

MORRIS COUNTY BOYS-WEEK 6 REWIND

Air Jordan!!!!!!

Those are the first two words to come to mind when I think back to the week that was in Morris County over the last week.

I am of course referring to the aerial exploits of ``Air'' Jordan Pacheco, the senior pole vaulter at Morris Hills who sent the home crowd at Gifford Stadium into a frenzy last Wednesday at the NJAC Large Schools meet at Morris Hills.

With the home crowd, opposing coaches and fellow competitors jammed around the pole vault mat in the back corner of Gifford Stadium, Pacheco put on the greatest pole vault show in Morris County history.

With victory already sewn up and a personal best of 15-2 already in his pocket, Pacheco raised the bar to 15-8 in an attempt to break the Morris County record.

On his second try, Pacheco sailed over 15-8 as the crowd roared and he began celebrating on the mat when he bounced up. Pacheco's 15-8 broke the Morris County record of 15-7 ½ set in 1992 by Greg Schroeder of Hanover Park.

Pacheco wasn't done.

With the crowd growing in numbers and still buzzing after his recent clearance, Pacheco scaled over 16-1 on his second try and the place went berserk.

At the time, the 16-1 was No. 1 in New Jersey this season, tied for No. 5 in state history, and was the best pole vault performance by a New Jersey athlete since Adam Sarafian of Ocean Township cleared a state record 17-4 ½ in 2004.

A few days later, Craig Hunter of Robbinsville reclaimed the state lead when he cleared 16-6 at the Mercer County Championships.

After missing on his three tries at 16-5, Pacheco did a back flip on the mat to celebrate what he accomplished.

``My biggest goal this season was to get that county record and get 16-0," said the Slippery Rock-bound Pacheco, who came into the meet with a personal best of 15-1. "So to accomplish both on the same day is a pretty

awesome feeling. I went up to 15-8 to get the record, then I picked 16-1 because I knew Hunter was No. 1 in the state with a 16-0 $\frac{3}{4}$, so I wanted to try to get the top vault in the state. I still have a lot of big goals for the rest of the season. I feel I can go even higher than this."

VENA SPARKS COUGARS TO RECORD

It was a break-out week for junior Andrew Vena.

After splitting 1:58.5 in the sprint medley at the Morris County Relays on May 4, Vena followed that up with a 50.87 in the 400 at the NJAC Championship meet on May 7th (5th place.)

The next day he again ran a strong 800 to take 3rd in the NJAC large school race in 1:58.87. He then split 50.4 on the opening leg of the 3rd place 4x400 that broke Chatham's 2008 school record in that race with a 3:24.46.

Carson Burns, Sean McHugh, and Jake Budlow were also on the record setting team. The previous school record in the 4x400 had been set in Frank Heffernan's last season as coach at Chatham and consisted of a team of Chris Black, TJ Lavelle, Corey Fauver, and Mike Brakken. (3:25.67)

MENDHAM GOES PR CRAZY AT NJAC'S

Mendham's great season continued with a number of personal best performances at the NJAC Large School Championships last week.

All these are PR's

Cory Pressl - 55.91 for third in the 400 IH

Christian Kildal-Brandt - 49.92 in second in the 400 and 1:58.20 in the 800 for second.

Dylan Heraghty - 50.07 in the 400 for third and 23.00 in the 200 for sixth

Pat Carney - 51.18 in the 400 for eighth

Justin Naselli - 4:23.95 in the 1,600 for third and 9:26.00 in the 3200 for first

Mendham also won the 4x400 in 3:23.41 as Christian Kildal-Brandt (50.5), Tom Pavarini (52.3), Pat Carney (51.1) and Dylan Heraghty (49.5) combined on the victory.

MORRIS COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS PREVIEW

**TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY
BOONTON HIGH SCHOOL, 4 P.M.**

Mendham, which won its first county relay title a couple weeks ago, will try to do it again against defending champion Morris Hills and Randolph.

Mendham edged Morris Hills for second place, 76-75, at the NJAC Large Schools meet last week and Randolph was third with 57.

“We're excited for the County Championships this week,” said Mendham coach Dave Quinn. “Morris Hills and Randolph have some great athletes and will be hard to beat as always. We hope to continue performing well and give ourselves a chance to win when the 4x400 relay lines up.”

Morris Hills will need all its guys to be at their best to win because it will be without star distance man Travis Ellis, who got hit with bronchitis recently. Randolph, second at the Morris County Relays, is very strong in the jumps and the throws behind Anthony Zarro, Aaron and Harris and Sam Kaplan.

HERE IS A LOOK AT EACH EVENT WITH PREDICTIONS

TEAMS: I am going with Mendham to win a close one over Morris Hills and Randolph.

100 and 200: These races are both toss ups. In the 100 and 200, Kamau Dumas of Morristown (11.07/22.66) and Adam Franklin of Mountain Lakes (11.08/22.66) are the two fastest runners in the race.

Also keep an eye on Malcom Chavis of Roxbury (22.85) and Jared McPherson of Montville Z(22.92) in the 200.

I am going to split this up and give Dumas the 100 and Franklin the 200.

400-It doesn't get much closer on pape than this as Malcolm Chavis of Roxbury (49.86), Lionel Chambers of Parsippany (49.87) and Christian Kildal-Brandt of Mendham (49.92) are the only runners to go sub 50.0 auto this season. I like Chambers to win a thriller.

800-With Travis Ellis of Morris Hills expected to miss the meet after a bout with bronchitis, sophomore Ben DeVenezia of Mountain Lakes is the

favorite to win this. DeVenezia has emerged as a big star on the track this season after a huge XC campaign. DeVenezia ran a personal best 1:56.43 last week and has shown a powerful kick this season. I don't see anyone being able to knock him off right now.

1,600-It's tough to bet against Josiah Hanko of Trinity Christian in this one, although Ben DeVenezia of Mountain Lakes (4:20.45 this season) and state indoor Group 3 champ Alex Cary of Morristown should be right with Hanko the whole way in a race that has the potential to be won in around 4:15. I am picking Hanko.

3,200-Hanko is expected to run this on Wednesday in a race where he should be battling with Mendham junior Justin Naselli, who closed in 58.5 to win NJAC Large School title in a meet record 9:26.00. I like Hanko to come out on top.

HH-Jules Hislop of Delbarton, the county champion indoors, is the favorite in this. He's in the only guy in the county to go under 15.00 this season. Daniel Barreira of Hanover Park is the best of the rest. Hislop should win big.

IH-Jules Hislop of Delbarton and Greg Leeper of Morris Hills should have another great battle to the line.

At the NJAC meet, Leeper went out very fast and held off Hislop to win with a personal best of 53.91, the top time in the county this season. Hislop was second in 53.91. These two could push each other to a new state best I am going with Leeper in another close one.

HJ-Sophomore Spenser Clouse of Mendham, who shocked himself and everyone else when he made 6-5 at the county relays, is the clear choice to win this. It's hard to believe this is the first season he's ever high jumped. Three other jumpers have made 6-2, Ryan Harris and Anthony Zarro of Randolph and Jeremy Feland of Boonton. Clouse is the pick to win.

LJ-Greg Leeper of Morris Hills is the man to beat with his county best 22-9. Right behind him are Booker McLean of Montville (22-1) and Anthony Zarro of Randolph (22-0). Leeper is the pick.

TJ-Anthony Zarro of Randolph (44-7) and Jeremy Feland of Boonton (44-4 3/4) are the top two seeds. Zarro should win,

SP-This one is up for grabs between a bunch of guys with eight throwers over 50 feet. Dan Miller of Morristown is the top seed with a 53-2 1/2, but Tommy Rhodes of Delbarton, Grant Sanchez of Morris Hills, Sam Kaplan of Randolph, and Ryan Agbim and Matt Santangelo of Hanover Park are all capable of winning. I am sticking with Miller.

DIS-Four guys have thrown over 156 this season with Grant Sanchez of Morris Hills leading the way with a 161-11. Troy Andretta of Kinnelon is next at 159-10. Sanchez is the pick.

JAV-Aaron Harris of Randolph leads the county with a 182-4, more than 13 feet ahead of the next best thrower. Harris is the obvious choice to win.

PV-Jordan Pacheco of Morris Hills, who broke the county record with a 16-1 last week at the NJAC meet, will be trying to take his game to even higher heights. Pacheco is my pick.

4x400-If the team title comes down to this event then Mendham has the advantage. The Minutemen have the top time in the county of 3:22.41, more than 2 seconds faster than anyone else. Mendham should win in around 3:21 and change.

IN THE Paddock

The 43rd East Coast Relays, one of the best and biggest meets of the season, is scheduled for Monday at Randolph at 3:45 p.m. Rain date is Tuesday at the same time and place.

After the East Coast Relays, the state sectionals is next on the schedule (May 24-25) as the Road to the Meet of Champions continues.

FYI-The Meet of Champions is back at Frank Jost Field in South Plainfield (June 5) after spending the last two years at Old Bridge's Lombardi Field.