to come through," Formanek said.

**9 Rochester** — The Falcons return most of their top 10 runners from last season which could mean a jump in the league standings from last year's fifth-place finish. Bryan Mullins leads the returnees with help from seniors Matt Merian and Justin Tonti. Juniors Jason Day and Matt Chumbly will also contribute. "They're pretty focused and have been training hard and working together," Rochester coach Larry Adams said.

**10 Oxford** — The Wildcats lost only two runners from a team which won or shared five straight league titles, and they're still young. Junior Donnie Richmond could be one of Oakland County's top runners and he'll have help from juniors Kevin Brown and Nolan Walter. Kenny White, a sophomore will help along with Tim Rowland, last year's No. 8 runner who could make a solid contribution. Tony Stein and freshman Adam Richmond will also help. "I think we're better than last year," coach Ray Sutherland said.

# Wildcat boys' XC runs wild

By Sam Eggleston  
SPORTS WRITER

The Novi Wildcats boys cross country team has to be pretty happy with their first showing of the season. It doesn't count towards their final record, but it does show them just about where they stand for the beginning of their regular season.

The Wildcats took on the Northville Mustangs in a beginning-of-the-season scrimmage August 21, a scrimmage that the Wildcats took seven of the top 10 spots in.

"It was one of the nice little surprises for us," Novi coach Bob Smith said. "It was a pleasant surprise to see that we had that kind of depth."

Senior transfer Brian Gilchrist, originally from New York, took second in the meet with a time of 16 minutes, 40 seconds.

"I could tell last spring (when he came on to the track program) that Brian was a highly capable runner," Smith said. "He is showing what he is able to do already. A 16:40 is a really good time and he did it in the first meet of the season."

Not far behind Gilchrist was Mark Moore, a sophomore runner, with a finishing time of 17:25 for third place.

"That just shows how good Gilchrist is," Smith said. "Mark Moore is a very solid runner, and for Brian to finish 45 seconds ahead of him is a statement of his ability."

In fourth place was junior Eric Joseph with a 17:30, while Spencer Orens finished sixth behind Northville's Clark Paciorek with a time of 17:42.

Finishing seventh overall and fifth on the team was sophomore

Amol Huprikar with a final time of 17:45. Justin Namm, a sophomore, finished ninth overall with an 18:26, while Mike Pitcher rounded out the top 10 for the meet and the top seven runners for Novi with an 18:40 and a 10th-place finish.

"Last year, Northville was one of the top teams in the area and with a better region draw would have probably been a state contender," Smith said. "Their coach, Chris Cronin, does a really nice job with those guys. Now that we have run against a team with good stature, we are better able to view our standing and our situation."

The Wildcats are also very happy with their pack times. One of the goals that the team originally set for itself was for groups of runners to run in packs with the spread between the first five runners coming about a minute apart. With their first competitive run of the season, Gilchrist, Moore, Joseph, Orens and Huprikar were only 1:05 apart from one another, prompting Smith to set a new goal.

"Forty-five seconds apart would be ideal," Smith said. "We are happy to have a good pack time, but teams with great pack times usually don't have a front runner. Gilchrist is assuming the role of a front runner really fast. To expect five guys to lead a race is unrealistic, but to expect Spencer, Mark, Eric and Amol to be within 45 seconds of each other is our goal."

*Sam Eggleston is the sports writer for the Northville Record and the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at [seggleston@ht.homecomm.net](mailto:seggleston@ht.homecomm.net).*

# Harrier boys are looking strong

By Sam Eggleston  
SPORTS WRITER

The Novi Wildcats boy's cross country team isn't going to be looking at their losses from last year's season as an excuse for 2002. Instead, they are going to take those losses and use them as a weapon as they look and load some of their most solid runners in hopes of hunting down a Kensington Valley Conference title.

The Wildcats, coached by veteran Robert Smith, are in full realization that the KVC is up for grabs this year. All of the schools that are in contention took a hit in one way or another, and they are now looking to sneak up and grab the crown this year.

"The KVC is tougher than ever," Smith said. "There are going to be four, five or six schools that are really going to step up and be serious contenders. Milford is the team to beat in the league, the state meet is really theirs to lose. Brighton had a great summer. Lakeland is chomping at the bit to return to their glory years. We've been running hard and then there is Howell, you can't count them out. South Lyon is also looking like a strong team this year."

Even if Milford is the overall favorite for the league title, Smith said that his boys have to be one of the favorites for second place.

"There's not that great of a difference between first and second in this conference," he said.

The Wildcats return quite the

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## 'Cats look to fight in KVC

Continued from 1

experience to their line-up. Seniors Mark Andrews, Brian Gilchrist, Daniel Mockus, Mike Pitcher and Dan Thelen will be expected to lead the team by example while juniors Scott Bergeson, Eric Joseph, Isaac Lee, Nick Preketes, Darin Styles and Eric Tingwall will be filling in plenty of gaps this year.

On the younger end of the board, the Wildcats bring a very talented and determined group of athletes. Sophomore Amol Huprikar is expected to be one of the top Novi runners this year followed by fellow sophomore Mark Moore — last year sensation Tim Moore's younger brother. Justin Namm and Spencer Orens will see plenty of run time as will Nate Quay. The eager freshmen are well represented in 2002 as well. Matt Thomas, Greg Morisette, Andy Macek, Kevin Lee, Ryan Fox and Steve Fannon

**"In this league, you can't expect to take all summer off and start practice August 12 and still hope to be competitive. You have to work all summer at getting your times down, and that's what these guys have been doing."**

**Bob Smith**

*Novi Boy's Cross Country Coach*

will be building their experience to be tomorrow's leaders today.

"We have a solid group of athletes," Smith said. "We are really lucky to have athletes that want to be part of a successful team. They work all summer on their times. In this league, you can't expect to take all summer off and

start practice August 12 and still hope to be competitive. You have to work all summer at getting your times down, and that's what these guys have been doing."

*Sam Eggleston is the sports writer for the Northville Record and the Novi News. He*

# Boy harriers continue winning ways

By Ryan Edwards  
SPECIAL WRITER

The Novi boys cross country team remained undefeated as they ran away from Lakeland on Sept. 10.

The key to their victory was great one-through-five pack running, with only 1:30 separating their top five finishers. The group also managed to all stay ahead of Lakeland's third finisher. This allowed Novi to dominate the top 10, placing seven runners including five of the top seven times.

"Our 'Cats enjoyed quite a picnic as they enjoyed the Eagles as their main course," said Coach Bob Smith via e-mail.

If that indeed was the case, then Brian Gilchrist was the hungriest of the bunch, collecting first place honors with a time of 17:15. By no means though did the rest of Novi's runners go hungry, with captain Scott Bergeson (19:56), captain Eric Joseph (19:47), Mike Pitcher (19:15), Justin Namm (18:56), Tim Kava (18:45), Spencer Ornes (18:32), Amol Huprikar (18:10), Mark Moore (17:44) and Gilchrist all finishing the race in less than 20 minutes.

Eric Tingwall also set a career personal record at Kensington's course by running a time of 20:35, and Novi had 22 runners finish the race, leading the Wildcats' to a victory and a final

score of 23-35.

The Wildcats continued their winning ways September 14th, as the boys' ventured out to the Walled Lake Western Invite and a confrontation with the "Hill".

The freshman and sophomore division conquered the "hill" as they captured first place overall with a score of 39. Their closest competition was 44 points behind them in runner-up South Lyon. Even more impressive, 205 points separated them from sixth place finisher Southfield Lathrup. Mark Moore helped lead the team to victory, crossing the finish line first overall at a time of 17:09.

Smith seemed to be pretty excited, stating that "It is nice to

win the ninth-10th grade division, a strong message has just been sent that the Novi cross country program is alive and well...and will be for years to come".

Unfortunately, the junior-senior division didn't fare as well as their younger teammates. They finished in a very respectable position of third place, behind runner-up Walled Lake Western and winner Brother Rice.

To their defense though, they weren't running at full strength. Brian Gilchrist, who took first against Lakeland, didn't run due to the team's training schedule.

"We run so many meets each season, we need to make some difficult choices," Smith said.

"This was one of them."

Novi also had six other runners who were unable to run due to injuries.

Tim Kava did his best to pick up the slack, finishing fifth overall with a time of 17:52. Mike Pitcher (18:37), Nick Preketes (19:33), and Mark Andrews (19:39) all finished in the top 25 for the Wildcats. It wasn't enough, though, to bring them a first place finish.

Novi runners and their fans were hoping for a first-place finish Sept. 17 (after the *Novi News* went to print), as they met with those pesky Bulldogs' from Brighton. A Wildcat win, however, will not come easy. It'll be a difficult match-up against a very

similar and very good Brighton team.

"The key will be for us to put several runners in between their third and fourth runners," Smith said. "If we can get four guys there, we should sneak out a win."

Smith admits that the meet will not be an easy victory for either team, predicting that the margin of victory or defeat will be three points or less — regardless of who wins. So it looks to be one of the more exciting meets of the season.

*Ryan Edwards is an intern for the Northville Record and the Novi News. Comments can be directed to the sports department at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104.*



# Wildcat harriers outrun Brighton

## Bob Smith coaches his Wildcats to yet another KVC dual meet victory

By Tyler Carter  
SPECIAL WRITER

The heat did not seem to affect the Novi Wildcat harriers September 17, as they defeated the Brighton Bulldogs at Cass Benton in a hard-fought battle.

Heat reaching 80-degrees soft on means that runners will not log their fastest times; however, the Wildcats were able to get thirteen personal best performances out of their squad.

With the victory, Novi continues their perfect 4-0 record in dual meets during the 2002 campaign.

Brian Gilchrist ran out to an

early lead in the race, but Brighton's Kevin Gienapp was able to catch up near the mile and a half mark.

Gilchrist never let Gienapp out

of sight, finishing in second by just seventeen seconds with a career best 16:30.

Coach Bob Smith reveals, "Mental preparation is as important as physical preparation, and our team was really mentally prepared for Tuesday's meet. Our strategy was to break up Brighton's lead

pack, and our top runners really responded to this challenge." Novi's top four harriers were across the line before Brighton's third runner finished the race.

The Wildcat's key to their 24-32 victory was the sophomore pack that finished in the 4th, 5th, and 6th positions. The pack consisted of Mark Moore, Spencer Ornes, and Amol Huprikar all of whom ran the fastest times of their careers, helping to secure the win.

Moore annihilated his previous Cass Benton personal best by 34 seconds, recording a 16:51. Ornes and Huprikar also

shattered their previous best times, finishing in 17:04 and 17:05, respectively. Tim Kava accounted for the remainder of the Wildcat scoring, running a season-best 17:15.

The miniscule 45 second difference between Novi's first and last scorer was essential to the Wildcat's victory. It is when the team runs as a tight pack like this that they become dangerous. The 1:20 difference between Novi's top runner and their seventh runner gives evidence of the incredible depth of this year's team.

Junior Eric Joseph finished in 17:46, and sophomore Justin

Namm had a personal best 17:50 as the final Novi varsity runner. Senior Mike Pitcher was Novi's eighth runner, logging a personal best 18:08.

"Justin Namm and Mike Pitcher are really the unsung heroes on our team," Smith said. "They have been running outstanding times, and have been challenging our other runners to step up. These guys are really helping to make us a better team."

Despite the numerous personal best times on Tuesday, Smith feels that his runners are saving something for the end of the season:

"I can't say enough about our guys and their understanding of the sport," he said. "They aren't going out and running their legs off this early in the season. We really don't have anything to prove at this point in the season. Late October and early November is when we will have something to prove."

The Wildcats will take on South Lyon on September 24.

Tyler Carter is an intern for the Northville Record and the Novi News. Comments can be directed to the sports department at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104.

**Boys' Cross  
Country**

# Novi grad leads MSU cross country team

Sophomore Chris Toloff of Michigan State University was the men's top collegiate finisher at the Spartan Invitational cross country meet in East Lansing. Toloff, a graduate of Novi High, clocked 24 minutes, 45 seconds for the 8-kilometer course at Forest Akers East Golf Course. No team scores were kept.

In the women's race, Sarah Pepera (Ortonville Brandon) placed eighth overall and was part of Michigan State's women's team's solid showing at the Spartan Invitational meet in East Lansing. She had a personal best of 18:12 for the 5-kilometer course. The Spartans, No. 12 in the nation, had five runners among the top eight finishers. Also running for the Spartans were freshmen Leigha Christian (Rochester) and Taylor Bones (Bloomfield Hills Lahser).

# Local runners pace Notre Dame

Junior Todd Mobley appears prepared to assume leadership of the University of Notre Dame men's cross country team.



Photo by Lisa Vette

Todd Mobley (right) and Tim Moore (left)

Mobley, a graduate of Walled Lake Central High, notched his second individual victory when he took first in the National Catholic cross country invitational championship. He was timed in 25 minutes, 16 seconds on the 8-kilometer course in South Bend, Ind. Notre Dame had five finish-

ers in the top seven in scoring 21 points.

Freshman Tim Moore, a graduate of Novi High, matched Mobley stride for stride before taking second, also in 25:16.

Earlier this season, Mobley placed first at the Adidas International meet in 24:51, and Moore came in second in 25:02.

# Still undefeated

## Novi looking at Oakland meet, KVC rival Milford

By Roger Garfield  
SPECIAL WRITER

The Novi Boys' Cross Country team maintained their undefeated record by beating South Lyon on Tuesday, September 24. The meet was held at the Straits of Island Lake, South Lyon's home course.

The top four finishers in the race were Wildcats; senior Brian Gilchrist finished first with a time of 16:44.

Senior Tim Kava and sophomore Mark Moore each ran the five kilometers in 16:52. In fourth place for the 'Cats was junior Eric Joseph, who finished with a time of 17:00 flat. Also finishing in the 17's were sophomores Amol Huprikar, Justin Namm, and senior Mike Pitcher.

"It was a beautiful day to run," commented Novi veteran Coach Robert Smith. "We took full advantage."

Twenty of the 25 Wildcat runners set a personal record for the season versus South Lyon, and 17 of them set career personal records. Novi tallied only 17 points on the day. The Lions had 40. In cross-country, the lowest score wins. A runner who finishes first gains one point for the team, second place gains two, and so on.

"The meet was closer than the score reflected," said Smith. "Both teams really enjoyed the race and the cooler than normal weather. It's generally been very hot this year."

The victory over South Lyon was especially meaningful to Smith, whose brother Scott coaches the Lions.

"We have a gentleman's bet every year in which the losing coach buys dinner for the winner."

the older brother and Novi coach said. "Once again, (Scott) will be treating me to an evening of fine dining."

The Wildcats, who have been one of the state's premiere teams over the past five years, have a difficult road ahead of them. They hosted the Hartland Eagles on Tuesday (prior to deadline) and travel to Kensington Metropark this Saturday to compete in the annual Oakland County Meet, which is the biggest cross-country meet in Michigan. Approximately 45 teams will be released from a 100-yard starting line under one gun on Saturday. Smith talked about how sensational the sight is.

"You can literally hear the ground shake when the race starts," he said. "I'm hoping for a top five finish, which is remarkable, but very possible."

Smith and the Wildcats are used to earning their fair share of accolades. In 1998 and 1999, the Wildcats won the Michigan Cross Country State Championships. They were runners-up in 2000, and Smith believes his team can finish in the top 10 once again this year.

Their biggest competition in the KVC this fall comes from Milford, who is also undefeated. Smith has much respect for the team from Milford.

"They are arguably the best team in the state. We face them next week; that should be quite a show."

This is Smith's 22nd year of coaching the Wildcats. He coaches track in addition to cross-country. He also teaches physical education and business at Novi.

See the 'Cats compete this Saturday at the biggest meet in Michigan, the Oakland County Invitational. The meet will commence at 10:00 a.m. at Kensington Metropark.

### Boys Cross Country



Photo by John Helder

Novi cross-country runner Amol Huprikar warms up last Tuesday before a meet against Brighton.

# Oakland County meet has many advantages, purposes

By Stephen Bell  
HOMETOWN NEWSPAPERS

On Saturday the cross country season will get real serious with the running of the Oakland County meet at Kensington. It is the first of the four major meets — along with the KVC, regional and state — that the second half of the season.

The county meet helps teams on a number of fronts.

The Possum Hollow course is also the site of the KVC meet. That's no big thing for teams that run it often like Milford and, this year, Lakeland. But for a team like South Lyon, which has historically struggled at Kensington, it is a chance to purge the demons with the hope that they don't come back when it counts for the league standings.

It allows teams to gauge themselves against non-KVC schools that will be running in the Holly regional, like Clarkston, Lake Orion and the Walled Lakes.

It is the largest non-state meet in the country, providing runners some pre-MIS experience finding their way amidst a seething mass of bodies.

"Milford, Novi and

Bloomfield Hills Lahser are the top boys' teams," Milford coach Brian Salyers said. "Then the question is, how does Lakeland run? How does Brother Rice run? There are a lot more questions than on the girls' side."

Milford's boys' team dominated last year's county meet and is expected to again after runners like Dan

DeRusha, Seth Thibodeau, Mike Andersen, Pat Miller and Chad Murray

didn't compete last weekend in competition of this one. DeRusha is the top returning placer from the 2001 meet, where he was fourth, and he certainly hasn't gotten worse since then.

So who will be number two? Possibly Novi, which most recently claimed the county championship in 2000.

"I'm on the panel that votes for the state rankings, and I have Novi in my top 10, but I'm the only one," Salyers said.

"They're a good, young team."

The Wildcats are undefeated in KVC dual meets and they have left room to get better yet.

"I can't say enough about our guys and their understanding of the sport," Novi coach Bob Smith said. "They aren't going out and running their legs off this early in the season. We really don't have anything to prove at this point in the season. Late October and early November is when we will have something to prove."

South Lyon lost to the Wildcats 17-40 last Tuesday.

"Novi's going to be a force," Lions coach Scott Smith said. "A couple years ago they came out of nowhere to win the state meet ..."

The one Oakland County team other than Milford that is ranked in the top 10 of the state's Division I schools is Lakeland. The Eagles, as usual, appear to be tapering to schedule. They have two all-stars in seniors Adam Craig, who finished in the top 10 at the 2001 county meet, and Chris Welch. But the team success will be determined by the performances of their next guys, Mitch Weiner, Jason Susnowski, Steve Leonard,

Brad Craig and Josh Parr.

The favorite in the girls' race has to be Clarkston, which beat fellow state contenders Rockford and Brighton two weeks prior at the Spartan Invitational. The Wolves are young but talented with sophomore Liz Mengyan, junior Mo Kuhta, sophomore Gillian Nordquist, freshman Lyndsay Smith and sophomore Anne Oltman. Mengyan is a possibility to win the state title. She was third at last year's Oakland County meet, which Clarkston won. The first and second place finishers, Rochester Adams Shannon Stanley and Detroit Country Day's Megan Young, are both back this year.

The one team with a chance to hang with Clarkston is Milford. Lisa Canty and Kristin Granroth have been running at an elite level all season and fellow junior Tiffany Kaid took a major step forward last week with a come-from-behind third place against Hartland.

*Stephen Bell is the sports writer for the Milford Times and the South Lyon Herald. He can be reached at (248) 685-1507 ext. 25 or by e-mail at sbell@ht.homecomm.net.*

## Oakland County Cross Country Meet Preview

# All the makings of a KVC classic

The Novi Wildcats have been showing that no matter how many runners they lose in a season, they are going to be contenders the next.



**Sam Eggleston**

The Wildcats will be going up against the best of the best when they take on the Milford Mavericks squared in hopes of showing who indeed is the best of the rest in the Kensington Valley Conference.

The Wildcats will have to come with everything they have if they hope to take down the Mavericks and stay undefeated in Kensington Valley Conference dual meet runs, and don't think Milford is going to lay down either.

This is going to be one of those knock-down-drag-out fights that find both Milford and Novi send-

ing each and every gun they have into the fray with this one. I am expecting the kind of run that really has no clear-cut victor before hand.

On paper, both Novi and Milford are looking quite good. These teams show why cross country in the Kensington Valley Conference is on the rise and is quickly helping the league become one of the most competitive in southeastern Michigan. With the coaching that both of these teams have, it's no wonder that they are the cream of the crop.

You can always expect both of these teams to bring their best to the race when they face each other. This match-up is beginning to turn into one of the classic cross country rivalries in Oakland County and I don't expect that to quit right now.

A race like this could easily come down to whoever has the most depth instead of the most stars. Expect to see the winner with a great pack time and a strong kick across the finish.

No doubt, there will be more than a handful of personal best times set in this meet as well. These runners know the value of competition and are going to exploit it for all they can.

As of right now, I am going to have to just take a shot in the dark on who it is that is going to walk away with this win. I am, of course, a huge Wildcat fan and will have to pick them over the Mavericks.

## **Novi stays undefeated over Milford**

*Sam Eggleston is the sports writer for the Northville Record and the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at [seggleson@ht.homecomm.net](mailto:seggleson@ht.homecomm.net).*

**GAME  
OF THE  
WEEK**

**Novi  
Wildcats  
Cross Country  
at Milford**

Tuesday, October 8  
4:30 p.m.

A graphic with a jagged, torn-paper edge. It features the text 'GAME OF THE WEEK' in large, bold, sans-serif letters at the top. Below this is a stylized logo of a wildcat's head in profile, facing right. Underneath the logo, the text 'Novi Wildcats Cross Country at Milford' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the date and time 'Tuesday, October 8 4:30 p.m.' are printed in a smaller font.

# Milford too tough

By Steve Bell and Sam Eggleston  
SPORTS WRITERS

A number of variables had to fall into place for Milford's boys' cross country team to have a challenging dual meet last Tuesday. Large, competitive meet three days prior in which your varsity had to go all out? Check; the Oakland County meet. Extracurricular late night activities which expend energy and take the mind off of important things like cross country? Check; the homecoming dance hours after the county meet. And the third variable, a team which can actually run with the nation's seventh-ranked team? Check; the Novi Wildcats.

Novi went above and beyond the call of duty on the third count, with five kids running a five-minute first mile at Possum Hollow. At which point Milford responded to the challenge and ended up winning the meet 21-35.

"The first mile, our kids were feeling it," Milford coach Brian Salyers said. "As the second mile developed Novi paid the price for taking it out so aggressively, they went out 12 seconds faster than Oakland County. At that point it was not physical, it was about pride for us."

Dan DeRusha ended up running the fastest time a Milford athlete has had at Kensington in a dual meet, 16 minutes 15 seconds, three days after running 16:09, which was the second-fastest ever on the course. Mike Andersen was third (17:01), Seth Thibodean fourth (17:05), Kyle Harris fifth (17:05), Chad Murray eighth (17:16) and Pat Miller 10th (17:29).

"I was very pleased that Novi responded," Salyers said. "I wanted to see us challenged under short-

term circumstances, forced to press and forced to respond. Those circumstances are difficult to create because you need outstanding competition. I told Bob Smith, Novi's coach, that going against them two days after facing them at the county meet, they have run us as tough as anyone in Michigan. I don't think it's breaking news that two KVC teams are running at a top level, but Milford and Novi are as good as anybody out there."

For two straight weeks, Milford has managed to best the impressive Wildcat squad — but in no way is it due to lack of effort.

## Cross Country

"It is my firm belief that Milford is the best team in the state this year," Novi coach Robert Smith stated via email. "If the state meet was run today, they would be crowned state champion."

In the dual meet against the Mavericks, sophomore Mark Moore continued his steady improvement this season with a second overall finish in a time of 16 minutes, 45 seconds — his personal best. Senior Brian Gilchrist came in second for the 'Cats and sixth overall with his time of 17:07 while Eric Joseph was nipping at his heels in seventh.

Senior runner Tim Kava was the fourth Wildcat across the line and in the top-10 while sophomore Spencer Ornes was 11th overall with a time of 17:32.

The Wildcats also had the pleasure of taking second place in the Oakland County Meet — behind Milford. Gilchrist led the way with a time of 16:42, which was good for ninth place overall. Moore was 15th in the run with a 16:58 while Kava was 23rd in 17:13 and Joseph was 29th with 17:15. Ornes collected the Rob Mutch award as he took 31st place, just off of the 30 medal positions, with his time of 17:19.

Tuesday, October 22, 2002.

# KVC CROSS COUNTRY MEET



PHOTO BY ALAN WARD/DAILY PRESS & NEWS

## HIGH SCHOOLS

# Milford's day in the KVC

■ **Maverick runners win both races; boys win conference title**

By MARVIN GOODWIN  
Of The Oakland Press

**MILFORD** — Milford's boys cross country team has been ranked No. 1 in the state for most of the season. But that matters little when it comes to the Kensington Valley Conference meet, which has produced the eventual state champion in five of the last seven years.

And although Milford won the conference title with 42 points Monday at Kensington Metropark, rapidly-improving Novi was nipping at the Mavs' heels, finishing second with 52 points. Lakeland, led by Adam Craig (third) and Chris Welch (fifth) was third with 84 points.

"As the scores prove, I think the Novi team is a great team," Milford coach Brian Salyers said. "They're the best team we've faced on Michigan soil. That speaks volumes on our conference."

Indeed, the Wildcats are



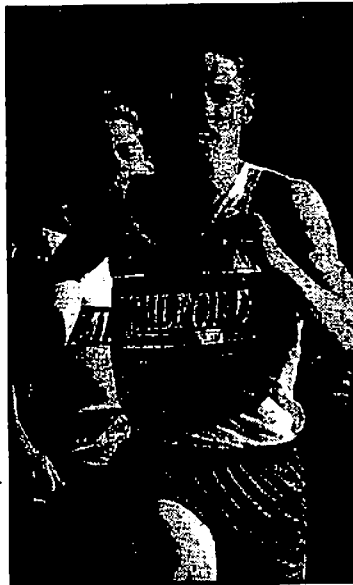
Oakland Press file photos/JOSE JUAREZ

Milford's Lisa Canty (left) won the girls race at the KVC championships, while the Mavericks' Dan DeRusha won the boys race.

surging at the right time. "We're on our way," said Novi coach Robert Smith with an eye toward Saturday's regional at Springfield Oaks. "We can run with them."

For the girls, Brighton, one of the state's top-ranked teams, won with 24 points. Milford was second with 43 and Hartland had 100 for third.

Dan DeRusha of Milford took first in the boys race in



(12th) and Spencer Ornes (14th).

"Dan's time was outstanding on this course," Salyers said. "It eclipsed Tom Greenless's (team record) 16:06 three years ago and that bodes well for his preparation (for Saturday's regional)."

For the girls, Lisa Canty of Milford edged Brighton's Sue Rivard at the finish line to cap a dramatic race for the individual title.

Rivard had moved ahead of Canty after the final hill, and was still ahead with only meters to go.

"There was doubts (I could catch her)," said Canty, whose 19:31.5 beat Rivard by two-tenths second. "I got her a couple of feet from the finish line, then I leaned. I don't know if I can handle more close races like that."

Milford's Kristin Granroth was third. Brighton, among the state's top teams, had seven finishers among the top 10. Milford's Tiffany Kaid (11th) and Mallory Farnum (12th) followed.

"It was one of those days where our girls really performed well," Salyers said. "I couldn't ask for more."

16:01, finishing some 17 seconds ahead of runner-up Brian Gienapp of Brighton on the five-kilometer course.

Novi's Mark Moore (fourth) and Brian Gilchrist (sixth) finished ahead of Milford's next runner, Chad Murray (eighth). But the Mavs finished their scoring as Pat Miller (11th), Dana Pitcock (13th) and Seth Thibodeau (15th) got to the finish line ahead of Novi's Tim Kava



Tuesday  
October 22, 2002

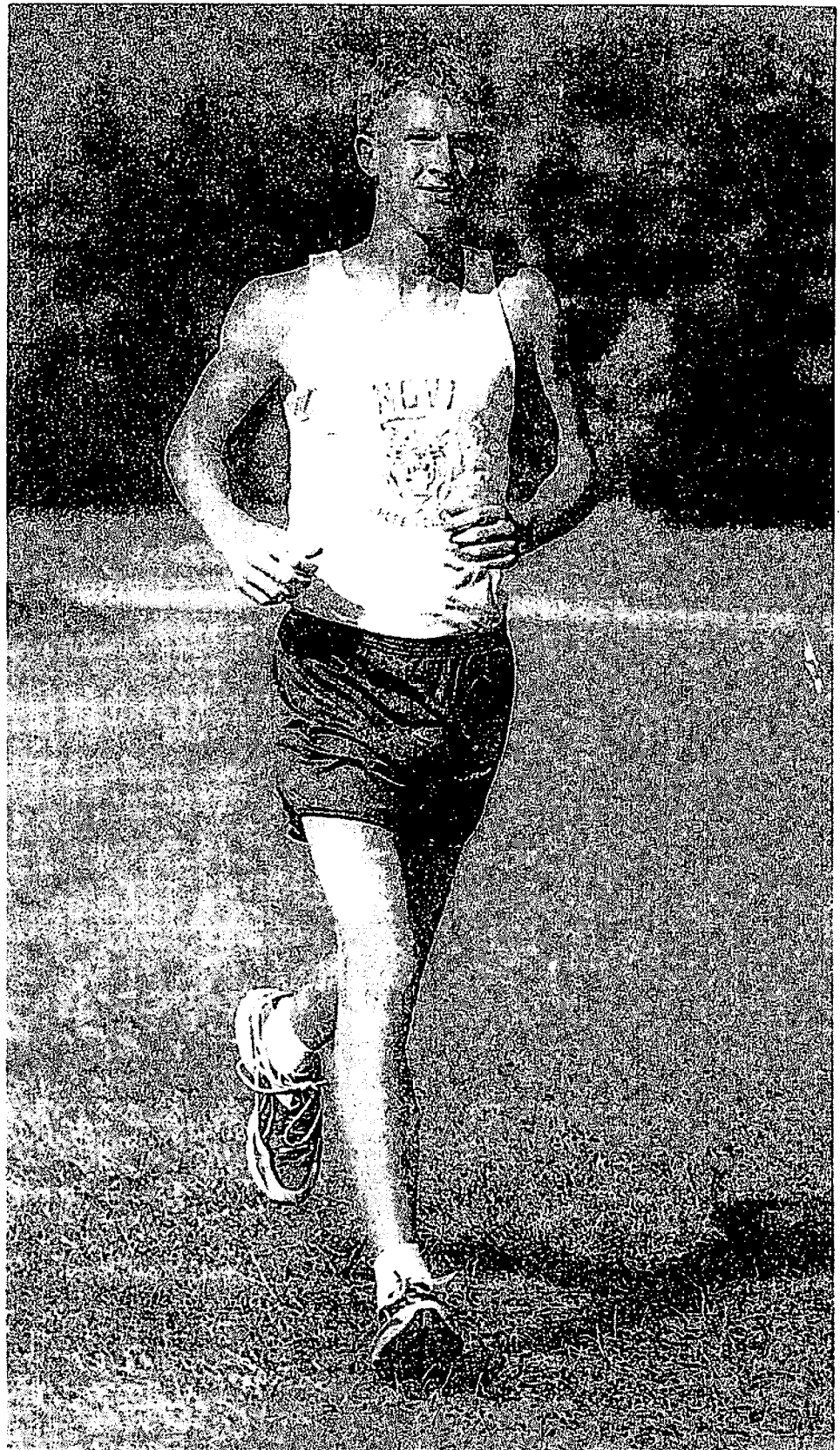


Photo by John  
Heider

**Novi  
cross  
country  
runner  
Eric  
Joseph  
runs at  
Cass  
Benton.  
The boys  
team fin-  
ished  
second  
behind  
Milford in  
the KVC  
finals  
meet last  
week.**

# CC boys take second

Thursday, October 24, 2002-NOVI NEWS 38

## in KVC finals

### Milford runners take top slot

By Stephen Bell  
SPORTS WRITER

When Brighton's Kevin Gienapp got winded by the lake, who was left for Dan DeRusha to race? Tom Greenless, for one. The Milford junior beat the Milford alumnus' Kensington course school record on Monday, winning the KVC championship for himself and the team in the process. DeRusha finished in 16 minutes 1 second, 17 seconds ahead of Gienapp and five seconds faster than Greenless did in 1999.

"Dan is looking in top form," Milford coach Brian Salyers said. "When you put the name Greenless behind you, you're doing something right."

DeRusha was one of six all-league runners for Milford, which finished the meet with 42 points, 10 ahead of Novi. That performance, combined with its 7-0 dual meet record, gave Milford its second-straight KVC championship. Lakeland, with top five finishers Adam Craig

and Chris Welch, was third with 84 points.

Just as in their dual meet, Novi gave Milford something to think about.

"We were less impressive than we were at Oakland County," Salyers said. "I don't think we were mentally prepared. But that's not to take anything away from Novi. Their performance just solidifies what I'd thought, that they're the best team we've seen on Michigan soil. They're battle-tested and ready to go for a couple more."

The Wildcats had five All-KVC runners, with Mark Moore fourth and Brian Gilchrist sixth. Both were beaten by Lakeland runners, however, as Craig finished comfortably ahead of Moore, finishing in 16:32, and Welch ran down Gilchrist on the straightway to finish in 16:36.

After DeRusha, scoring for Milford were Chad Murray in eighth place (16:50), Mike Anderson in ninth (16:55), Pat Miller in 11th (17:00) and Dana Pitcock in 13th (17:03). Seth Thibodeau made second-team

all-conference, 15th in 17:06, and Kyle Harris came in 23rd (17:31).

For Lakeland, Craig and Welch got some help as sophomores Steve Leonard (19th, 17:23) and Mitch Weiner (22nd, 17:23) both finished in the top half of the field. Jason Susnowski was 35th (18:00), Brad Craig 39th (18:13) and Dan Welch 53rd (18:52).

In the final league standings Lakeland tied with Brighton for third place. The Eagles were 4-3 in dual meets, the Bulldogs were 5-2.

"I was happy with our finish," Lakeland coach Randy Wilkins said. "Our goal was to get past Brighton, and we did that. Now we've gotta do it once more."

The entire KVC, and special guests, will run in the Holly regional on Saturday.

*Stephen Bell is the sports writer for the Milford Times and the South Lyon Herald. He can be reached at (248) 685-1507 ext. 25 or by e-mail at sbell@ht.homecomm.net.*

Thursday, October 31, 2002-NOVI NEWS

# Wildcats headed for the state meet

By Steve Bell  
and Sam Eggleston  
HOMETOWN NEWSPAPERS

The Division I boys' cross country regional at Springfield Oaks County Park once again looked like KVC Meet-North as the three teams to qualify for Saturday's state final — Milford, Novi and Lakeland — merely repeated the finish from the KVC championship five days prior.

Milford put five runners in the first 15 spots, the cutoff point for individual state qualifiers, to win its second-consecutive regional crown with a score of 45 points. Novi was second with 71 and Lakeland third with 123 points.

Milford junior Dan DeRusha was first overall with a time of 15 minutes 55 seconds.

"That's an outstanding time," Milford coach Brian Salyers said. "Dan was running a different race strategically. He was trying to simulate the state meet, positioning himself behind for



Photo Courtesy of ROBERT SMITH

**The Novi Wildcats are off to the races in the Holly Regional.**

the first mile, gaining in the second mile and then finishing strong."

The Novi Wildcats boys cross

country team will be making their fifth straight trip to the Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn to com-

pete in the MHSAA lower peninsula cross country finals.

The Wildcats, who are coached by Robert Smith, man-

aged to make it out of the Regional against some of the best talent in the state of Michigan to travel to MIS to run against their old friends, Milford and Lakeland.

Mark Moore was first for Novi and 4th overall with a time of 16:26. Brian Gilchrist was 5th overall and 2nd for Novi just two seconds behind Moore. Eric Joseph was third (16:43) and Tim Kava was 4th (16:51). In the JV race, Scott Bergeson was 6th overall and first for Novi with a time of 18:18.

The 'Cats will have to run the best races of the season if they are looking to make some noise in the finals meet — which no doubt they are.

A quick group of runners, the Wildcats have improved steadily all season long and will no doubt be looking to improve even more for the biggest race of the year.

Their competition is stiff though. Both Milford and Lakeland bring plenty of talent to the board.

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Friday, November 1, 2002

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Associated Press

Sophomore Kelly Sampson, left, took last week's regional for Renaissance in 19 minutes, 25 seconds.

### Cross Country: Notebook

## Renaissance makes finals

By Bev Eckman-Onyskow / The Detroit News

DETROIT -- Saturday, Oct. 26, was historic for the Renaissance girls cross country team.

It became the first Detroit PSL team, boys or girls, to win a regional in more than 20 years. And it advanced to the state finals Saturday at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn.

The Renaissance Phoenix were led to victory in their Division 2 regional at Royal Oak Kimball by sophomore Kelly Sampson, who won in 19 minutes, 25 seconds.

"I'm excited we're going to states (Saturday at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn). That was our goal ... and we accomplished it," Sampson said this week. "We worked hard, and we are coming together. Hopefully we can go even further next season."

Renaissance won with 50 points, ahead of St. Clair Shores Lakeview (83) and Royal Oak Dondero (87).

### Cross country state finals

**What:** Michigan High School Athletic Association cross-country finals, four divisions, boys and girls.

**When:** Saturday, Michigan International Speedway, Brooklyn.

**Schedule:** 7:30 a.m., Entrance opens. 10 a.m., Division 3 girls. 10:30 a.m., Division 4 girls. 11 a.m., Division 3 boys. 11:30 a.m., Division 4 boys. 12:15 p.m., Divisions 3 and 4 awards. 1:30 p.m., Division 2 girls. 2 p.m., Division 1 girls. 2:30 p.m., Division 2 boys. 3 p.m., Division 1 boys.

**Admission:** \$5.

**Information:** Results will be posted on mhsaa.com approximately 60 minutes

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"People don't expect distance runners to come out of the city," Renaissance Coach Rick Miotke said.

Renaissance's squad includes sophomore Amber Hay, seventh at the regional in 21:21; sophomore Sharlonda Nunn, 12th in 22:40; freshman Alex Cunningham, 13th in 22:44; and sophomore Mica Crayton, 14th in 22:45.

"There are 30 teams that qualified, so if we can get in the top 20, we know we are doing well," Miotke said.

**KVC excels**

There's something about the Kensington Valley Conference that lends itself to distance runners. From 1990-99, the conference has won eight boys and two girls trophies for finishing in the top two, with 37 top-10 finishes, 22 boys and 15 girls.

Five KVC teams qualified for the Division 1 finals -- Huron Valley Milford, Novi and Huron Valley Lakeland boys, and Brighton and Milford girls.

Milford's boys are ranked No. 1 in Michigan, No. 5 in the Midwest and No. 7 nationally.

Analyzing this trend, Milford Coach **Brian Salyers** said, "The level of competition breeds success. The dual meets promote school spirit and large participation.

"We have the Livingston-Oakland middle school league that feeds the KVC high schools. It's excellent. We have six major parks, including Kensington, to run, and dirt roads that offer a more friendly training surface."

Saturday, Milford handily won its regional at Springfield Oaks in Davisburg with 45 points, followed by Novi (71) and Huron Valley Lakeland (123).

Milford junior **Dan DeRusha** was first in 15:55; Brighton senior **Kevin Gienapp** second, in 16:06; Clarkston senior **Jared Elmore** third, in 16:25.1. Next were **Mark Moore**, a sophomore from Novi, in 16:26; **Brian Gilchrist**, a senior from Novi, in 16:28; **Adam Craig**, a Lakeland senior, in 16:29; **Pat Miller**, a Milford senior, in 16:32; **Chris Welch**, a senior from Lakeland, in 16:33.5; Pinckney senior **Matt Tidman** in 16:33.9; and Milford senior **Seth Thibodeau**, in 16:34.4.

There were 16 teams at the regional, but KVC runners took nine of the top 10 places.

*You can reach Bev Eckman-Onyskow at (313) 222-2392 or at [beckman@detnews.com](mailto:beckman@detnews.com).*

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HIGH SCHOOLS

# Lutheran NW's Rolf wins Division 4 state title

By MARVIN GOODWIN  
Of The Oakland Press

**BROOKLYN** — Milford's boys and Clarkston's girls were each in the running for state cross country titles Saturday at Michigan International Speedway.

But Laura Rolf of Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest had the lone winning effort for Oakland County participants.

Rolf captured the Division 4 individual title, running the five-kilometer course in 18:16.4 in capping an undefeated season. Shannon Stanley of Rochester Adams took second in the girls Division 1 race for the third straight year.

Meanwhile, Milford's boys were runners-up for the second straight year — Rockford

won with 133 points, the Mavs had 135 and Novi was

third with 161 — and Clarkston's girls also took second in Division 1 behind Rockford, which scored 57 points to win its fifth straight state title.

Clarkston had 110, Brighton had 116 and Milford placed fourth with 135.

Bloomfield Hills Lahser's boys were third in the Division 2 race with 188 points as Dexter won with 70.

After being ranked No. 1 in the state much of the season, the Mavericks' runner-up fin-



Rolf

ish tempered their spirits. Seth Thibodeau was Milford's top finisher in 25th place. After finishing last in last year's

race, Dan DeRusha, the team's top runner all season, was 76th.

"We've run very well all year," coach Brian Salyers said. "Today we were two points short. They're very disappointed and everyone can point their fingers to themselves. We share the disappointment."

Novi's Mark Moore, eighth in 15:47, and Brian Gilchrist (19th in 15:55) paced the Wildcats. Lakeland's Chris Welch was 10th (15:48) and teammate Adam Craig (15:52) was 15th. Oxford's Donnie

Richmond was 11th in 15:48, Troy Athens' Chris Hammer was 17th in 15:54 and Clarkston's Mark Sitko surged to 20th in 15:55.

Lahser's Bruce Kaczmarek, 24th in 16:11, and Mike Quick, 29th in 16:18 paced the Knights to their best finish since 1971 when they also placed third.

"For us to graduate three seniors from our team last year ... and for us to finish third, that proves how hard we've worked," coach Nick Stratton said. "The kids are definitely excited about what they did."

In the girls race, Stanley was second behind Rockford's Nikki Bohsack, who won her second straight title in 17:43.

"I felt really strong during the race ... and I'm really happy with my time," said Stanley, whose 17:56 topped

last year's effort.

Clarkston, which finished second to Brighton at last week's regional, beat Brighton this time but couldn't handle Rockford. Liz Mengyan was fifth (18:32) and Mo Kuhta was seventh (18:40) to lead Clarkston.

"It was a good solid effort, but we could've run better," coach Jamie LaBrosse said. "They've (Rockford) got a good solid program (and) we're going to take a run at them again next year. We're not going away."

Lisa Canty took fourth for Milford in 18:31 and teammate Kristin Granroth was 19th in 18:50.

Lahser freshman Caitlin Clifford, in her first state meet, took fourth in the Division 2 girls race in 18:37.

Rolf didn't finish last year's race, succumbing to exhaus-

tion near the end. This year, she managed her pace and passed Caitlin Kelly of Kinde-North Huron in the last quarter mile.

"I just used all the energy I had left," said Rolf. "It feels great. It was very different from last time. Last year I went home crying."

In Division 3, Megan Young of Birmingham Detroit Country Day placed sixth in 19:05. Hillsdale won with 152 points.

In Division 4, Val Allen took 19th to lead Southfield Christian to 12th place with 304 points. Ann Arbor Greenhills won with 93.

In the boys Division 4 race, won by Harbor Springs with 113 points, Luke Hutchins placed 25th to lead Southfield Christian to 11th place with 329 points. Hemlock won the boys Division 4 title with 90 points.

■ For complete  
finals results  
See Page B-11



Black Craig DeRusha Gilchrist Moore Naughton Richmond Quick Thibodeau Welch  
Canty Clifford Granroth Kuhta Martin Mengyan Nordquist Rolf Stanley Young

# Milford, Clarkston head up All-County cross teams

By MARVIN GOODWIN  
Of The Oakland Press

Runners from the Kensington Valley Conference (KVC) dominated this year's All-Oakland County cross country team. Six runners from the conference are on the 10-team squad and two of the teams represented. Milford and Novi, placed second and third respectively at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Dan DeRusha, Milford:** The Mavs' top runner garnered regional, KVC, Spartan Invitational and Oakland County meet individual titles and led Milford to team titles in those meets. Dominated most of his races, only needs to solve state meet dilemma.

■ **Neal Naughton, Walled Lake Western:** Likes to take charge in races and runs from the front, according to coach Mike Formanek. Won Hazellet and Walled Lake Western invitationals and was runner-up at county meet. Suffered a broken foot while taking fourth at Gabriel Richard Invitational, cutting short his season.

■ **Adam Craig, Lakeland:** Steady runner always among the leaders in every race. He was eighth at the county meet, seventh at the Brother Rice Invitational, third at the KVC meet, sixth at regional and finished 15th in Division 1.

■ **Chris Welch, Lakeland:** Along with Craig, formed a strong 1-2 punch with consistent effort. Was fifth at the KVC meet, fifth at the Oakland County meet, eighth at regional, eighth at the Brother Rice Invitational and 10th at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Donnie Richmond, Oxford:** Strong finish was the Flint Metro Conference champ's forte. He was regional champ, fourth at the Oakland County meet, Brother Rice Invitational runner-up, Oxford Invitational champ and placed 11th at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **John Black, Brother Rice:** Helped the Warriors to one of their

## All-County boys first team

Name	School	Year	Season Best
Dan DeRusha	Milford	Jr.	15:22
Adam Craig	Lakeland	Sr.	15:52
Chris Welch	Lakeland	Sr.	15:48
Mark Moore	Novi	Soph.	15:47
John Black	Brother Rice	Soph.	15:52
Mike Quick	Lahser	Fr.	15:58
Seth Thibodeau	Milford	Jr.	15:59
Brian Gilchrist	Novi	Sr.	15:55
Donnie Richmond	Oxford	Jr.	15:48
Neal Naughton	W.L. Western	Jr.	15:41

## All-County boys second team

Name	School	Year	Season Best
Chris Harrner	Troy Athens	Jr.	15:54
Mark Soko	Clarkston	Sr.	15:55
Bruce Kaczmarek	Lahser	Soph.	16:11
Kyle Harris	Milford	Jr.	16:05
Jared Elmore	Clarkston	Sr.	16:12
Chad Murray	Milford	Jr.	16:07

**HONORABLE MENTION:** Dana Pzrook (Milford), Pat Miller (Milford), Tim Kava (Novi), Eric Joseph (Novi), Brenden Godwin (St. Mary's), Steve Czarnocki (Rochester Adams), Justin Switzer (Waterford Kettering), Bryan McFins (Rochester), Shane Giben (Brother Rice), Mike Frisch (Avalon), Bob Peterson (Lake Orion), Thomas Cowan (Troy), Colin Orr (West Bloomfield), Marc Rouslet (Brother Rice), Tom Kruszewski (Walled Lake Central), Roy Setsuda (Walled Lake Central).

best seasons as their leading runner. He was third in the Catholic League, third at regional, seventh at the Oakland County meet and placed 16th at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Mark Moore, Novi:** After a 15th-place finish at the Oakland County meet, came on strong at season's end. Was fourth at regional and KVC meets and was the area's top finisher at the state meet, taking eighth in the D-1 race.

■ **Brian Gilchrist, Novi:** Quickly adapted after moving from Saratoga Springs, N.Y., where he was a member of Class A and Federation state championship team. Placed sixth at the KVC meet, ninth at the Oakland County meet, fifth at regional and 19th at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Seth Thibodeau, Milford:** Started high school career as mediocre runner but piled up mileage to join area's best in his first year on varsity. Was third at the county meet, fourth at the Spartan Invitational, 10th at

regional and 25th in Division 1.

■ **Mike Quick, Bloomfield Hills Lahser:** The only freshman on the squad. Quick was 13th at the Oakland County meet, second at the Spartan and Holly Invitationals, and OAA II and regional champ and placed 26th at the Division 2 state meet.

■ **Coach of the Year Nick Stratton, Bloomfield Hills Lahser** — In his fourth season, Stratton continues to keep the Knights on an upward swing. After losing three seniors from their top five of last year from a team which took fourth in the Division 2 state meet, the Knights took third at state this season.



Stratton

By MARVIN GOODWIN  
Of The Oakland Press

Four-time All-State runner Shannon Stanley of Rochester Adams found her familiar place on the girls All-County cross country team while Clarkston and Milford, with a combined five representatives on youthful squads, get ready for future successes. Laura Rolf of Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest was the lone state champion from Oakland County.

■ **Shannon Stanley, Rochester Adams:** The senior was third at the Oakland County meet, won Brother Rice Invitational and regional titles, placed 10th at the Spartan Invitational, was OAA I league runner-up and Division 1 state runner-up for the third straight year.

■ **Laura Rolf, Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest:** Won Metro Conference and regional titles but showed she could run with the larger schools by winning the Oakland County meet and Division 4 state crowns in capping an unbeaten season.

■ **Megan Young, Detroit Country Day:** Another solid season for the sophomore who was runner-up at the Oakland County, regional and Spartan Invitationals meets, and won the Oxford, Holly and Carman-Ainsworth Invitationals.

■ **Callin Clifford, Bloomfield Hills Lahser:** Made a big improvement during her first season of high school competition. Was Brother Rice Invitational runner-up, second at the Oxford Invitational and won OAA 2 and regional titles before finishing fourth at the Division 2 state meet.

■ **Lisa Canty, Milford:** Continued to improve from her freshman season, winning Huron Invite and KVC meet titles. Placed fourth at the Division 1 state meet. She was 12th her freshman

## All-County girls first team

Name	School	Year	Best Time
Shannon Stanley	Adams	Sr. 1	7:56
Liz Mengyan	Clarkston	Soph.	18:32
Mo Kuhta	Clarkston	Jr.	18:40
Lisa Canty	Milford	Jr.	18:31
Kristin Granroth	Milford	Jr.	18:50
Gillian Nordquist	Clarkston	Soph.	19:31
Theresa Martin	Troy Athens	Jr.	18:38
Megan Young	Country Day	Soph.	18:48
Laura Rolf	Lutheran NW	Soph.	18:18
Callin Clifford	Lahser	Fr.	18:28

## All-County girls second team

Name	School	Year	Best Time
Lyndsay Smith	Clarkston	Fr.	19:50
Anne Olson	Clarkston	Soph.	19:09
Jennifer Waters	Marion	Sr.	19:06
Tiffany Kald	Milford	Jr.	19:13
Mallory Farnum	Milford	Soph.	19:14
Allison Smith	Groves	Sr.	19:18

**HONORABLE MENTION:** Ashley Anderson (Rochester Adams), Beth Byrne (Rochester Adams), Lauren Witt (Clarkston), Beth Hill (Troy), Susan Barrows (North Farmington), Rachel Burton (Farmington), Ashley Wharton (Lake Orion), Megan Kald (Milford), Megan Jambeck (Milford), Val Allen (Southfield Christian), Ashley Fort (Troy Athens), Beth Hoekstra (Clarkston), Alycia Mauney (South Lyon), Shannon Bailey (Farmington Harmon), Shannon LaBrosse (Farmington Mercy).

year and eighth last year.

■ **Kristin Granroth, Milford:** Normally found among the leaders along with her teammate, the junior placed third in the KVC meet, seventh at the Oakland County meet and 19th at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Theresa Martin, Troy Athens:** An aggressive runner who wasn't afraid to take the lead, Martin was fifth at Oakland County, Spartan and Holly invitationals and was regional champion before taking 26th at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Liz Mengyan, Clarkston:** The team's leading runner all season, she paced the Wolves to a second-place finish at the Division 1 state meet. She was OAA I meet and regional champion and placed fifth at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Mo Kuhta, Clarkston:** Along with Mengyan formed the area's best 1-2 punch in cross country. A regional runner-up to her teammate, Kuhta placed seventh at the Division 1 state meet.

■ **Gillian Nordquist, Clarkston:** The sophomore finished 10th at the Oakland County meet, fourth at the Holly Invitational and fourth at the Brother Rice Invitational.

■ **Coach of the Year Jamie LaBrosse, Clarkston:** Since he took over as varsity coach three seasons ago, the Wolves have improved each year. They were sixth at the Division 1 state meet last year and took second this year after winning the Spartan, Holly, Hanson and Brother Rice invitationals and winning the Cavalier Classic and second straight Oakland County title.

The Wolves were unbeaten in dual meets and won the OAA 1 title, too.



LaBrosse

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Tuesday, December 10, 2002

## Boys 2002 All-Metro Cross Country Teams

By Bev Eckman-Onyskow / The Detroit News

### Bradley Bohlinger

#### Grosse Pointe Woods University Liggett

Bohlinger, a senior, finished 13th in Division 4 in a personal-best 16 minutes, 46 seconds. That made him the highest Metro boys finisher in Divisions 3 and 4. He was undefeated in Metro Conference jamborees and won his regional at Belle Isle. "He's a multisport athlete. He's a scrapper. He's a hockey player and a gutsy runner," Coach David Boynton said. "He runs competitively during the summer, so he's dedicated. Our former coach, Phil Langford, works with him. Brad runs from the front. His goal is to cross the line and fall over. He leaves it all out there."

### Dan DeRusha

#### Highland Milford

DeRusha, a junior, had an off-day at states, finishing 76th in 16:35.20, after winning his regional at Springfield Oaks in 15:55. His season-best was 15:22, good for fourth in Hilliard (Ohio) Davidson Meet of Champions. He won the Kensington Valley Conference, the Oakland County meet and the Spartan Invitational, and as part of three straight top-five team finishes. "Dan has been blessed with tremendous physical tools and worked hard to fully develop them," Coach Brian Salyers said. "He is strong, efficient and possesses exceptional leg speed. Dan has a passion for his sport and his team."

### Kevin Gienapp

#### Brighton

Gienapp, a senior, finished fifth in Division 1 in 15:37, his personal best by 20 seconds. He won the Reese, Lansing Eastern, Ypsilanti and Rochester Adams invitationals, and five duals, and was runner-up in the Kensington Valley Conference. "He's very goal-oriented, and he has a good work ethic to achieve his goals," Coach Bob Ritsema said. "He



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maintains a good pace, so only the top runners are there at the two-mile mark. He plans his race strategy, and when he gets done, he analyzes it, he's his own worst critic."

**David Lucas****Detroit Catholic Central**

Lucas, a junior, was 38th in Division 1 at states in 16:12.40. He was 5-0 in duals and won the Catholic Central and Sturgis invitationals. He was third at Haslett and third in his regional, fourth at the Holly Invitational and fifth at West Bloomfield. "A (right) hip pointer threw his stride really off at states," Coach Tony Magni said. "He's the type of runner who'll focus on the leaders, and not let them get away. His strength kicks in at the end. He picks off as many as possible. He goes into a race knowing exactly who the top runners are, and goes after them."

**Mark Moore****Novi**

Moore, a sophomore, finished eighth in Division 1 in a personal-best 15:47.50. He won the Walled Lake Invitational and was fourth in a tough regional and the highly competitive Kensington Valley Conference. "He had a breakout race against Milford in early October which proved to Mark he was capable of racing an entire 5K at a high level," Coach Bob Smith said. "From there his confidence soared, and he's been an elite runner ever since. His style is evolving. He's now comfortable running with the front guns the entire way. He led the state meet for the first mile and hung on for a very solid eighth place, he was the highest-placing sophomore at the state meet."

**Larz McElroy****St. Clair**

McElroy, a senior, finished seventh in Division 2 in a personal-best 15:54.60. McElroy won eight invitationals, including Brown City, Linden, Cros-Lex Port Huron and Marysville, and was the Macomb Area Conference White Division champion. "He's got extreme dedication. He gets up to 90 miles a week in the summer and 70-80 miles during the season. He never misses a day," Coach Jon Davidson said. "He's a smart runner. He'll let the other people run the first half of the race, and he takes over after that."

**Bohlinger****McElroy****DeRusha****Quick****Glenapp****Voss****Lucas****Welch****Moore****Salyers**

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## **Mike Quick**

### **Bloomfield Hills Lahser**

Quick, a freshman, was undefeated in regular-season duals and was the Oakland Activities Association Division 2 champion. Quick ran his season best (15:58.9), winning his regional at Metro Beach and was 29th at states in 16:18.90. He was second in the Spartan and Holly invitationals and fifth at the Oxford Invitational. "Mike has great enthusiasm for running. He enjoys daily practices and competition," Coach Nick Stration said. "Mike has the ability to go out at a hard pace and then maintain that hard pace throughout the race."

## **Dustin Voss**

### **Saline**

Voss, a senior, finished second in Division 1 in a personal-best and school-record 15:21.85. He won the Brother Rice and Ypsilanti invitationals and his regional, and was second at the Holly and Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard invitationals. Coach Tom Frederick termed Voss "the most gifted athlete I've worked with in my coaching career. He came in as a freshman running 16:13, which was the fastest freshman time in Saline history. He's a real guts runner. He can kick it up another notch. He goes out fast in the lead and pushes the pace."

## **Chris Welch**

### **White Lake Lakeland**

Welch, a senior, was 10th in Division 1 in 15:48.35, his season best. "He was eighth in tough regional in 16:33. It was outstanding to come back and be 10th in the state," Coach Randy Wilkins said. Welch was fifth in the Kensington Valley Conference in 16:35, and fifth in the Oakland County meet in 16:40.

## **Brian Salyers**

### **Coach, Highland Milford**

Salyers led his team to the No. 1 ranking in Division 1, which it held most of the season. Milford finished a close second to Rockford at the state meet, 133-135, its sixth consecutive top-10 finish. Milford's boys were 7-0 in duals and won the Kensington Valley Conference, the most competitive and toughest cross country conference in the state; the Oakland County meet, with 31 points, the lowest total in 30 years; and their regional. Milford's girls, also coached by Salyers, were 6-1 in duals and finished fourth in the state in Division 1. Salyers was named Coach of the Year by the Michigan Interscholastic Track Coaches Association.

**Second team:** Neil Atzinger, Saline; John Black, Birmingham Brother Rice; Tim Copacia, Utica Eisenhower; Adam Craig, White Lake Lakeland. Brian Gilchrist, Novi; Jon Hodge, Grosse Ile; Neal Naughton, Walled Lake Western; Donnie Richmond, Oxford; Mark Sitko, Clarkston; Seth Thibodeau, Highland Milford.

**Honorable mention:** David Brown, Port Huron Northern; Brian Doot, Detroit Catholic Central; Jared Elmore, Clarkston; James Erickson, Belleville; Matt Gillespie, Livonia Stevenson; Justin Hajduk, Salem; Jon Hans, Dearborn Heights Crestwood; Kyle Harris, Highland Milford; Dan Horgan, Detroit Catholic Central; Luke Hutchins, Southfield Christian; Bruce Kaczmarek, Bloomfield Hills Lahser; Tim Kava, Novi; Pat Miller, Highland Milford; Chad Murray, Highland Milford;