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Venables runs away from pack

The Highland senior tied a course record in winning the girls' Group 3 race; Moorestown won the team title. Haddonfield swept the boys' and girls' Group 2 races.

By Phil Anastasia

Inquirer Staff Writer

There was nobody to challenge Megan Venables.

So she challenged herself.

Venables, a senior at Highland, tied a course record in winning the South Jersey Group 3 championship in girls' cross-country Saturday at Delsea.

Venables' winning time of 17 minutes, 23 seconds equaled the mark set in 2008 by former Kingsway star Chelsea Ley.

"When there's nobody to push you, you have to push yourself," Venables said.

The top five teams and top 10 individuals in each group advanced to this Saturday's state championships at Holmdel.

Haddonfield won the Group 2 boys' and girls' team titles, and the Moorestown girls were surprise winners of the Group 3 title.

Ocean City senior Miles Schoedler ran the fastest time of the day, winning the Group 3 boys' race in a personal-best time of 15:34 to spur the Red Raiders to the team title.

"I told myself I was going to run as hard as I could until I fell over," Schoedler said.

Washington Township senior Anthony Dentino won the Group 4 race in 15:38, a personal best. Shawnee's junior Connor Herr was second in 15:43.

"It's nice to see my hard work pay off," Dentino said.

Cherokee junior Megan Lacy won the Group 4 girls' race in 17:36, 90 seconds faster than her fifth-place time in 2009.

"I never thought I could drop my time by a minute and a half," Lacy said. "From where I was last year, I never thought I could come all this way."

Cherokee's girls took second in Group 4 after tying with Toms River North with 68 points because the Mariners had the edge among sixth-place runners.

Haddonfield dominated in Group 2. Seniors Ben Potts (15:55), Matt Nussbaum (16:00), and Tim Malloy (16:24) went 1-2-3 in the boys' race as the Bulldogs captured their seventh consecutive South Jersey title and 11th in 12 years.

"I would have liked to run a little faster, but the big thing was for us to place the way we did for the team," Potts said.

Haddonfield went 1-2-3 in the girls' race, too, as seniors Mia Spinelli (19:57) and Colleen Shea (20:00) took first and third, with freshman Shelby Cain (19:59) in between.

Haddon Township's boys won their third consecutive Group 1 title behind senior Joe Eagan, who used a late surge to capture the individual race in 16:42.

Moorestown's five runners placed between fifth and 13th to carry the Quakers to the girls' Group 3 title. Junior Tara Monihan was Moorestown's best with a time of 19:30.

"On paper, I thought we would be right there with Delsea, and our girls ran better than we thought," Moorestown coach John Denning said.

In the Group 3 race, Venables quickly ran away from the pack. Her winning time was 99 seconds faster than the second-place finisher's.

It was Venables' first sectional title; she finished behind Ley in this race in 2007, 2008, and 2009.

"I wanted to get out fast and make myself surge even though there was no one with me," Venables said. "Next week, I'll have people with me."

The results

GROUP 4 BOYS

Team scoring:

1. Southern, 63. 2. Lenape, 87. 3. Toms River North, 117. 4. Cherokee, 126. 5. Cherry Hill East, 136.

Individual leaders: 1. Anthony Dentino, Washington Township, 15 minutes, 38 seconds. 2. Connor Herr, Shawnee, 15:43. 3. Paul Szulewski, Williamstown, 15:55. 4. Peter Murray, Shawnee, 15:56. 5. Greg Malloy, Cherokee, 15:57. 6. Rob Rawls, Triton, 16:05. 7. Brandon Skeie, Southern, 16:06. 8. Eric Dragonetti, Southern, 16:11. 9. Jarred Iacovelli, Southern, 16:18. 10. Chris Billalba, Toms River North, 16:30.

GROUP 3 BOYS

Team scoring:

1. Ocean City, 46. 2. Lacey, 76. 3. Delsea, 117. 4. Moorestown, 119. 5. Toms River South, 125.

Individual leaders: 1. Miles Schoedler, Ocean City, 15:34. 2. Anthony Horten, Moorestown, 15:49. 3. Erik Johnson, Ocean City, 15:58. 4. Noah Jacobs, Lacey, 16:03. 5. Brady Deckert, Delsea, 16:07. 6. Anthony Colasurdo, Lacey, 16:08. 7. Nick Costello, Delsea, 16:20. 8. Peter Skryzalin, Cherry Hill West, 16:31. 9. Tim Reardon, Burlington Twp., 16:33. 10. Ray Newman, Toms River South, 16:35.

GROUP 2 BOYS**Team scoring:**

1. Haddonfield, 20. 2. Barnegat, 91. 3. Haddon Heights, 113. 4. Pleasantville, 144. 5. Sterling, 156.

Individual leaders: 1. Ben Potts, Haddonfield, 15:55. 2. Matt Nussbaum, Haddonfield, 16:00. 3. Tim Malloy, Haddonfield, 16:24. 4. Matt Nelson, Barnegat, 16:33. 5. Greg Halla, Haddonfield, 16:45. 6. Kendall Chapman, Deptford, 16:48. 7. Joe Mandara, Barnegat, 16:54. 8. Jacob Clark, Pleasantville, 17:04. 9. Conor Jacobs, Haddonfield, 17:13. 10. Nick Gandolfo-Luci, Haddon Heights, 17:15.

GROUP 1 BOYS**Team scoring:**

1. Haddon Township, 28. 2. Maple Shade, 74. 3. Pennsville, 114. 4. Penns Grove, 141. 5. Woodstown, 149.

Individual leaders: Joe Eagan, Haddon Township, 16:42. 2. Tyler Cummings, Pennsville, 16:43. 3. Grant Grothusen, Haddon Township, 17:18. 4. Brandon Dugan, Schalick, 17:19. 5. Pete Coulter, Audubon, 17:21. 6. Tim Kenna, Haddon Township, 17:23. 7. Nikolai Hladik, New Egypt, 17:26. 8. Jim Nolan, Haddon Township, 17:29. 9. Courtney Malcolm, Penns Grove, 17:35. 10. Alex Daily, Haddon Township, 17:40.

NON-PUBLIC BOYS**Team scoring:**

1. Bishop Eustace, 38. 2. Paul VI, 51. 3. St. Augustine, 78. 4. Camden Catholic, 119. 5. Moorestown Friends, 144.

Individual leaders: 1. Tom Hoban, Paul VI, 16:02. 2. Ryan Matthews, St. Augustine, 16:19. 3. Ron Griswold, Bishop Eustace, 16:39. 4. Drew Haines, Moorestown Friends, 16:51. 5. Eric Franklin, Bishop Eustace, 16:54. 6. Neil MacFarlane, Paul VI, 16:56. 7. Jake LaSala, Holy Spirit, 17:01. 8. Adam Verna, Paul VI, 17:05. 9. Jon Seator, Bishop Eustace, 17:06. 10. Luke Mazzochette, Bishop Eustace, 17:07.

GROUP 4 GIRLS

Team scoring:

1. Toms River North, 68. 2. Cherokee, 68. 3. Southern, 90. 4. Lenape, 96. 5. Williamstown, 151.

Individual leaders: 1. Megan Lacy, Cherokee, 17:36. 2. Natalia Ocasio, Lenape, 18:40. 3. Karah O'Halloran, Toms River North, 19:14. 4. Emily McGee, Lenape, 19:19. 5. Rachel Heussner, Southern, 19:22. 6. Michelle Hess, Eastern, 19:25. 7. Megan Charbeneau, Cherokee, 19:29. 8. Jillian Smith, Southern, 19:33. 9. Elissa Knight, Southern, 19:33. 10. Johanna Petruski, Toms River North, 19:41.

GROUP 3 GIRLS

Team scoring:

1. Moorestown, 44. 2. Delsea, 75. 3. Kingsway, 107. 4. Seneca, 118. 5. Ocean City, 130.

Individual leaders: 1. Megan Venables, Highland, 17:23. 2. Mary Kate Brelsfor, Ocean City, 19:02. 3. Christin Bettis, Hammonton, 19:11. 4. Felicia O'Donnell, Delsea, 19:16. 5. Tara Monihan, Moorestown, 19:30. 6. Paige Senatore, Delsea, 19:40. 7. Alexis Juliano, Moorestown, 19:48. 8. Christine McMahon, Lacey, 20:05. 9. Emily Juliano, Moorestown, 20:08. 10. Lizzy Gorman, Moorestown, 20:20.

GROUP 2 GIRLS

Team scoring:

1. Haddonfield, 19. 2. Haddon Heights, 84. 3. Buena, 112. 4. Barnegat, 116. 5. Bridgeton, 121.

Individual leaders: 1. Mia Spinelli, Haddonfield, 19:57. 2. Shelby Cain, Haddonfield, 19:59. 3. Colleen Shea, Haddonfield, 20:00. 4. Rachel Quinn, Haddon Heights, 20:17. 5. Maddy McAdams, Haddonfield, 20:25. 6. Alex Walsh, Middle Twp., 20:28. 7. Kassandra Irizarry, Bridgeton, 20:30. 8. Molly Bolinger, Haddonfield, 20:38. 9. Haley Manochi, Haddonfield, 20:42. 10. Alexis Conte, Barnegat, 20:48.

GROUP 1 GIRLS

Team scoring:

1. Pitman, 28. 2. Maple Shade, 51. 3. Woodstown, 83. 4. Lindenwold, 103. 5. Cape May Tech, 133.

Individual leaders: 1. Rachel Greenberg, Pitman, 21:21. 2. Hannah Merschen, Haddon Township, 21:52. 3. Emily Vendetta, Pitman, 21:56. 4. Kaley Moyer, Maple Shade, 22:08. 5. Ayanna Lyons, Paulsboro, 22:19. 6. Cara Davenport, Salem, 22:35. 7. Lyndsey Fraser, Woodstown, 22:37. 8. Nicole Menghi, Maple Shade, 22:45. 9. Kacy Millar, Pitman, 22:52. 10. Kiersten Stukowski, Clayton, 22:54.

NON-PUBLIC GIRLS

Team scoring:

1. Bishop Eustace, 28. 2. Holy Spirit, 39. 3. Wildwood Catholic, 79. 4. Paul VI, 99. 5. St. Joseph's, 125.

Individual leaders: 1. Holly Bischof, Bishop Eustace, 18:05. 2. Emily Casey, Holy Spirit, 18:59. 3. Courtney Kelly, Bishop Eustace, 19:21. 4. Mo Dipietrantonio, Bishop Eustace, 19:34. 5. Catherine Nolan, Holy Spirit, 20:00. 6. Emily Johnson, Wildwood Catholic, 20:36. 7. Grace Lederer, Wildwood Catholic, 20:47. 8. Angel Bongiovanni, Holy Spirit, 20:52. 9. Rachael Weiss, Bishop Eustace, 21:08. 10. Bridget Flynn, Holy Spirit, 21:22.

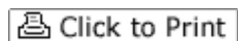
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