

MORRIS COUNTY REWIND

The Morris County Championships provided plenty of fireworks last Tuesday when Josiah Hanco, Chris Luciano, Paul Ehmann, Mackenzie Barry, Brennan Sharkey, Liz Lansing, the Randolph girls, Morristown boys, and rising star Sierra Castaneda led the fastest day in the history of Greystone!!!!

In the boys race, Hanco, a senior at Trinity Christian, finished first in 15:24.3 to smash the course record. Luciano, a senior at Mountain Lakes, dropped a huge personal best to get second in 15:40.8, No. 3 in course history. Ehmann, a junior, was third in 15:57.8, No. 8 in course history. Morristown repeated as champs with an average of 16:30, the fastest ever by a Morris County team at Greystone.

The girls were equally as impressive as Randolph crushed the course record average with an 18:47. Barry, a senior at Mendham, became the second girls to win three county XC titles as she posted another sub 18 time. Sharkey, a senior at West Morris, was second in 18:05.3, No. 5 in course history. Lansing, a junior, was third in 18:12, No. 7 in course history, and Castaneda, just a sophomore at West Morris, was fourth in 18:14.5, No. 12 on the all-time list at Greystone.

Let's take a look back at all the action from the county meet and beyond in **MORRIS COUNTY REWIND.**

HANKO's GEM

In the span of a couple days, Josiah Hanco of Trinity Christian went from not knowing if was going to be on the starting line at Tuesday's 60th Morris County Championships to becoming the fastest runner to ever cross the finish line on Greystone's 3.1-mile layout.

The Duke-bound Hanco, who decided last Sunday that he was good to go after nursing a strained calf the last few weeks, hit the mile in 4:50 and two miles in 9:45 before freezing the numbers on the clock at 15:24.3 to smash the course record of 15:29.6, set by Morgan Pearson of Delbarton at the county meet in 2010. Pearson also went to Duke before transferring to Colorado.

Hanco finished 16 seconds ahead of runner-up Chris Luciano of Mountain Lakes, who dropped a 46-second personal best with a 15:40.8, No. 3 in course history.

In the team competition, Morristown, No. 8 in The Star-Ledger Top 20, averaged 16:30.3, received six personal bests, and had five runners in the top 20 on the way to a 65-85 victory over a surging Delbarton team for its second straight team title.

Hanco, second at the county meet last year, was stunned by what he did.

“It's more of a shock than anything,” Hanco said. “I did not come into this race thinking about going for a course record. It was about going for the win, getting my first county title in cross-

country, and getting ready for the state meets. But when I came around the corner toward the finish and saw the clock at like 15:11, I was like wait a second. I never expected to run this fast."

Hanko wasn't so sure he'd be able to finish as fast as he did.

"At two miles I was feeling iffy and was just trying to get to the finish," he said. "But then I saw my coach (Brian Lee) with a half mile to go and he told me that I had the win and to just go for time. So I gave it an extra push, and I'd say that's what gave me the record."

Hanko, who went to physical therapy and stretched faithfully to battle through the calf injury, said he wasn't 100 percent sure he'd be running until Sunday.

"This past Saturday I did a workout and I was feeling iffy, and afterwards I went through the stretching routine on Sunday, and Sunday was kind of the deal-breaker," Hanko said. "I had no tightness and that's when I had it my mind that I would run today."

In the team race, Morristown turned in its best performance of the season as it put five runners across the line before any other team had four finishers, and had a compression of just 36 seconds between its No. 1 and No. 5 runners.

Leading the charge was senior Sean Lyons, sixth in 16:07.3, a personal best on any course.

"It's a lot of hard work that's paid off for our team," said Lyons, who has come back strong after being sidelined earlier this season with a back injury. "We had high hopes last year and this year, and it feels really good to come back and win again. "

Lyons said he's finally healthy again.

"I had some alignment issues with my hip," Lyons said. "One of my legs is longer than the other and it was putting a lot of stress on my buttocks and my back and I was getting pain up my spine. I couldn't even walk or run. I got to a chiropractor and got myself back. But when I ran 16:40 in my last race I was a little scared that I might not get able to where I was. But today I was able to race comfortably and strong for the first time and it felt really good."

LUCIANO'S BOMB

Chris Luciano of Mountain Lakes didn't just surprise everyone watching the Morris County Championships, he also shocked himself with his runner-up finish in 15:40.8, a 46 second personal best and the third fastest time ever at Greystone.

"No I didn't see this coming," said Luciano. "I knew I had something better than 16:26 (previous Greystone PR) on this course in me and was just hoping to break 16 and stay up there with the top pack, and the rest is just history. I just kept my eyes on Hanko's blue jersey, and if you can stay within 100 yards of him you now you are running a fast time. So as long as I stayed near him

I knew good things would happen. When I saw the clock when I finished I couldn't believe it. It was an awesome feeling. This was best the moment for me in my two years of running cross-country.

EHMANN BOUNCES BACK

After sitting out the NJAC meet with a sore hammy, Mendham junior Paul Ehmann dropped his Greystone PR down to 15:57.8, No. 8 in course history, to place third at the county meet.

Ehmann said he wasn't sure what to expect from himself.

"I was a little cautious coming into this race because I was out for like a week and a half, two weeks with my hamstring," said Ehmann. "So I didn't know what to expect. I was thinking maybe 16. I had a workout on Saturday and my legs were fresh for the first time this season, and I told myself that I can do this. When I finished the race with a new PR for Greystone I was ecstatic."

UPDATED BOYS ALL-TIME LIST FOR GREYSTONE

15:24.3-Josiah Hanco, Trinity Christian, 2013

15:28.6-Morgan Pearson, Delbarton, 2010

15:40.8-Chris Luciano, Mountain Lakes, 2013

15:49.5-Travis Ellis, Morris Hills, 2012

15:50.1-Collin Frost, Randolph, 2010

15:50.2-Steve Lewandowski, Mountain Lakes, 2011

15:52.5-Josiah Hanco, Trinity Christian, 2012

15:54.1-Craig Corti, Wallkill Valley, 2013

15:55.5-Justin Naselli, Mendham, 2012

15:57.8-Paul Ehmann, Mendham, 2013

15:58.6-Paul Ehmann, Mendham, 2012

15:58.6-Brendan Ungemach, Wayne Hills, 2012

GIRLS MORRIS COUNTY RECAP

Mendham's Mackenzie Barry became the second girl to win three county championships and Randolph, No. 2 in The-Star Ledger Top 20, broke the course record for team average at Tuesday's Morris County Championships at Greystone.

Barry, who ran the second fastest time at Greystone Park in last week's Northwest Jersey Athletic Conference Championships (17:54.6), followed up with the third-fastest time in course history as she won in 17:55.3. She outlasted West Morris' Brennan Sharkey, who ran 18:05.3 and retained her standing as No. 5 on the course list. Randolph's Liz Lansing was third in 18:12, No. 7 at Greystone.

"It's so exciting to be put in that category with one other person," said Barry, who joined West Morris' Kristen Hall (1988, '90, '91) as the only girl to win the county title three times. "I really wanted to come out and get a good time. It's always fun to run with these other girls."

Barry, Sharkey and Lansing finished in the same order as they did in the conference championship last week. In that race, Barry won in 17:54.6, No. 2 in course history.

"It was really fun," Barry said. "We really pushed each other the entire race and we all had really fast times."

Randolph had four runners finish in the top eight and registered a 18:47.8 team average, beating Mendham's course record from last year's county championship, when it ran 18:57.

"It's such a great feeling because we've been working so hard for this," Lansing said. "This season has had its ups and downs, but it just goes to show how strong we are as a team to come here and break the record."

Behind Lansing, Carole Harsch finished No. 10 on the all-time course list as she finished in fifth in 18:16.9. Margaret Thompson (sixth, 18:40.7) and Liz Wellman (eighth, 18:44.2) helped Randolph to the 48-69 victory over No. 11 Mount Olive for its fourth county title in six years.

All seven Randolph runners ran personal bests, one week after the squad returned a healthy lineup to the starting line. Harsch and Wellman each missed about a month this fall with injuries.

"It's unbelievable and it's the true underdog story," Harsch said. "Nobody thought anything about us a few weeks ago. To have all seven girls PR is huge. We performed and to come together the way we did today is a successful day."

Sarah Masukewicz (seventh, 18:41.8) and Alexandra Christian (ninth, 18:48.9.) led Mount Olive to a second-place finish for the third consecutive year.

UPDATED GIRLS ALL-TIME LIST FOR GREYSTONE

17:48.1-Sarah Disanza, High Point, 2012
17:54.6-Mackenzie Barry, Mendham, 2013
17:55.3-Mackenzie Barry, Mendham, 2013
17:56.8-Mackenzie Barry, Mendham, 2010
18:03.4-Megan Curham, Villa Walsh, 2012
18:04.5-Colette Richter, Mountain Lakes, 2012
18:05.3-Brennan Sharkey, West Morris, 2013
18:07.9-Samantha Jones, Randolph, 2011
18:12.0-Liz Lansing, Randolph, 2013
18:12.6-Josette Norris, Tenaflly, 2012
18:13.3-Marisa Ruskan, Bridgewater, 2012
18:14.5-Sierra Castaneda, West Morris, 2013

LOOK OUT FOR ROXBURY

The Roxbury boys are peaking at the right time under coach Brendan Donegan as the Gaels keep getting faster and faster at the right time of the season.

With senior Mike Koch leading the charge with a school record performance, Roxbury ran its best race of the season and the fastest race in school history (17:06 average) since 1995 when it finished 7th at the Morris County Championships last Tuesday at Greystone.

Koch finished 10th in 16:19.7 to take down the school record of 16:31.6 that Logan Mcrae ran to place fourth at the North Jersey, Section 1 Group 4 race at Thompson Park in Jamesburg in 2011.

Roxbury, which is targeting a sub 17 average, has its sights on a top five finish at the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 meet on Nov. 9.

Donegan said he's had 12 personal best times over the past couple weeks.

Here they are-

SENIORS

Michael Koch (17:02) NJAC 16:32.05 * MCC 16:19.70*

Zach Matthiesen (18:32) NJAC 16:36.41

Paul Poliviou (18:27) MCC 17:59.4,

Joey Moriera (17:35) NJAC 17:05.2

Karl Stevens (18:59) Liv Invit. 18:39

JUNIORS

Kyle Gasiorowski (17:45.3) MCC 17:06.2

Matt Lveine (18:39) Liv I 18:21

Brandon Rizzo (1st year) MCC 18:27.7 (first race: 21:22.35/ randolph)

SOPHOMORES

Brandon Hill (1st year) MCC 19:26.1 (First Race 20:45.9/ roxbury)

Thomas Daley (23:05.20) MCC 23:38.9

FRESHMEN

Joel Ortiz Liv I 18:57 (first Race: 20:59.4/ NJAC #1)

Brendan Miske MCC (4k) 17:50.4 (First Race 17:27.5- 3.6 k)

MOUNT OLIVE SMASHES RECORD

Although the Mount Olive girls finished second for the third straight year at the Morris County Championship (48-69 to Randolph), there weren't any heads hanging when the Marauders accepted their runner-up award.

That because Mount Olive ran great!!

How great?

How about a school record average for Greystone of 19:18, smashing the record of 19:36 it ran the previous week at the NJAC Championships. When Mount Olive won the sectional title at Greystone last year, it averaged 19:46.

Mount Olive had 4 PR's at the county meet-

7-Sarah Masukewicz-18:41.8

13-Mariah Christian-19:18.6

20-Erin Schafer-19:49.2

22-Micaela Poggi-19:53.1

MITCHELL AND VERNAZZA SIZZLE FOR CHATHAM

Chatham boys coach Pat Barry was very encouraged by the third-place finish by his team at the county meet.

“We keep getting better, but so does the competition. I am very humbled by the fact that my team keeps going after the leaders, both the teams and the individuals, and keeps on getting off the mat to try again. Will Mitchell and Dominic Vernazza ran the two fastest times ever for Chatham runners at Greystone. (16:01 and 16:14) Anthony Malatesta had run 16:15 his Junior year.

“Our 3-7 pack all improved, but so did the pack for Delbarton and Morristown. In this case, it's one step forward while the other teams seem to take two steps forward. All of our top runners 1-9 set personal records which were set the previous week in the NJAC meet.”

Will Mitchell-11- 16:01- 22 second PR

Dominic Vernazza--12-16:14- 20 second PR

Grant Hauck--11--16:52 - 5 second PR

Andrew Vena-12---16:55 - 3 second PR

Liam Hynes--10--16:59 - 1 second PR

Parth Shah-12---17:17 - 10 second PR

Kevin Gesell--10--17: 26 - 24 second PR

Ben Seitz-Sitek--10--17:35 (JV race) - 18 second PR

Pat Mortensen--10--17:46 (JV race) -35 second PR

“We also had standout races from Chris Schneider and Alec Gonzalez in the 4K frosh race. Chris was 7th in 14:17 while Alec was 8th in 14:23. Bill Schneider was 23 in 15:09. Billy and Chris Schneider are part of a set of triplets. Their sister (Maggie Schneider) was the 5th runner on the

varsity girls team at the the county meet." The Chatham girls placed 6th.

GREAT CHOICE

With the Morris County Championships scheduled for this past Tuesday and the State Prep Championships the following day at Blair Academy, Villa Walsh understandably felt it wasn't in its best interest to lineup the same seven runners two straight days.

So they had a decision to make.

“We know how tough Morris County is to win and we felt we had a much better chance of winning a state title at the prep meet, so we decided to go for that,” said senior Jackie Endres.

It turned out to be a great choice as Villa Walsh outscored two-time defending champion Gill St. Bernard's, 46-64, to win the State Prep B title. Villa Walsh lost to Gill St. Bernard's by two points last year.

Villa Walsh trailed Gill St. Bernard's by 13 points after each team had three runners across, but Villa's 4-5 runners picked up 31 points on Gill's 4-5.

“This is a great feeling,” said Endres, fifth in 19:46. “Our whole pack ran great and feels really good to win this after losing by just two points last year.”

WHAT A DOUBLE!

Senior Michaela Reilly of Morristown-Beard, who won the NJAC Small Schools title on Oct. 22, ran a personal best 19:24.3 to place 17th at the Morris County Championships on Tuesday and then came back less than 24 hours later to place third in the state Prep B race at Blair Academy on Wednesday in 19:33.9. Impressive!!!

PARSIPPANY UPDATE

Here is what Parsippany coach Walt Bleuler said about the performance of his team at the county meet.

“The girls team placed 11th, but there were several personal best times, which is a great sign for the state sectional meet. Jen Mlynar ran 19:58 PR), Bria Saunders (21:02 PR), Gabby Rachmaciej 21:34 (PR) Kati Hsu (22:21), Amanda Angulo (22:40), Nelly Guzman 22:46 (PR) and Michele Giambrone (22 :46).

“The boys finished 17 th but this too is promising for our goal of placing in the sectional. There were 3 prs here also. Bhargav Tarpara ran 17;34, Ronald Tudorache 18:09, and Steven Patrucuolla in 18:39,Dan Bamert ran 19:42,Jon Ho in 19;59. We will be running at Warinanco

Park and hope to have both teams advance."

THE ROAD TO HOLMDEL

The road to Holmdel Park for the state championships has just a couple more stops along the way.

All the public school teams will be in action at the NJSIAA sectionals on Nov. 9. The top five teams and top 10 individuals in each group in each section will advance to the State Group Championships on Nov. 16 at Holmdel Park.

Many of the non-public schools, which don't have to qualify for the State Group Championships, will use the NJCTC Championships on Nov. 9 at Warinanco Park in Elizabeth for its final tuneup.

At the State Group Championships, the top three teams and top 10 runners in each group plus 2 wild card teams and 10 wild card runners will advance to the Meet of Champions on Nov. 23 at Holmdel.

I will provide sectional previews next week, so be sure to check back here for those.

Until then, **GET YOUR MORRIS XC ON!!!**