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E. Side takes sectional; Columbia's Curley wins

By ED GRANT

Newark East Side took the first step in defense of its Group 4 state title yesterday by winning the sectional race, 73-98, from Morristown.

Russell Curley of Columbia took individual honors by 100 yards from Dan Avis of Westfield in 16:27, with Dorian Fenner leading East Side in fourth place in 17:08.

Senior Brian Norwell of Mendham and sophomore Brian Walsh of Chatham both led one-two finishes for their teams in the North Jersey, Section 2 cross-country championships at Warinanco Park in Elizabeth.

Norwell finished 25 yards ahead of teammate Chris Shields to win the Group 3 race for the second year in a row in 16:37. Mendham led Morris Hills, 51-98, for the team title. Walsh defeated teammate David Gerridge by 120 yards in the Group 2 race where Chatham ousted defending Millburn, 59-76.

Mendham won its first sectional championship, Chatham, the result of a merger between the borough and township high schools, won for the first time, too, although Chatham Township had won five Group 1 titles, the last four between 1983 and 1986.

Whippany Park retained its Group 1 title, 42-56 over Gov. Livingston of Berkeley Heights. Everette Gray of Newark Arts won the race by 35 yards from Matt Sanson of North Warren in 17:34. John Anderson led a sweep of seventh through ninth places for Whippany Park in 18:05.

North Hunterdon was an easy repeat winner in the Central Jersey, Group 4 cross-country race at Holmdel County Park, 38-112 over Middletown South. Scott McGhee of Neptune won the race by a yard from Joe Ruvalo of J.P. Stevens in 17:02. Chip Oscarson led North Hunterdon in third in 17:17, with teammates Brian Harris, Marcel Mol and Brendan Heffernan placing seventh through ninth.

Cedar Ridge also won again in Group 3, 38-68 over Hamilton North, and Henry Hudson took the Group 1 race, 65-87 from Metuchen. Clinton Bell of Franklin won the Group 3 race in 16:33 and Larry Weiss of Metuchen took the Group 1 event in 17:51.

Bryan Spoonire of Asbury Park "lost" the Group 2 sectional cross-country race in what amounted to a dead heat with teammate Craig McDonald, who got the judges' nod; both boys were timed in 16:46.

Freshman Demond Joyner was

fourth for Asbury Park in 17:32, but only four runners officially finished for the defending champion, which failed to qualify as a team. Somerville won the title, 45-80 from Holmdel, led by Frayzee Sutphen in fifth place in 17:37.

Bergen County teams swept the field in the North Jersey, Section 1 meet at Garret Mountain, West Paterson. Ridgewood upset defending Vernon in Group 4, 65-71. Paramus topped Union Hill in Group 3, 55-75. Rutherford repeated in Group 2, 92-97 over Kittatinny, and Waldwick won its first title in Group 1, 41-59 from Saddle Brook.

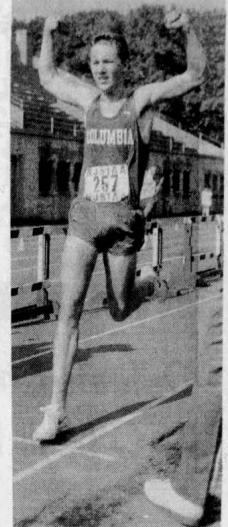
Junior Ken Flynn of Ramsey was the fastest winner on the day, repeating in Group 3 at 16:31. Craig Masker of Mahwah won again in Group 2 in 16:55, Eric Boucher of Ridgewood took the Group 4 race in 17:10 and Paul Capuzzo of Emerson Borough won in Group 1 in 17:55.

Haddonfield started its drive for a third straight state Group 1 title with a 43-84 victory over Haddon Township in the South Jersey meet at Mt. Holly Tech. Tim Shanahan won the race for Haddonfield in the day's fastest time of 15:43.

Albert Donawa of Camden won the Group 4 race in 15:45, with Shawnee taking team honors, 80-104 from Toms River North. Highland repeated in Group 3, 23-87 over Eastern. Ray Beyer of Absegami won the race in 16:08, but Highland took the next four places, led by Jerry Franks in 16:22. The Group 2 race saw Chris Lopez lead Cinnaminson to a 45-73 margin over Clearview, finishing first in 16:25.



Ellie Benitez of Dover gets some help from teammate Alicia Gilliam after finishing yesterday at Warinanco Park, Roselle



Russ Curley of Columbia raises his arms after winning Group 4 race yesterday at Warinanco Park

Pettus, Pippins spark Arts by Verona to section title