

New Jersey 1-2-3 | CBA Takes Top Honors

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WAPPINGERS FALLS, NY - The Christian Brothers Academy came into this race riding a high that hoped to ride all the way to Portland. Last Saturday at the NJ Meet of Champions CBA shattered an already monstrous single race team time record (held by West Windsor-Plainsboro North in 2008 with a team that had both Rosas) by running a total time of 80:26.2 averaging 16:05.3, an absolutely mind boggling time for the legendary course at Holmdel Park in Holmdel, NJ. That record list can be found by clicking on this link <http://nj.milesplit.com/pages/xcatholmdelteamsinglerace> They came into the Nike Cross Nationals Northeast Regional (ranked US #3 by Marc Bloom) as most would say a heavy favorite to win at Bowdoin but also now a favorite to win it all in Portland. But 1st thing 1st they had to make it out of Wappingers Falls with a top 2 finish to secure an automatic bid. Led by Mike Mazzaccaro who after running 15:20 at Holmdel has been considered by some (maybe many) to be the best CBA runner EVER. CBA was going to need a strong race from all 7 as Pembroke HS, MA and Haddonfield, NJ were also

considered big threats to place and/or win the team crown. Early on in the race (somewhere just past 1 mile) CBA has 3 of their top 7 in the top 20. At that point you knew they weren't going down without a fight. Coming out of the woods with around 1200m to go it looked as though it was theirs for the taking. Rounding the final turn it was Mazzaccaro leading the Colts to the finish with Dan Mykityshyn not far behind and it looked as though they had done it. However, we would have to wait for the awards ceremony because they officials weren't about the ruin the surprise.

So naturally Ian Brooks is set to announce and he starts with the 4th place team. "In 4th place Plainsboro XC". As I thought to myself, did I hear that right? Plainsboro XC (West Windsor-Plainsboro North) took 4th place without Joe Rosa? Sure did, what a remarkable season the Knights had as they finished 4th place at the NXNNE race without one of their stars. Naturally it doesn't hurt to have another Rosa (Jim) on your team, who by the way had a sensational race, but I'll get to that later. Plainsboro XC times and places were:

Jim Rosa - 1st - 15:35.5 (Course Record)
Casey Dalrymple - 23rd - 16:44.8
Pat O'Connell - 43rd - 17:00.1
Danny Lee - 68th - 17:16.1
Sean O'Connell - 88th - 17:35.4
Suraj Nyalakonda - 180th - 18:45.0

Next up was the 3rd place team, and this was the place that NOBODY wants to be here, as it's the 1st team NOT to get an automatic bid to Portland and a chance to run as a team for the National Championship. Brooks says "In 3rd place, Haddonfield TC" and right there I just felt awful (but happy at the same time) for the Bulldogs from Haddonfield. Haddonfield's times and places were:

Ben Potts - 5th - 16:11.5
Matt Nussbaum - 8th - 16:23.1
Tim Malloy - 34th - 16:50.8
Greg Halla - 37th - 16:56.6
Conor Jacobs - 102nd - 17:45.4
Ethan Quanci - 141st - 18:12.2
Eric Lacy - 142nd - 18:12.6

So it was all down to the top two and most of the crowd knew it was between the Titans TC (Pembroke HS, MA) and Brothers XC Club (CBA, NJ). From Brooks' mouth "In 2nd place, Titans TC" and I looked over to CBA team and support staff and they couldn't hold their emotions. It was about to come true (their dream). Brooks' turned to the crowd and announced "This years Northeast Regional team champion, the Brothers XC Club". They all jumped up from their seats in the grass and all hide wide smiles as they made their way to receive their plaque as they were crowned 2010 Nike Cross National Northeast Regional Champions.



NJ won both the boys and girls team championship and also finished 3rd and 4th in both genders.

In the Northeast boys individual race it was all about NJ. Even before the race the entire crowd knew it. But where would they finish? The major battle (and much anticipated one) was between NJ state champion Jim Rosa and Edward Cheserek who had been ripping through courses all season (these two only met once, and it was at the Manhattan Invite on the 2.5mile course of Van Cortlandt

In This Article

[Bragg, William](#)
[Cheserek, Edward](#)
[Dalrymple, Casey](#)
[Elkaim, Jeremy](#)
[Halla, Greg](#)
[Jacobs, Connor](#)
[Jennings, Levi](#)
[Kelly, George](#)
[Kirna, Andrew](#)
[Lacy, Eric](#)
[Leahy, Jack](#)
[Liberatore, Aaron](#)
[Lippert, Conrad](#)
[Malloy, Timothy](#)
[Mazzaccaro, Mike](#)
[Mykityshyn, Dan](#)
[Nussbaum, Matthew](#)
[Nyalakonda, Suraj](#)
[Potts, Ben](#)
[Quanci, Ethan](#)
[Rosa, James](#)
[Rynkowski, Pat](#)
[Zapcic, Scott](#)
[Nike Cross Nationals Northeast Regional](#)

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Name:

Discussion

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Park where Rosa claimed victory). From the get go it was all about these two. From the start down the 1st 600m it was Rosa and Cheserek already leading the pack. At the one mile Cheserek had a 1 step lead over Rosa as they came through in around 5:06, very fast for this course (Bowdoin is considered MUCH tougher than Holmdel). Right behind those two was Jeremy Elkaim (recently verbally committed to head to the U. of Oregon next year) of Livingston, NJ so it was NJ 1-2-3 just past 1 mile. The course isn't the most spectator friendly so I would only see them again heading out of the woods with around 1200m to go (I definitely needed to see the finish) and it was still NJ 1-2-3 this time Rosa led Cheserek and Elkaim trailed. So they had one big horseshoe to do around the open field and then on to the finish. I found my place behind the finish line so that I could take photos of them down the final stretch. Rosa was the 1st in my sight and it was apparent he put the hammer down in the final 200m. Rosa was going to win it. But how fast was it going to be? Rosa crossed the line and smashed another course record finishing in 15:35.5, Cheserek finished 13 seconds behind Rosa in 15:48.3 and Elkaim rounded out the NJ sweep finishing in 3rd in 15:55.3 the only 3 runners to break 16:00 in the race. Those 3 along with CBA will be heading to Portland on automatic bids. Haddonfield will have to wait and see if they receive an At-Large bid. The top 21 individuals in the race are selected to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd team All-Northeast and those athletes are:

1st Team (in order of finish, places 1-7)

Jim Rosa (WWPN) - 15:35.5

Ed Cheserek (St. Benedict's) - 15:48.3



Jeremy Elkaim (Livingston) - 15:55.3

Steven Sollowin (Weymouth Youth TC) - 16:03.9

Wade Endress (Toona RC) - 16:03.9

Zachary Fraielli (LSA RC) - 16:04.0

Ben Potts (Haddonfield) - 16:11.5

2nd Team (in order of finish, places 8-14)

Mike Mazzaccaro (CBA) - 16:11.6

Sam Gagnon (Manchester Distance Project) - 16:21.5

Matt Nussbaum (Haddonfield) - 16:23.1

Ryan Kelley (Titans TC) - 16:23.3

Wesley Gallagher (Titans TC) - 16:23.4

Ryan Meehan (Bishop Hendricken TC) - 16:29.8

Jack Leahy (Westfield) - 16:30.0

3rd Team (in order of finish, places 15-21)

Dan Mykityshyn (CBA) - 16:30.5

Patrick Rynkowski (Ridgewood) - 16:31.2

David Melly (Norton Team Endurance) - 16:33.5

Levi Jennings (Ridgewood) - 16:35.0

George Kelly (CBA) - 16:36.2

Andrew Kirna (Westfield) - 16:36.7

Alex Levine (Danbury XC Club) - 16:39.2

Bold = New Jersey athletes

12 New Jersey male athletes made an All-Northeast Team

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