

## BOYS

The final chapter in the cross-country saga of the Rosa twins of West Windsor-Plainsboro North will be written this fall and we would hope that it will end where it should---at the Footlocker Finals in San Diego, CA.

After their 1-2 finish at the outdoor Nationals last June, the twins---who have run the past two years at the Nike Invitational in Portland, Ore.---should try to give New Jersey its third victory in a race which has generally been acknowledged as the true national individual championship since its beginnings three decades ago.

Whatever happens, this promises to be a memorable season for Garden State athletes on both the individual and team level. Christian Brothers Academy has one of its best and deepest teams in a decade or more and hopes to reclaim the AG title, as well as take Eastern and perhaps even National honors.

As usual, we will take a look at the possible top 10 teams and 25 individuals, listed in alphabetical order.

## TEAMS

**CBA:** After three strong freshman teams in a row, Tom Heath had the enviable task of choosing which seven boys will take the line at the AG meet. The first four seem certain: seniors Mike Mazzaccaro, Dan Mykityshyn and Will Villa and junior George Kelly. Three juniors could fill out the lineup: Tim Gorman, Conrad Lippert and Scott Zapcic.

**DON BOSCO:** The defending champs lost heavily to graduation, but retain enough to certainly be among the top five in the state. Eric Lapinski, Brandon Baxter, Chris Costello and Nick Mendolia head the Ironmen.

**HADDONFIELD:** Another team that lost heavily last June, but retains a top pair of Ben Potts and Matt Nussbaum who are backed by Ethan Quanci, Tim Malloy and Greg Halla.

**MENDHAM:** A mostly junior team which did very well as sophs a year ago. Clay Petty and Peter Ehman head the Minutemen with Chris Barry and Gerald Gorman next in line.

**MT. LAKES:** It is rare these days for a Gr. I school to crack the top 10 but it just might happen this year as the Lakers have a pair of stars in Stephen Lewandowski and Rutger Admirand and perhaps enough behind them to recall the days of Bernards.

**RED BANK CATHOLIC:** The Caseys have a top pair in Kevin Byrne and soph Rob Napolitano and enough behind them to get the third Parochial A spot in the AG race.

**RIDGEWOOD:** The always strong Maroons showed some distance strength last spring with Pat Rynkowski, Levi Jennings and Steve Spreitzer leading the way. They should run 2nd to Don Bosco in the North 1 area.

**SOUTHERN OCEAN:** The Rams lost top hand Matt Valeriani, but retained Eric Dragonetti, Brandon Skeir and Jamie Iacovelli to have an edge in the always close Ocean County meets.

**WESTFIELD:** The Blue Devils were a surprise 5th-place finisher in the 2009 AG meet and have most of that team back, including Jack Leahy, Andrew and Jon Kirna and Zach Lizmi.

**WEST-WINDSOR PLAINSBORO NORTH:** The Rosa twins insure a 1-2 finish for the Knights and Chris Dalrymple and Pat O'Connell should be in the high 16s or low 17s on most courses.

## INDIVIDUALS

**JEREMY ANTIVO, Rahway:** Had a great spring season, running 4:14.74 in the 1600 and 9:24.61 in the 3200.

**TIM BALL, Piscataway (47):** Ran 2nd in the Middlesex County meet last fall and broke the state sophomore 1600 record last spring with a 4:10.57 in the Parochial A race, then finished 6th in the AG.

**KYLE DAVIS, North Brunswick (16):** Top half of the state's other twin team, Kyle was 6th in the Gr. IV race. Ran 9:31.57 in the 3200 outdoors.

**CULLEN DAVIS, North Brunswick:** Finished 5th, right behind his brother in the CJ sectionals, but failed to make the AG race, Had a 4:16.41 1600 outdoors.

**C.J. DEFABIO, Watchung Hills (27):** Finished 3rd in his sectional race and 7th in Gr. IV. Likes to run from behind as he did in winning his conference 3200 race outdoors in 9:25.19.

**JERAMY ELKAIM, Livingston (26):** Scored his big win outdoors in the AG 3200 where he ran 8:46.08 MR in an upset win over Joe Rosa. Also had a 4:12.89 in the 1600.

**COLLIN FROST, Randolph (14):** Ran 2nd to Elkaim in the NJ 1 sectionals and 8th in Gr. IV, but lost much of his track seasons to injuries.

**STEPHEN LEWANDOWSKI, Mt. Lakes (35):** A top contender for the Gr. I title, he won his sectionals last year and finished 5th in the group race in a diving finish with one of his chief rivals this fall, Everett Price of New Providence.

**JARED MASON, West Orange:** Ran in the shadow of Curtis Richburg last year, but came into his own in the spring with a series of fast races, topped by a 4:18.35 1600.

**MATT MCDONALD, North Hunterdon (18):** A steady winner last fall, including county, conference and sectional races, McDonald was 4th in Gr. IV and in the top 20 at the AG with identical times of 16:08, a mark of his consistency. Hit 9:20.29 for the 3200 outdoors.

**MIKE MAZZACCARO, CBA (4):** The Colts' best since John Coyle, Mazzaccaro had a great season last fall, winning his county, conference and group title and running 4th in the AG in 15:41. Lost his indoor season to injury, but came back strong outdoors where he ran 4:09.53 for the 1600 and 9:02.46 for 1600, breaking Coyle's school record.

**DAN MYKITYSHYN, CBA: (32):** The other half of CBA's M&M duo, Mykityshyn filled Mazzaccaro's shoes indoors, then stepped back and ran 4:19.96 and 9:18.99 outdoors.

**MATT NELSON, Barnegat (24):** Had an outstanding freshman campaign, finishing in the top six in all his major races leading to the AG. His 16:19 at the AG is second only to Craig Forys among yearlings at Holmdel. Continued his hot streak indoors with a state 1600 frosh record of 4:20.97 and ran 9:23.4 for 3200 outdoors before an injury sidelined him for the AGs.

**MATT NUSSBAUM, Haddonfield:** Ran 2nd to teammate Jon Vitez in the Gr. II race, but had an off day at the AG. Ran 4:19.96 in the 1600 and 9:18.99 for 3200 outdoors and had some hot relay legs for the 4MR team.

**MIKE O'DOWD, Colts Neck (19):** Ran 16:00 for 2nd in Gr. IV before hitting 16:09 at the AG meet. Injuries limited both his indoor and outdoor seasons.

**MORGAN PEARSON, Delbarton (7):** Had a great initial cross-country season last fall with a 2nd in the Parochial A to go along with his 7th in the AG at 15:47. He then qualified for the Nike Nationals. Kept right going on the track, running a 9:08.98 2M at the Nationals and also clocking 4:19.59 for 1600M.

**BEN POTTS, Haddonfield (31):** Took over as his team's top 800 and 1600 runners outdoors with times of 1:53.49 and 4:16.47. Was 3rd in the Gr. II race last fall and will be one of the favorites to win it this time.

**EVERETT PRICE, New Providence (40):** Probably the biggest "find" of the 2009 outdoor season with his 4:14.86 1600 at the Union County meet, followed by a series of sub-4:20 races in the state and National meets.

**COLIN RICHMOND, St. Rose (17):** No one won as many group titles as Colin last year---a maximally total of seven, leading his team to Parochial B titles in all three seasons. He had an early 4:21.15 1600 indoors and a 9:25.63 3200 as well, but his outdoor times were limited by a late start due to injury.

**PATRICK RONO, Lyndhurst (9):** This son of an Olympic champion is in his final season of eligibility this year, but will probably turn up in the prep ranks for his senior campaign. He had a big spring season in 2009, placing 2nd in the AG 800 in 1:52.80 and also placing 7th in the 1600.

**JOE ROSA, WW-Plainsboro No. (1):** Despite a lengthy layoff indoors, reminiscent of what happened to Marty Liquori at the same stage in his career, Joe had an incredible junior campaign, topped by his 14:56 course record at Holmdel and his 8:40.76 2M win at the outdoor Nationals. Also ran 4:08.65 for the mile and 14:28.44 for 5K.

**JAMES ROSA, WW-Plainsboro No. (2):** His junior season was featured by his 15:15 for 2nd at the CC AG meet, his 4:07.70 mile at Adidas Invitational outdoors (after winning the AG 1600 in a MR 4:07.89) and his 8:48.11 for 2nd to Joe in the National 2M.

**MILES SCHOEDLER, Ocean City:** Won his county and sectional races last fall and was 8th in Gr. III, but missed the AGs due to injury. Finished 5th in the indoor AG 1600 and 4th outdoors with a 4:11.46.

**BRIAN SCHOEPFER, WW-Plainsboro So. (15):** Running in the shadow of Sam Macaluso last year, Brian turned in a 4:15.87 1600 outdoors and ran several fast 1200 legs on the Pirates' crack DMR team.

**PAUL SZULEWSKI, Williamstown (10):** A fine cross-country season, capped by his 15:57 at the AG meet after a pair of 5ths in the sectional and group races. Ran 9:13.93 at the indoor AG meet, but lost his entire outdoor campaign to injuries.

## GIRLS

Another very close finish seems likely in this fall's AG race with half a dozen teams nurturing hopes of grabbing the gold, including the 1-2 finishers in last year's close race, Hillsboro and Randolph.

The other contenders include eight-time winner Red Bank Catholic, Holy Angels Academy, Lenape and Hunterdon Central. RBC and Holy Angels lost very little to graduation after finishing a somewhat distant 3-4 in 2009.

Individually, Megan Venables of Highland, the silver medalist last fall and the 3200M AG winner last spring, goes in as favorite with Caroline Kellner of West Windsor-Plainsboro South and Joelle Amaral of Randolph as her chief rivals. Unfortunately, last spring's frosh sensation, Claudia DiSomma of Sparta, had decided to stick with soccer this fall as has sub-5:00 1600 runner Marisa Ruskan of Bridgewater.

## TEAMS

**DELSEA:** This will be a big year for the Crusaders who have moved up to Gr. III and seem likely to dominate the indoor and outdoor campaigns. Felicia O'Donnell heads a lineup which lost only one from its Gr. II champs of a year ago. She is backed by Dominique Hassinger and Paige Senatore.

**HILLSBORO:** The defending champs lost leader Ashley Smolinka and Maureen Lynch, but still have the rest of their winning lineup, including Julianne Miller, Alez Cady, Kelly Janokowicz and Rebecca Curan.

**HOLY ANGELS:** The Angels have one of the best 1-2 punches in the state with Jen Molke and Emily Dunne and also return Maureen Crimmins and Shannon Glynn from last year's top six.

**HOPEWELL VALLEY:** The perennial group champs will get a severe challenge from Delsea and Princeton this year. Soph Casey Quinto heads the lineup which also includes Kate Caulfield and Cassie Whitebread.

**HUNTERDON CENTRAL:** A veteran team headed by Allison Payenski and Kathy Vodopia and also including Sarah Kebede and Jessica Krystek from its AG 3200R champs. Possibly the best Red Raider team since the heydays of the 1980s.

**LENAPE:** Caitlin Orr graduated, but the Indians had the best frosh group in the state last fall, headed by Natalie Ocascio and Amanda Restivo and will thus be a power for several years to come.

**RANDOLPH:** Graduation took away Molly Higgins, Natalie Anthony and Victoria Kiss, but left Amaral, Jen Jackowski and Rebecca Snelson and Samantha Jones, who has moved over from soccer this fall. And three young Norwegians moved in over the summer to bolster the ranks.

**RED BANK CATHOLIC:** The Caseys have perhaps the best top four in the state with Molly McNamara, Liana Marzano, Lindsey Bellaran and Mary Kate Byrne (Kevin's sister) and a solid 5th in Heather Rochford with some depth to protect against any failures up front.

**RIDGE:** Versatile Jackie Madden graduated, but the Bains' siblings, Sabina and Simran, are still on hand, along with Caelinn Carney and Jessica Kaystek. This is always one of the state's deepest teams so there will be no problem filling out the lineup.

**VOORHEES:** The Vikings, with five group wins in a row are now in Gr. II should have little trouble extending that string, led by soph Nisa Cicitta and senior Kathryn Hahn and also including veterans Shannon Carney and Brigid McGill.

### INDIVIDUALS

**JOELLE AMARAL, Randolph (5):** Had a great junior year with marks of 4:52.28 and 10:48.08 outdoors. Won her sectional race last fall and placed 4th in Gr. IV before running 18:43 in the AGs.

**HOLLY BISCHOFF, Bp. Eustace (13):** A strong sophomore year saw her win the South Jersey Parochial title last fall and run a 10:56.53 to take the Parochial A 3200 in the spring.

**KAYLA DEL PIANO, South Brunswick:** Injuries spoiled much of her sophomore year, but she managed a 5:04.07 1600 in the spring. Before going down last fall, she won the sophomore race at the Magee Memorial and finished 5th in the A race at the Shores Coaches.

**EMILY DUNNE, Holy Angels (28):** One half of the Angels' potent 1-2 punch, Dunne was 4th in the Parochial A race and finished 3rd in the Bergen County Meet of Champions. Ran 11:18.60 for 3200 outdoors.

**BRIANNA FEERST, Pt. Pleasant Beach (29):** Won her sectional and group races last fall before running 19:31 at the AG meet. No indoor season, as usual, and a slow start outdoors due to injuries.

**DANA GIORDANO, Bernards (26):** Won her sectional race last fall and placed well against strong competition in her county and conference races. Had a good outdoor season with a 5:03.91 in the 1600 and a 10:55.69 in the 3200.

**GEORGIANA HONRATH, Manasquan (36):** The leader of 'Squan's "Three Sisters" act last fall, Georgiana was 3rd in both her county and group meets.

**KELLY JANUKEWICZ, Hillsboro (33):** Her finish made the difference for the Raiders in the tight AG meet last fall. She was among the best of the state's strong freshman class and had a solid, if not spectacular outdoor campaign.

**CAROLINE KELLNER, WW-Plainsboro South (4):** Had a simply brilliant sophomore campaign, running 18:37 in the AGs, winning Gr. IV in 18:43 and also taking her county and sectional titles. Should be an AG champion before she graduates. Had a 10:48.08 3200 outdoors.

**MEGAN LACY, Cherokee (7):** No wins last fall, but a series of fine races against tough competition, capped by her 18:48 at the AG meet. Ran 5:06.67 and 11:01.07 outdoors.

**ALYSSA LAGUARDIA, De Paul (22):** A great junior campaign right through to the outdoor season where she set county records of 2:12.26 for 800M and 4:58.16 for 1600M.

**KATE LEIB, Pingry (24):** The Big Blue will probably be back where they belong this fall (Parochial B) and, if so, Leib will be one reason why they win another group title. Pretty much what is called a pure CC runner, Kate ran 19:21 in the AG race.

**MOLLY MCNAMARA, RBC (30):** Her AG race was one of her few bad ones last fall. She had finished 2nd to now graduated teammate Michelle Capozzi in the Parochial A race, reversed that order to win both the Monmouth County Shore Conference titles. Her outdoor season as brilliant: a 2:09.63 in the 800 and a 4:51.13 for 2nd in the AG 1600.

**MARY MIGTON, Roxbury (11):** The last "survivor" of the great Roxbury 2007 team, Migton ran 18:57 at the AG meet after placing 3rd in Gr. IV at 18:59. She ran 2:15.17 for 800 outdoors and 5:07.53 for 1600 indoors.

**JULIANNE MILLER, Hillsboro (21):** A steady, if not spectacular runner, Miller now moves into the hot spot for the Raiders, left vacant by the graduation of Ashley Smolinka, Had an 11:15.15 3200 last spring.

**JEN MOLKE, Holy Angels (16):** After a fine CC season in 2009, Molke went down with injuries that sidelined her both indoors and out.

**NATALIE OCASCIO, Lenape (20):** The leader of last fall's strong freshman group, Natalie had one big win over now graduated teammate Caitlin Orr at the sectionals. She then turned in times of 2:17.99, 4:58.48 and 11:10.51 on the track.

**FELICIA O'DONNELL, Delsea (35):** One of the "Big Four" who will lead Delsea to big things indoors and out, Felicia had to carry on alone outdoors when senior running mate Ashley Deckert went down with injuries. She responded nobly, running a 4:58.45 1600 and also hitting 2:19.81 in the 800.

**ALLISON PAYENSKI, Hunterdon Central:** Did her best running on the track with the Red Raiders 3200R and DMR. Ran 7th last fall in the state's toughest sectional race and 13th in Gr. IV.

**SARAH QUINN, Gill-St. Bernard's (19):** Came literally from no-where to finish in the top 20 at the AG meet in 19:15. Ran under 11:20 both indoors and outdoors at 3200.

**CHRISTA STRYCHARZ, Steinert (32):** A "solo" runner, Strycharz held her own in the tough Mercer County competition and then took 30 seconds off her Holmdel best at the AGs.

**OLIVIA TARANTINO, Pingry:** Injuries marred most of her junior year, but she managed an 11:19.28 3200 at her county meet last spring.

**ERIN THOMPSON, Immaculate Heart Academy (8):** After her fine CC season, which saw her break 19:00 at the AGs, Erin went down with injuries that slowed her both indoors and out.

**KRISTEN TRAUB, Eastern Christian (17):** Won half a dozen times last fall, including county, conference and group titles. Played basketball with her sister indoors, then doubled the distances through the group level outdoors.

**MEGAN VENABLES, Highland (2):** The last (alphabetically) shall be best as Venables goes into the season a solid favorite to win the AG after a junior campaign which saw her run 2nd to Chelse Ley at all three state levels. With Ley sidelined by injury, Venables cleaned up indoors and lost outdoors only to Colette Whitney in Gr. III, avenging this with her AG victory.