

## **MORRIS COUNTY GIRLS REWIND-WEEK 8**

Villa Walsh's ``pack attack'', led by triple winner Megan Curham, made history by winning the first title in school history. Randolph made it a five in a row. Keturah Orji of Mount Olive was the only athlete in the state (boy or girl) to win four individual gold medals, and Mendham, West Morris, Pequannock, Mount Olive, and Whippany Park all advanced to the state group championships with second place finishes to highlight action at the state sectional championships last Friday and Saturday.

The top two teams in each sectional plus any athletes from those teams that placed in the top 12, along with the top six individual finishers in each event advanced to the state group championships this Friday and Saturday.

More on that later.

First, let's look back at all the sensational performances by Morris County's finest at the sectional championships.

### **SECTIONAL FLASHBACK**

#### **HISTORY MAKERS**

Princeton-bound Megan Curham won the 800 in 2:25.20, the 1,600 in 5:08.40, and the 3,200 in 10:36.42 to spark Villa Walsh to a 110-97 ½ victory over Kent Place for the North Jersey, Non-Public B North title at Msgr. Donovan in Toms River.

Also for Villa Walsh, sophomore Grace Penders won the long jump at 15-2 ¾, and the triple jump with a 32-8 ½, freshman Mary Lynch was fourth in the 3,200 11:57.77, senior Chrissy Clark finished second in the 400 hurdles 1:10.53, and third in the 100 hurdles with a PR of 16.59, and sophomore Monica Benz was fifth in the pole vault (9-6) and third in the high jump (4-8). Villa Walsh also qualified for the group meet in all three relays.

``The team victory was a first for Villa Walsh and validated our "pack attack" or team approach, with us qualifying in 15 events," said Villa Walsh coach Rick Synold. ``Having only three seniors, we were very lucky to have three special ones who were great mentors throughout the year."

Also at the North Jersey, Non Public B North meet, Emilie Cowan of St.

Elizabeth, the Morris County 400 champion, won the 200 (26.76) and the 400 (59.83).

## **DRIVE FOR FIVE**

Randolph, which received individual golds from Liz Lansing, Samantha Kral and Aliyah Huland El and one from its 4x800 relay team, rolled to a 112-80 victory over runner-up Ridgewood for its fifth straight North Jersey, Section 1 Group 4 title in Randolph.

Lansing won the 800 in 2:14.27 and was second in the 1,600 in 5:02.54. Kral won the 100 hurdles in 15.53, and Huland El won the triple jump and was third in the long jump. The Rams won the 4x800 in 9:58.90.

Also in North Jersey, Sec. 1 Group 4, Tara Liska of Roxbury cleared 9-3 to win the pole vault.

## **FIT TO BE TIED**

Mendham, the Morris County Relay champion, and West Morris tied for second in North Jersey, Section 2 Group 3, and Pequannock was the runner-up in North Jersey, Section 1 Group 1 as all three teams earned a berth in the state group championships this weekend.

At the North Jersey, Section 2 Group 3 meet at Millburn, Mendham and West Morris were locked up in a great 4-way battle with Woodbridge and Cranford for the team title.

Woodbridge secured its first title ever by winning the 4x400 (4:03.51), but Mendham got second and West Morris sixth in the 4x400 to each finish tied for second with 72 points. Cranford was fourth with 67.

Kylene Cochrane led the charge for West Morris, winning the 1,600 (4:59.35) and the 800 (2:16.88), while teammate Kendall Ballotti won the high jump (5-0).

For Mendham, Mackenzie Barry set a new Section 2 record with her winning time in the 3,200 (10:30.36), ran on the winning 4x800, and finished third in the 1,600.

## **MCGROGAN SPARKS GOLDEN PANTHERS**

At the North Jersey, Section 1 meet at Randolph, Pequannock won the 4x100 (51.56) and 4x400 (4:08.92) and Jenn McGrogan captured the high jump (4-10) to help the Golden Panthers finish second behind Hasbrouck Heights, 102-93.33.

Nicole Rodriguez of Kinnelon had a great meet in North Jersey, Section 1 Group 1, winning the 1,600 and 3,200.

## **SUPER QUAD**

Keturah Orji was the biggest individual winner in the state at sectionals as the junior won the 100 (12.29), the 200 (25.44), the long jump (18-11  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) and the triple jump as she broke her own meet record with 40-11. Led by Orji, Mount Olive placed second in North Jersey, Section 1 Group 3 with 64  $\frac{1}{2}$  points. Northern Highlands won with 83.

Jefferson, the Morris County champion, finished third, just five points behind Mount Olive. Katie Hatler and Carrie Wasdyke led the way for Jefferson. Hatler won the 100 HH in 14.62 and ran on the winning 4x100 (50.67). Wasdyke won the shot put 42-8) and discus (122-8).

## **FIELD DAY**

The Whippany Park field event put on a clinic at Ridge High School, racking up 61 points to help the Wildcats place second to Newark Tech, 156-82.

Whippany's 61 field event points were points than third place Verona (548) scored on the track and in the field combined.

Nikolette Dunbar won the shot put with a meet record 42-10  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and Whippany got a 1-2-3 in the pole vault, led by Ashley Granato's victory of 7-6, which came in heavy rain and extremely windy conditions.

## **SAUNDERS SIZZLES**

Bria Saunders of Parsippany lit up the track at the North Jersey, Section 2 Group 2 meet at Millburn. She won the 100 in 12.56, the 200 in 25.25, the 400 in 59.52, and anchored the winning 4x400 to help lead the Red Hawks fourth place finish with 66 points. Bernards won with 103.

Also for Parsippany, Ally Schlosser placed 6th in the 1,600 and 4th in the 3,200 with a PR of 11:41.370. Gabby Rachmaciej was on the 4x800 that placed 4th and ran the second leg of the winning 4x400. Jen Mylnar placed 6th in the intermediate hurdles in 1:10.13., ran on the 4x 800 and ran the

third leg of the 4x400. Krysten Mayers placed 4th in the long jump, 2nd in the 200 and led off the winning 4x400, and Kathryn Campbell placed 4th in the javelin.

Also at the North Jersey, Section 2 Group 2 meet, Helene Rowland of Madison won the shot put and discus.

## **NEXT UP**

The NJSIAA State Group Championships will be held this Friday and Saturday, and there will be one major change involving the team scoring. For the first time ever, only the top two teams from each public school sectional meet are eligible to win a group team championship.

The eight teams that advanced can use all their athletes that placed in the top 12 in the sectional meet. The individuals that advanced from all the teams that didn't finish in the top 10, will not count in the team scoring. This new system will allow for a truer team champion to be crowned as opposed to the past when a couple superstars from one team could win a group team title by themselves.

Note-There is no team qualifying system for the Non Public teams. The top 8 finishers from all the Non Public teams at the sectional meet advanced to the state group meet.

**Here are the Morris County public school teams that advanced to the group meet**

Group 4-**Randolph** (first in North Jersey, Section 1)

Group 3-**Mount Olive** (second in North Jersey, Section 1), **Mendham** and **West Morris**, which tied for second in North Jersey, Section 2.

Group 1-**Pequannock** (second on North Jersey, Section 1) and **Whippany Park** (second in North Jersey, Section 2).

## **GROUP CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Dates-Friday, May 31 at 3:30 p.m.. Saturday, June 1 at 11 a.m.

Frank Jost Field in South Plainfield-Groups 2-3 and Non Public A

Silver Eagle Stadium in Egg Harbor-Groups 1-4 and Non-Public B

### **AT STAKE**

The top six finishers in each event in each group meet plus six wild cards per event from the six group meets combined will advance to the Meet of Champions next Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at Frank Jost Field in South Plainfield. The Meet of Champions starts at 3 p.m.