

They are coming from all corners of the state, and from even as far as Northport, N.Y. They are coming for one reason!! To run on the hallowed ground of Holmdel Park.

The time has finally arrived as more than 8,100 runners will rock the trails of Holmdel at this Saturday's adidas Shore Coaches Invitational.

It's a meet that serves as the perfect mid-season barometer for teams and runners, separating the contenders from the pretenders on the 3.1-mile state championship layout.

There will be 28 races!!!! That's right, 28 races!!!

There are 15 boys races (six varsity) and 12 girls races (six varsity) and one open race. The first race starts at 9 a.m. and the final race (the open race) is scheduled for 5:05.

IMPORTANT INFO ABOUT PARKING -There is no on-site parking available at Holmdel Park or on any surrounding side streets for the Shore Coaches meet. You must go to the Vonage parking lot in Holmdel and hop on a free bus to Holmdel Park. If you park on the side streets around Holmdel Park you will get ticketed.

It's time to check out what to look at the Shore Coaches meet as several of Morris Cohnty's finest will be in action.

BOYS SHORE COACHES OUTLOOK

Morris County will be well represented in the Championship Race at 3:05 p.m as Mendham and Josiah Hanco of Trinity Christian will mix it up with many of the state's best.

NJ #1 and U.S. #2 Christian Brothers Academy will be one of 13 ranked teams in the state that will toe the line in the Championship Race. Northport, a perennial power from New York, is also in the Championship Race.

CBA will hold out its top runners as coach Tom Heath's pack prepares for the Eastern States Championship race in Oct. 12 at the Manhattan Invitational at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx. But don't fall asleep on the Colts. Remember what they did at the Meet of Champions last year when they won the team title with mostly J.V. runners in the lineup.

CBA will go with Drew Reda, Aidan Durney, Nick Trigani, Mike Cassidy, Jon Dooling, Brian Dengler, and Jack Morris. Morris, a junior, earned the final spot by finishing first in a dual meet on Thursday in 17:04.

The other ranked teams from New Jersey in the Championship Race are No. 3 Pope John, No. 4 Haddonfield, No. 5 West Windsor South, No. 6 South Brunswick, No. 7 Westfield, No. 9 Middletown North, No. 10 Southern, No. 11 Millburn, No. 12 Voorhees, No. 14 Mendham, No. 16 Kingsway, and No. 18 St. Peter's Prep.

Some teams will not be at full strength due to SAT's. Middletown North will run without 2012 Meet of Champions winner Tom O'Neill, and Mendham won't have frontrunner Justin Naselli.

Hanko, a senior, is coming off big wins at the Wave Mania and Six Flags Invitational the past two weeks. Hanko, the state Non Public B Champion last fall, appears fit enough to go under 16 at Holmdel for the first time. Last year he ran 16:00 at the Meet of Champions to finish 11th.

Hanko will face a loaded field that will include Kyle Kroon of Toms River South, a 2012 Foot Locker National finalist who was second at the Meet of Champions last year in 15:46, Rob Stone of Millburn, who won the North Jersey, Section 2 Group 3 title and was fifth at the Meet of Champions in 15:52, and Tim McGowan of Northport, N.Y., who went under nine in the 3,200 last spring.

GIRLS SHORE COACHES OUTLOOK

Morris County teams and runners will be right in the thick of things in the Championship Race (3:05 p.m) as No. 3 Randolph and Brennan Sharkey of West Morris will be on the line .

Randolph will not be at full strength as its dealing with some injuries to some key runners, but junior Liz Lansing will be in action as the first-year XC runner races at Holmdel for the first time.

The race is stacked with many of the top teams in the state.

Red Bank Catholic, which took over the No. 1 this week after its impressive win at the Ocean State Invitational last week in Rhode Island, will put that ranking on the line against nine ranked teams in the Championship Race (3:05 P.M.).

Among the teams looking to knock off RBC are No. 2 Rumson, No. 3 Randolph, No. 4 North Hunterdon, No. 6 West Windsor South, No. 7 Haddonfield, No. 9 Voorhees, No. 11 West Morris, No. 15 Ridge, and No. 18 Seneca.

No. 5 Mount St. Dominic, the preseason No. 1 team, has scratched from Championship Race because of injuries and illnesses. The Essex County powerhouse won the state Non Public A title last year.

The individual battle in the Championship Race should have plenty of fireworks with senior Brennan Sharkey of West Morris and Lansing right in the middle of things. Sharkey and Lansing will clash with freshman superstar Briana Gess of Haddonfield, Lacey's Danielle Leavitt, Clarissa Modde of Voorhees, and Eve Glasergreen of North Hunterdon will clash.

Sharkey has come out of nowhere this season to run some ridiculous times. She has gone 18:01 at Freedom Park, No. 2 in course history, and 18:06 at Greystone, No. 5 in course history.

Gess, one of the most highly touted freshman ever, has already run 18:38 at Holmdel this year when she won the Saturday In The Park 5-K last month in 18:38. The freshman course record of 18:20 was set in 2005 by Briana Jackucewicz of Colts Neck.

Lansing won the 1,600 at the outdoor Meet of Champions in 2012, and was second in the 1,600 at the M of C last spring.

Leavitt won the Shore Conference title last year, while Modde was 12th and Glasergreen 20th at the M of C last fall.

Mendham senior Mackenzie Barry will collide with sophomore Grace Dwyer of Nottingham, in the B race 2:50 p.m. in a race that could produce the fastest time of the day.

Last year, Barry finished first and Dwyer was third at the state Group 3 meet, and Barry was third and Dwyer eighth at the Meet of Champions. Barry has won two M of C titles on the track in the 3,200 (one indoor and one outdoors). Dwyer is coming off a big win in 18:47 at Bowdoin Park last week.

The Mount Olive girls, No. 8 in the state, have a lot of runners taking the SAT on Saturday, so they have decided to run in the Open Race.

SPECIAL GUEST STARS

Two of the biggest names and true legends in New Jersey track and field history, Monmouth County's own Robby Andrews and Ajee' Wilson, will be on hand at the Shore Coaches meet representing adidas.

The two superstars will be signing autographs and may serve as the honorary starters for the adidas Championship Races.

Andrews, a 2009 graduate of Manalapan, won 2 NCAA 800 titles at Virginia and is one of the top 800/1,500 runners in the U.S. His personal bests are 1:44.71 for 800, 3:34.78 for 1,500, and 3:57.82 for the mile.

Wilson, who graduated from Neptune High in 2012, is one of the top 800 runners in the World! She finished third at the 2012 U.S. Championships and sixth at the World Championships this past summer with a PR of 1:58.21.

Make sure to stop by and say hi to Robby and Ajee'. They are as friendly and easy going as they are talented.

MOUNT OLIVE KEEPS CLIMBING

The Mount Olive girls moved up one spot to No. 8 in the state's rankings this week after its impressive victory at the Passaic Coaches Invitational at Garret Mountain last Saturday.

Mount Olive was No. 9 when it averaged 20:31 and knocked off then No. 8 Wayne Hills and then No. 10 Voorhees to win the Group 3 title at the Passaic Coaches meet. Sophomore Alexandra Christian (fifth in 19:51) and junior Sarah Masukewicz (sixth in 19:52) led the way for the Marauders.

Mount Olive was trailing both Voorhees and Wayne Hills by two points after each team had three runners across, but Mount Olive's fourth and fifth runners rallied to give Mount Olive a 68-73 victory over Voorhees. Wayne Hills, missing one of its top five, was third with 106.

“It's nice to beat them today, but it's early in the season and we have to keep working hard to do well against them at states later in the season,” said Mount Olive senior Sara Christian, 14th in 20:38. “We have a lot of big goals and hopefully we can just keep building our way up to states. We are hoping to repeat as sectional champs and qualify for the Meet of Champions after just missing it last year.”

RANDIOLPH RUNS WELL AT BOWDOIN PARK

The Randolph girls, missing two key runners, still turned in a strong performance at the Bowdoin Park Classic last Saturday in Wappingers Falls, N.Y. Randolph averaged 21:09 and placed second to New York power Suffern, 33-82, in the Division 2 race. Junior Liz Lansing led the way for the Rams by placing fifth in 19:27. Junior Margaret Thomson was eighth in 20:15, and sophomore Nora May McSorley was 13th in 20:59.

1-2 PUNCH KNOCKS OUT THE COMPETITION

Junior Ben DeVenezia and senior Chris Luciano of Mountain Lakes, who form one of the best 1-2 combinations around, finished 2-3 in the Group 2 race at the Passaic Coaches Invitational to spark the Lakers to 62-73 victory over Bishop Ahr. DeVenezia, the 2012 state Group 1 champion, was second in 16:13, and Luciano, second in the state Group 1 race last year, was third in 16:14. Mountain Lakes, with just two seniors in its top seven, averaged 17:29.

HANLEY STARS AT STEWART

Senior Patrick Hanley of Madison continued his red hot running and the Morristown boys suffered an unfortunate ending to its race at the Stewart Memorial Invitational last Saturday at Warinanco Park in Elizabeth.

Hanley, one of the most pleasant surprises in the state this season, dropped a Warinanco PR of 16:59 to win the B race by 17 seconds. In the A race, Rudy “El Flashito” Morristown was in contention for the victory with a half mile left in the race, but he and two runners from Voorhees veered off course when they followed the white line used to mark the dual meet course. Morristown wound up second to Millburn, 73-91.

INN AND PULEO DROP BIG PR'S FOR MONTVILLE

Olivia Inn, a senior at Montville, and Joe Puleo, a junior at Montville, ran the best races of their lives at the Passaic Coaches Invitational last Saturday at Woodland Park.

Inn ran 21:24 to finish 29th in the girls Group 3 race in 21:24 to lead Montville to an eighth-place finish. Inn's time of 21:24 is a 22 second drop off her previous lifetime best that she ran at

Greystone.

In the boys Group 3 race, Puleo, a junior who never broke 19 before this season, ran 17:36 to finish 12th to spark Montvilele to a fifth place finish.

ALONG THE TRAIL

There were a number of impressive performances turned in by Morris County runners at the Passaic Coaches meet.

In the girls Group 4 race, Morris Knolls jammed three runners in the top seven and averaged 21:54 on its way to a second place finish with 54 points, just nine points behind the winner Watchung Hills. Morris Knolls was led by junior Jasmine Dostanko, third in 20:40, senior Allyson Black, fourth in 21:02, and senior Shannon Dolan, seventh in 21:11.

Max McVicar continued his super sophomore season by running 17:44 to place 13th in the boys Group 3 race to help Mount Olive place seventh in the team standings.

PARSIPPANNY REPORT

Parsippany coach Walt Bleuler filed this update on his team.

“The girls team had a nice week with 2 wins by defeating Whippany Park and Dover. Team was led by Ally Schlosser, followed by Jen Mylnar, Kati Hsu, Amanda Angulo, Bria Saunders, and Gabby Rachmaciej. The girls are now 3-1. Team ran well at the Safari Run at Great Adventure. Ally Schlosser did not run with issues with her hip. Jen Mylnar placed 17 in a time of 20:31 followed by Kati Hsu 22:09, Bria Saunders 22:10. Amanda Angulo 22:29, Gabby Rachmaciej 22:34, Michele Giambrone 22:53 and 7th. Runner is Nelli Guzman in 23:14. Team will race against Hanover Park and Madison on Tuesday. Team is hoping that Schlosser is back but if not we will continue to improve.

The boys team was led by Bhargarv Tarpara who placed first against Dover and Whippany Park. He was followed by Ronald Tudorache, Jon Ho, Dan Bamert, Steven Patroculo. The boys are hoping to run better as a pace and have the 3,4,5 runners break 20 minutes and develop into a better group of back runners. Tapara and Tudorache have been 18:13 and Tudorache in 18:38. Hopefully all parties improve to have a chance in the state sectional meet.”

Good luck to everyone competing at the adidas Shore Coaches Invitational. I hope everyone PR's.

GET UR MORRIS XC ON!!!!

