

Bennett wins, paces CBA to Parochial A title in X-c

By JIM LAMBERT

Chris Bennett became the first runner from tradition-rich Christian Brothers Academy, ranked first in The Star-Ledger Boys' Top 10, to win a Parochial A title by crossing in 16:24 and four of his teammates placed in the top eight to lead their team to a repeat crown at the NJSIAA Cross-Country Group Championships yesterday in Holmdel Park.

The Group 4 boys' race provided the most drama with eighth-ranked Eastern, the South Jersey runner-up to Highland Regional, and 10th-ranked Westfield finishing in tie for first place with 114 points each. Eastern was awarded first place on a sixth runner tie-breaker.

Fourth-ranked North Hunterdon won its second straight Group 3 title. A fired up Asbury Park, second in the Central Jersey sectional, bounced back to win the Group 2 championship. Maple Shade, runner-up in Group 1 last year, captured Group 1. Pope John won his first ever Parochial B title.

Individually, Ridgewood's Bob Keino, a questionable starter all week because of a mild strain of his left achilles tendon, pulled away from Jackson's Rich Morris midway through the Group 4 race to win comfortably in 15:53. Morris was second in 16:07, the second best time of the day.

"I did feel some pain," admitted Keino. "Right now, I'd say I'm questionable for next week. We'll just have to wait and see how it feels."

The top three teams in each Group qualified for Saturday's Meet of Champions in Holmdel as well as the top 10 individuals in each group who don't run for one of the qualifying teams. The girls' M of C race will start at 11 a.m. and the boys' at 11:45.

Following Bennett, CBA, which has simply dominated this season and is ranked ninth nationally by Harrier Magazine, placed Brian Zink second in 16:26, Chris Chiaro sixth in 16:47, Eric Savoio seventh in 16:50 and Chuck Grosso eighth in 16:53 for a team average of 16:38.8. CBA won Parochial A with 24 points. Also in Parochial A,



Midland Regional's Kurt Wayton crosses finish line to win Group 3 Cross-Country title yesterday in Holmdel

Photo by Samir Id-Deen

second-ranked Paul VI, with early leader Joe DiGiacomo third in 16:38, and John Williams fourth in 16:38, placed its five runners in the first 20 to finish second with 60 points. Seventh-ranked Don Bosco Prep was third with 73.

Bennett, who shot to the front with about 600 meters to go, had a lot of things on his mind over the final straightaway.

"I thought about how no one from CBA has won this race before and I was also thinking about not letting anyone from Paul VI pass me," said

Bennett, who missed most of last season with stress fractures. "That was the longest straightaway of my life."

Eastern's sixth runner, Marco Penetra, finished 37th in 17:40, 13 places better than Westfield's sixth man, to give Eastern the Group 4 championship. Matt Elmuccio of Westfield, which qualified for the Meet of Champions for the first time since 1985, continued his great season by finishing eighth in 16:43. Also in Group 4, third-ranked Highland Regional finished a disappointing fourth and failed to qualify, 14 points behind third-place

Newark East Side, which had 129 points.

Eric Bertsch dropped 48 seconds off his Central Jersey time in Holmdel to finish eighth in 16:50, and Chris Robinson cut his sectional time by 30 seconds to place 12th in 17:00 to key North Hunterdon's title run in Group 3. Kurt Wayton of ninth-ranked Mainland won the Group 3 individual title in 16:19.

At the Central Jersey meet, Asbury Park was second on the sixth runner tie-breaker to Holmdel. It avenged that loss with a 90-108 margin over Holmdel for its second Group 2 championship.

Asbury Park sealed the victory by having Diron Accoo, eighth in 17:07; Darnell McLean, ninth in 17:10, and Sadat Safford, 18th in 17:21, finish ahead of Holmdel's first runner, Brian Herr, 20th in 17:31.

"People underestimated us," said Accoo. "We ran badly at the Shore Conference meet (fifth) last week and people counted us out. But we had something to prove. We came here to win a state championship and that's what we did."

Running his first race at Holmdel, Eric Castillo of Ridgfield Park, who fell in his league meet last October to end his season, raised his hands in victory as he crossed in 16:44 to win the Group 2 race.

"All summer as I trained, I dreamed about this," said Castillo. "When I got the lead I just kept hammering."

Chuck Nolte was second in 17:10 to help Maple Shade win the Group 1 title with 78 points. Tom Horne of Glassboro won the Group 1 race in 16:28. Junior Anthony DeBenedictis of Roselle Park, one of the favorites in Group 1 and second in Group 1 last year, had a knee lock up, causing him to stop momentarily before finishing fifth in 17:24. It was the first loss to New Jersey this season for DeBenedictis.

In Parochial B, Pope John, with Mike LaLonde fifth in 17:20 and its other four runner in the top 18, won with 50 points. Jim Pilla, third last year in 17:30, won the individual title in 17:08 for second-place Mater Del.

Boys' X-c results

GROUP 4
TEAMS: 1-Eastern 114, 2-Westfield 114, 3-East Side 129, 4-Highland Regional 142, 5-Memorial (W.N.Y.) 151, 6-Kearny 197, 7-Vineland 226, 8-Hamilton East 227, 9-Atlantic City 232, 10-Northern Central 279, 11-Shawnee 281, 12-Middletown North 293, 13-North Bergen 302, 14-Hackensack 321, 15-Middletown South 331, 16-Union Hills 372, 17-Edison 394.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Bob Keino, Ridgewood 15:53, 2-Rich Morris, Jackson, 16:07, 3-Michael Andino, Memorial (W.N.Y.), 16:16, 4-Phil Magee, Atlantic City 16:18, 5-Tony Barroco, Kearny 16:27, 6-Pat Nocito, Vineland 16:32, 7-Carmen Mastrano, Eastern 16:36, 8-Matt Elmuccio, Westfield 16:43, 9-Scott Musco, Brick 16:45, 10-Matt Marcini, Millville 16:55, 11-Nick Noguey, Highland Regional 17:05, 12-Roger Munoz, Kearny 17:11, 13-Anthony Bruno, Highland Regional 17:13, 14-Brian Torres, Clifton 17:16, 15-Andrew Ruggiero, Westfield 17:18, 16-John Patricio, Kearny 17:21, 17-Ken Sulphin, Hunterdon Central 17:22, 18-Naim Grigoriu, Piscataway 17:23, 19-Alex Toffen-Lancaster, Shawnee 17:23, 20-Kevin Ludovico, Middletown South 17:24.

BOYS' GROUP 3
TEAMS: 1-North Hunterdon 74, 2-Cedar Ridge 91, 3-Toms River South 152, 4-Mainland 174, 5-Rancocas Valley 203, 6-Wayne Hills 214, 7-Brigleton 264, 8-Mt. Olive and West Morris 272, 9-Waynesboro 292, 10-Phillipsburg 308, 11-Ocean City 313, 12-Morris Knolls 316, 13-South Brunswick 325, 14-Fox Lee 338, 15-Passaic Valley 344, 17-Ocean Township 354, 18-Madison Central 361, 19-Scotch Plains 379, 20-Clark 394.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Kurt Wayton, Mainland 16:19, 2-Eamon Blanchard, Lacey 16:23, 3-Matt Illian, Passaic Valley 16:45, 4-Doug Carter, Wayne Hills 16:30, 5-Geoff Waton, Mainland 16:30, 6-Mike Grant, Passaic Valley 16:39, 7-Scott McDonnell, Mt. Olive 16:48, 8-Eric Bertsch, North Hunterdon 16:50, 9-Jon Harris, Rancocas Valley 16:50, 10-Leigh Cadigan, Old Tappan 16:51, 11-Geoff Ryan, Passaic Valley 16:58, 12-Chris Robinson, North Hunterdon 17:00, 13-Scott Cedar Ridge 17:02, 14-Jason Capelli, Rancocas Valley 17:04, 15-Sean Mick, Delsea 17:05, 16-Scott Keyser, Mainland 17:18, 17-Henock Assela, Fort Lee 17:14, 18-Jeremy Maratone, Tenally 17:16, 19-Dan Malesko, Wayne Hills 17:19, 20-Mike Walker, Rancocas Valley 17:19.

BOYS' GROUP 2
TEAMS: 1-Asbury Park 124, 2-Holmdel 108, 3-Deiran 112, 4-Somerville 154, 5-Pineblades 165, 6-Morris Hills 187, 7-Ridge 249, 8-Hopewell Valley 254, 9-Central 280, 10-Central 280, 11-Northern Highlands 303, 12-Point Pleasant Boro 306, 13-Jefferson 309, 14-Haddon Township 309, 15-Westwood 325, 16-Newton 344, 17-Kingsway 351, 18-Hackettstown 446, 19-Clifton 529.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Eric Castillo, Ridgfield Park 16:44, 2-Rich Airey, Point Pleasant Boro 16:51, 3-Seth Schagalin, Kittanning 16:59, 4-John Korch, Hanover Park 17:02, 5-Dan Feeley, Cinnaminson 17:03, 6-Randy Latza, Voorhees 17:03, 7-Maakon Harris, Deiran 17:04, 8-Diron Accoo, Asbury Park 17:07, 9-Darnell McLean, Asbury Park 17:10, 10-Matt Feeley, Cinnaminson 17:11, 11-Jeff Fuchs, Clearview 17:11, 12-Zach Price, Princeton 17:12, 13-Chad Williams, Summit 17:19, 14-Matt Purdue, Pineblades 17:20, 15-Quetzal Saunders, Ridge 17:21, 16-Sadat Safford, Asbury Park 17:21, 17-Nick Procopio, Haddon Township 17:24, 18-Dan Tavares, Deiran 17:25, 19-Steve Seeback, Jefferson 17:26, 20-Brian Herr, Holmdel 17:31.

BOYS' GROUP 1
TEAMS: 1-Maple Shade 78, 2-Whippany Park 136, 3-Haddonfield 156, 4-Metuchen 171, 5-Henry Hudson 189, 6-Haddon Heights 189, 7-Newark Science 212, 8-Palisades Park 220, 9-Glassboro 261, 10-Spoilswood 264, 11-Bogota 276, 12-Middlesex 272, 13-Highland Park 324, 14-Point Pleasant Beach 337, 15-Madison Borough 342, 16-Central 349, 17-Park Ridge 278, 18-North Warren 418, 19-Ridgely 471.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Tom Horne, Glassboro 16:28, 2-Chuck Nolte, Maple Shade 17:10, 3-Tim Graves, Glassboro 17:22, 4-Anthony DeBenedictis, Roselle Park 17:24, 5-Felix Olivio, Seacaus 17:34, 6-Romel Fernandez, Newark Science 17:36, 7-Sheve Rukowicz, Spoilswood 17:38, 8-Ryan MacNaughton, Whippany Park 17:39, 9-Andrew Kapp, Point Pleasant Beach 17:40, 10-Tom Skaggs, Maple Shade 17:45, 11-Tony Giordano, Maple Shade 17:45, 12-Scott Patterson, Rumson 17:46, 13-Jason Grabelle, Metuchen 17:49, 14-Dave Berger, Haddon Heights 17:50, 15-Jon Egbert, Haddon Heights 17:52, 16-David Ledgerwood, Park Ridge 17:54, 17-Christian Mejia, Newark Science 17:56, 18-Mike Mirakian, Palisades Park 17:59, 19-Ralph Russomano, Whippany Park 18:02, 20-Mike Sica, Pitman 18:08.

BOYS' PAROCHIAL A
TEAMS: 1-Christian Brother 24, 2-Paul VI 40, 3-Don Bosco Prep 73, 4-St. Joseph's (Met.) 152, 5-Paramus Catholic 211, 6-Queen Of Peace 219, 7-Delbarton 231, 8-Selton Prep 272, 9-Bergen Catholic 285, 10-Red Bank Catholic 293, 11-St. Peter's Hall 300, 12-St. Joseph (Mont.) 327, 13-Holy Cross 332, 14-Msgr. Donovan 403, 15-St. John Vianney 406, 16-Bishop Ahr 410, 17-Immaculata 456, 18-Bishop Eustace 458, 19-Camden Catholic 502, 20-Notre Dame 520, 21-Holy Spirit 545, 22-Hudson Catholic 585.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Chris Bennett, Christian Brothers 16:24, 2-Brian Zink, Christian Brothers 16:26, 3-Joe DiGiacomo, Paul VI 16:27, 4-John Williams, Paul VI 16:38, 5-Martin Hickey, Don Bosco Prep 16:47, 6-Chris Chiaro, Christian Brothers 16:47, 7-Eric Savoio, Christian Brothers 16:50, 8-Chuck Grosso, Christian Brothers 16:53, 9-Andrew Zagula, Paramus Catholic 16:54, 10-Jake Lavigne, Don Bosco Prep 16:56, 11-Jason Weber, Bergen Catholic 17:02, 12-Michael Matos, Queen of Peace 17:02, 13-Brian Cunniff, Christian Brothers 17:06, 14-Tim Foley, Don Bosco Prep 17:08, 15-John Butti, Paul VI 17:08, 16-David Biko, St. Joseph's (Met.) 17:13, 17-Jason Patula, Don Bosco Prep 17:17, 18-Nick Cavalario, Paul VI 17:20, 19-Alex Drummond, St. Peter's Prep 17:24, 20-Marc Sabo, Paul VI 17:27, 21-Kurt Krause, St. Joseph's (Met.) 17:29, 22-John Dowley, Queen of Peace 17:30, 23-Mike Farrell, St. Joseph (Mont.) 17:31, 24-Kevin Gilman, Bergen Catholic 17:33, 25-Radley Spring, Holy Spirit 17:35.

BOYS' PAROCHIAL B
TEAMS: 1-Pope John 50, 2-Mater Del 75, 3-Sacred Heart 95, 4-St. Rose 107, 5-Pingry 161, 6-St. Mary's (S.A.) 168, 7-Wildwood 182, 8-Roselle Catholic 234, 9-McCorristan 283, 10-Essex Catholic 293, 11-Newark Academy 293, 12-DePaul 340, 13-Don Bosco Tech 355, 14-Eastern Christian 356, 15-St. Joseph (Ham.) 388, 16-Oratory Prep 399, 17-St. James 412.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Jim Pilla, Mater Del 17:08, 2-Mike Houlihan, Mater Del 17:09, 3-Douglas Cueva, Good Counsel 17:14, 4-Chris Coke, Essex Catholic 17:15, 5-Mike Latonde, Pope John 17:20, 6-Mike Pagliughi, Sacred Heart 16:40, 7-Tom Diemar, Pingry 16:46, 8-Jon Soaps, DePaul 17:34, 9-Jim Fotinelli, Wildwood Catholic 18:01, 10-Jim Michalski, Pope John 17:05, 11-Eugene Daly, Morris Catholic 18:12, 12-Dan Krall, Pope John 18:24, 13-Steve Valentine, Pope John 18:27, 14-Gavin Wynne, St. Rose 18:28, 15-Nick Bucceri, Sacred Heart 18:29, 16-Andrew Biber, Newark Academy 18:32, 17-Jason Kane, St. Rose 18:36, 18-Chris Knehr, Pope John 18:38, 19-Tim Langan, Pope John 18:44, 20-Vinnie Kuntz, Pope John 18:45, 21-Rob Herman, Mater Del 18:47, 22-Frank Pennell, Mater Del 18:47, 23-Frank Pancari, Sacred Heart 18:49, 24-Brian Gomba, McCorristan 17:51.



Photo by Samir Id-Deen

Pt. Pleasant Boro's Richard Airey, Jr. is congratulated by his father after finishing second in Group II Boys Cross-Country State Championships in Holmdel yesterday

Freshmen lead Red Bank C to Parochial A girls' crown

By MIKE G. MORREALE

donfield won in Group 1 and St. Rose Morris Catholic finished first in 20:26, strengthen my legs and has given me