

Keino, Rogers sweep X-country titles

CBA, Hunterdon Central take team championships

By JIM LAMBERT

Bob Keino and Jenna Rogers, Ridgewood's dynamic duo, continued their season-long domination yesterday by becoming the first teammates to sweep the individual titles at the 22d NJSIAA Cross-Country Meet of Champions in Holmdel Park.

Domination also applied to the Christian Brothers Academy boys' team, ranked No. 1 in The Star-Ledger Boys' Top 10 all season. CBA, ranked ninth nationally by the Harrier High School Report, capped its unblemished campaign by extending its state record to seven M of C titles with 46 points. Fourth-ranked North Hunterdon, the Group 3 champion, was second with 64 and seventh-ranked Westfield, the Group 4 runner-up, was third with 133. Westfield was led by Matt Elmuccio, who set a freshman course record by finishing fourth in 16:27.

Unexpectedly, the top-ranked Shawnee girls, who had looked like a shoo-in after convincingly winning Group 4 last week, finished fourth. Second-ranked Hunterdon Central, which kept its pack tight, pulled off the upset with 77 points. Third-ranked Red Bank Catholic was second with 83, fourth-ranked Ridgewood, the defending champion, was third with 87 and Shawnee, ranked 11th by the Harrier Report, was fourth with 125.

Keino, first in this race in 15:52 last year before having the title stripped when the NJSIAA ruled he transferred from his native Kenya for athletic advantage, led early and gradually pulled away on the bowl portion of the course near the halfway point and was never threatened. He covered the 3.1-mile layout in 15:51.1.

"I don't think about what hap-



Photo by Samir Id-Deen
Ridgewood's Bob Keino won the boys' NJSIAA Cross Country Meet of Champions yesterday in Holmdel Park and became part of an unprecedented duo ...

pened last year," said Keino, who reported that the left Achilles tendon he strained two weeks ago was feeling better. "I wasn't worried about my

time. I just wanted to run a good race."

Keino, a senior who visited Stanford University last week, hasn't lost a cross-country race since finishing fourth at the Kinney National Scholastic meet last December. Picked by many to win the Foot Locker National meet on Dec. 11 in San Diego's Balboa Park, Keino has to finish in the top seven at Saturday's Northeast Regional Championship in Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx to qualify for the national meet.

For the second week in a row, Jackson's Rich Morris ran a 16:07 to finish second to Keino. Morris, also second to Keino in the Meet of Champions 1,600 meters last spring, was second in the Group 4 race last Saturday to Keino's 15:53 and feels his friendly rival is the best in the country.

"I think he is going to win it (the national meet)," Morris said.

The Villanova-bound Morris has elected to end his cross-country season and will not compete in the Foot Locker Regional race.

"I just want to concentrate on the indoor season now," he said.

Rogers, a senior who hasn't lost to a New Jersey runner this season, jumped to the front in the girls' race right away and methodically extended her lead to win easily in 18:56.4. She was 34 seconds faster than Shawnee's Liz Moore, second in 19:29. Rogers' only loss this season occurred when she was third at the 2.5-mile Manhattan Invitational in Van Cortlandt on Oct. 9.

"I didn't know that until yesterday (Friday)," Rogers said about teammates never winning both M of C races. "When I found out, I thought it would be pretty cool. I'm happy that we were able to do it."

A great deal of Rogers' success is a result of her staying healthy. As a freshman, she developed two stress fractures and, following her sophomore cross-country season, she needed preventive surgery to remove bunions from both feet. Last season, she was ill at the M of C and was 16th in 20:17.

"Not being injured and having more self-confidence is the biggest difference for me now," said Rogers, who will run in Saturday's Northeast Regional. "Last year, I couldn't stand after this race. I was so sick that I couldn't see straight. But the team won and that was more important."

In the boys' team competition, Chris Bennett, who won the Parochial A title last Saturday in 19:24, led CBA by finishing eighth 16:39. CBA, which won its 10th Parochial A title with a five-man average of 16:33, as usual won as a result of its great depth. Following Bennett were teammates Chris Chiaro, 13th in 16:47; Brian Zink, 15th in 16:55; Eric Savoth, 28th in 17:06; and Brian Cunniff, 47th in 17:23, for an average of 16:58.

"We bent a little but didn't break," said CBA coach Tom Heath, whose team finished its third perfect season by finishing first in all 10 major invitational. "It's a perfect square, 10 of 10."

Last year, CBA won the Parochial A title, 69-71 over Don Bosco Prep, and then finished third behind champion Don Bosco Prep and second-place Ridgewood at the M of C.

"We remembered what happened last year and weren't going to let that happen again," Bennett said as the team nodded in agreement. "We had to finish it out and we did. We weren't going to let ourselves or the tradition of CBA down."

The Hunterdon Central girls, second to Shawnee, 39-54, in the Group 4 race, placed Autumn Fogg 19th in 20:13, Kelly Paulson, 23d in 20:20, Meghan Busse 24th in 20:22, Beth Crawford 20:30 and Betsy Packard 49th in 20:54 for an average of 20:27. Red Bank Catholic averaged 20:56 and Shawnee, which averaged 20:05 in the Group 4 race, dropped to 20:47.

"We figured they (Shawnee) couldn't run that fast again," Hunterdon Central coach Ludwik Lubaszka said. "Our objective was to keep our pack together and we did that and they (Shawnee) didn't."

BOYS

TEAMS: 1-Christian Brothers Academy 46, 2-North Hunterdon 54, 3-Westfield 133, 4-Paul V. 156, 5-Don Bosco Prep 163, 6-Eastern 193, 7-Cedar Ridge 195, 8-Toms River South 213, 9-East Side 230, 10-Mainland 255, 11-Asbury Park 274, 12-DeIran 276, 13-Maple Shade 355, 14-Water Dei 384, 15-Pope John 384, 16-Whippany Park 392, 17-Sacred Heart 411, 18-Haddonfield 481.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Bob Keino, Ridgewood 15:51.1, 2-Rich Morris, Jackson 16:07, 3-Tony Barroco, Karmy 16:27, 4-Matt Elmuccio, Westfield 16:27, 5-Phil Magee, Atlantic City 16:28, 6-Geoff Wayton, Mainland 16:34, 7-Matt Iltan, Pascock Valley 16:39, 8-Chris Bennett, Christian Brothers Academy 16:39, 9-Eamon Blanchard, Leicy 16:42, 10-Joe DiGiacomo, Paul VI 16:43, 11-Anthony DeBenedictis, Roselle Park 16:46, 12-Geoff Ryan, Pascock Valley 16:47, 13-Chris Chiaro, Christian Brothers Academy 16:47, 14-Mike Andino, Memorial W.N.V. 16:50, 15-Brian Zink, Christian Brothers Academy 16:55, 16-Pat Nocito, Vineland 16:57, 17-Martin Hickey, Don Bosco Prep 16:58, 18-Jake Levine, Don Bosco Prep 16:58, 19-Matt Guimes, North Hunterdon 16:59, 20-Doug Carter, Wayne Hills 16:59.

GIRLS

TEAMS: 1-Hunterdon Central 77, 2-Red Bank Catholic 82, 3-Ridgewood 87, 4-Shawnee 125, 5-Paul VI 151, 6-Wayne Valley 168, 7-Ocean City 210, 8-Ocean Township 219, 9-Bishop East 229, 10-Mendham 287, 11-Somerville 305, 12-Midland Park 323, 13-Morris Catholic 345, 14-Haddonfield 350, 15-Northern Highlands 351, 16-Bound Brook 409, 17-St. Rose 431, 18-Water Dei 621.

INDIVIDUALS: 1-Jenna Rogers, Ridgewood 18:56.4, 2-Liz Moore, Shawnee 19:29, 3-Amy Mizzone, Wayne Valley 19:31, 4-Karen O'Neil, Shawnee 19:39, 5-Brooke Carrey, Warren Hills 19:48, 6-Jackie Coscia, Mt. Olive 19:48, 7-Kouringy Galla, Immaculate Heart Academy 19:55, 8-Cathy McGuigan, Bridgeton 19:57.



Photo by Samir Id-Deen
... as Ridgewood's Jenna Rogers won the girls' NJSIAA Cross Country Meet of Champions, making them the first pair from the same school to sweep the honors

9-Kerry Andrews, Red Bank Catholic 19:58, 10-Amy Beykirch, Pinebluffs 19:59, 11-Hazel Clark, Columbia 20:01, 12-Colleen Sunderland, Northern Burlington 20:01, 13-Erin O'Rourke, Red Bank Catholic 20:02, 14-Megan Hartman, Ocean City 20:05, 15-Julie Schick, Mainland 20:08, 16-Megan Phillips, Ocean Township 20:08, 17-Kerry Moore, Midland Park 20:10, 18-Jen Rafferty, Riverside 20:11, 19-Autumn Fogg, Hunterdon Central 20:13, 20-Cathy O'Brien, Morris Catholic 20:13.