

Novi tops Salem to win Kensington Conference title

Tim Smith, Hometownlife.com

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(Photo: BRAD EMONS)

Friday's weather was nearly perfect and the KLAA Kensington Conference boys track and field meet nearly matched it in terms of competitive drama and flair.

Novi topped the 12-team field at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park with 137.5 points, featuring a lineup that scored depth points across the board.

In second was Salem with 114 points, while Livonia Churchill — in the Chargers' first conference meet following the March passing of beloved coach Rick Austin — came in third with 98.75 points.

"We would both agree that the key to winning this meet was balance," said Novi co-coach Marsha Reid, nodding to co-coach Cindy Kuhn. "And having kids be able to be dominant not just in distance and sprints, but also on the field and getting points in all the events."

Reid listed many key contributors, including Anthony D'Annibale winning the 400-meter dash, Dave Mudel taking first in the two-mile run, Scott MacPherson winning the mile, Nate Hankerson "doing a great job in sprints, having Jordon Castleberry over in the discus have a PR kind of day (137 feet, two inches). Just great balance overall."



Novi's Nate Wood and Josh Momeyer of Churchill, battle for the lead in their leg of the 4X800 relay. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographe)

Kuhn noted that the Wildcats "really stepped up and they did a great job improving their times which was really what it was all about, improving their seed times going into the regional meet.

"With that being said, doing a good job of getting us points where we needed them," Kuhn continued. "And they came together as a team and now is the best time to be doing it."

Novi also won the 3,200-meter relay, with the tandem of Josh Landy, Aric Landy, Scott McPherson and Nate Wood prevailing in just over eight minutes to comfortably defeat runner-up Churchill (8:06.17).



Jeremiah Roberts, of Salem High School, competes in the long jump. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographe)

Rocks show stuff

But Salem also gave Novi a battle, with Alex Howie winning both shot put and discus and the Rocks garnering first in the 400-meter and 800-meter relays — with VerShawn Patrick, Mason Phillips and Andrew Davis part of each quartet.

Also part of those winning relays were Jeremiah Roberts in the 400 relay and Ryan Young in the 800 relay.

Salem coach Dale Maskill said both relays broke school and P-CEP records in the process.

"And Davis, Patrick and Phillips were scorers in the 100 and 200 (sprints)," Maskill said. "They've been doing it all year. Our hurdlers had a nice day, too. We got some points from John Paul DeLa Cruz and Shariff Dyer was second behind (Canton's) Jemal (Vaunado)."

Other Salem event wins were recorded by Phillips in the long jump (22-4) and Davis in the 100 dash (11.10).

"I think we had a good day, we performed about as well as we can," Maskill continued. "Novi's distance crew was just way too much for us to handle today.

“We got them on Tuesday in the dual meet, because when you sweep a dual meet it’s only nine points, but when you sweep in a conference meet you’re getting 24 points.”

According to Churchill interim coach Jordan McClellan, who succeeded the late Austin, the Chargers were able to hold their emotions in check and give Novi and Salem a challenge.

“We had a lot of really great individual performances that were up in the top-2 today,” McClellan said. “Evan Cummins was second in the long jump and fourth in the discus.

“We had a bunch of guys get through to the finals in the 100 and 200, Dash (Dobar) ran an outstanding race in the 800 (first with a time of 1:58.53). Some of the teams that were ahead of us today we won’t see at the regional next week. So I think we have a really great chance as a team to score high at that meet.”



Participants in the 100-meter dash preliminary heat swing into action. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographer)

To the wire

One of Friday’s standouts was Canton’s Vaunado, who won both the 110- and 300-hurdle events (15.18, 39.44, respectively) and ran an impressive final leg in the closely contested 4-by-400 relay.

Vaunado ramped it up in time to nip Churchill’s Frank LaFave at the finish line. Canton prevailed 3:26.58 with the Chargers second at 3:26.83.

Also winning an event for the Chiefs was pole vaulter Andrew Koenigsnecht, with a conference record 14 feet, 7.5 inches.

“He’s been consistent in our dual meets,” Canton head coach Jess Shough said. “We look for him to be a state qualifier. He’s ranked in the state, as is Jemal.”

Other individual wins were scored by Livonia Franklin’s Brandon Smiley in the 200 dash (a school record 21.92) and Livonia Stevenson’s Ian Knoph in the high jump (6-5).



Canton's Andrew Koenigs knecht clears the bar during Friday's Kensington Conference meet. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographe)

KLAA KENSINGTON CONFERENCE

BOYS TRACK & FIELD MEET RESULTS

May 12 at Canton (P-CEP)

TEAM STANDINGS: 1. 1. Novi, 137.5 points; 2. Salem, 114; 3. Livonia Churchill, 98.75; 4. Canton, 75.75; 5. Plymouth, 53.5; 6. Livonia Stevenson, 47.75; 7. Livonia Franklin, 47; 8. Northville, 27; 9. South Lyon East, 18; 10. Westland John Glenn, 17; 11. Wayne Memorial, 14; 12. South Lyon, 11.75.

FINAL RESULTS

Shot put: 1. Alex Howie (Salem), 50 feet, 3 inches; 2. Reggie Micheaux (WM), 47-0; 3. Bobby Madley (LF), 46-7; 4. Ben Dietrich (LC), 44-1; 5. Mike McCarthy (SLE), 43-1.5; 6. (tie) James Deese (Canton), Jalen Jackson (WJG), 42-7.5; 8. Asa Hassan (LS), 42-4.

Discus: 1. Howie (Salem), 149-10; 2. Andy Mattison (SL), 140-4; 3. Jordon Castleberry (Novi), 137-2; 4. Evan Cummins (LC), 133-0; 5. Ryan McKeon (SLE), 132-2; 6. Deese (Canton), 129-9; 7. Robert Florence (Ply), 121-7; 8. Reggie Micheaux (WM), 119-3.

High jump: 1. Ian Knoph (LS), 6-5; 2. Connor Bush (Ply), 6-4; 3. Cameron Grace (Salem), 6-3; 4. Scott Sawyer (Novi), 6-1; 5. (tie) Cameron Kight (Ply), Andrew White (Novi), 5-11; 7. (tie) Aaron Simmon (LS), Jordan Forney (Canton), Braxton Blackwell (SL), Cummins (LC), Jaren Carble (LC), Christopher Kight (Canton), Kaleb Smith (Ply), Caleb Sheehan (N'ville), Alec Hopkins (N'ville), Josh Travis (SL), 5-9.

Long jump: 1. Mason Phillips (Salem), 22-4; 2. Cummins (LC), 21-4; 3. Martell Dooley (LC), 20-11.25; 4. Grace (Salem), 20-2; 5. Kevin Colangelo (LC), 20-0; 6. Brendan Ireland (Novi), 19-8.75; 7. Aaron Simmon (LS), 19-5; 8. Jacob Kast (LF), 19-2.75.

Pole vault: 1. Andrew Koenigs knecht (Canton), 14-7.5; 2. Scott Sawyer (Novi), 13-6; 3. Collin Bowersox (LS), 13-0; 4. Cody Tapp (Salem), 12-9; 5. Chuck Carey (Canton), 12-6; 6. Logan Delonis (LS), 12-0; 7. (tie) Joey Villarosa (SL), Austin Sheppard (Salem), Calvin Vos (Ply), 11-6.

110-meter hurdles: 1. Jemal Vaunado (Canton), 15.18; 2. Malcolm Caldwell (Ply), 15.39; 3. Evan Marini (LS), 16.14; 4. John Stefan (Novi), 16.16; 5. Hunter Joy (Novi), 16.56; 6. Logan Leinbach (Canton), 16.59; 7. John Paul DeLa Cruz (Salem), 16.92; 8. Marcus Martin (LF), 26.09.

300 hurdles: 1. Vaunado (Canton), 39.44; 2. Shariff Dyer (Salem), 39.97; 3. Jacob Waranauckas (SLE), 41.01; 4. Montel Lewis (WJG), 42.21; 5. Joy (Novi), 42.66; 6. Jake Kaupp (LS), 42.67; 7. Brendan Ireland (Novi), 43.09; 8. Alvin Li (Novi), 43.09.

100 dash: 1. Andrew Davis (Salem), 11.10; 2. Jamal Allen (LC), 11.20; 3. Nathan Hankerson (Novi), 11.28; 4. Deon Pitchford (LC), 11.32; 5. LaDarius Sharp (LS), 11.35; 6. (tie) Michael Mathias (Ply), Sean Pitcher (Novi), 11.59; 8. VerShawn Patrick (Salem), 11.64.

200: 1. Brandon Smiley (LF), 21.92; 2. Mason Phillips (Salem), 22.09; 3. Davis (Salem), 22.37; 4. Christian Bagnall (LF), 22.47; 5. Niguel Smith (LC), 22.73; 6. Hankerson (Novi), 22.79; 7. Deon Pitchford (LC), 23.44.

400: 1. Anthony D'Annibale (Novi), 49.70; 2. Jared Tarrance (WJG), 49.86; 3. Dirk Thornhill (Canton), 50.38; 4. Caleb Moraw (Canton), 50.77; 5. Khalil Pasha (LF), 51.38; 6. Josh Momeyer (LC), 52.09; 7. Nolan Knight (N'ville), 53.04; 8. Srikar Komanduri (Canton), 53.22.

800: 1. Dash Dobar (LC), 1:58.53; 2. Nathaniel Wood (Novi), 1:58.79; 3. Scott MacPherson (Novi), 1:59.80; 4. Frank LaFave (LC), 2:00.41; 5. Blake Maday (Novi), 2:00.97; 6. Derek Skaff (Salem), 2:01.91; 7. Ben Griffith (LS), 2:02.17; 8. Alex Poe (Canton), 2:03.04.

1,600: 1. Scott MacPherson (Novi), 4:23.00; 2. Nicholas Couyoumjian (N'ville), 4:24.62; 3. Ethan Byrnes (Ply), 4:25.61; 4. Gabriel Mudel (Novi), 4:27.66; 5. John Landy (Novi), 4:30.06; 6. Brandon Boyd (Ply), 4:32.11; 7. Dobar (LC), 4:32.57; 8. Carter Solomon (Ply), 4:32.73.

3,200: 1. Mudel (Novi), 9:35.78; 2. Byrnes (Ply), 9:38.83; 3. Jack Balint (LS), 9:42.13; 4. Solomon (Ply), 9:44.98; 5. Tyler Opdycke (LC), 9:48.81; 6. Ben Cracraft (N'ville), 9:50.81; 7. Luke Haran (Salem), 9:52.41; 8. Trey Mullins (Novi), 9:53.36.

400 relay: 1. Salem (VerShawn Patrick, Mason Phillips, Jeremiah Roberts, Andrew Davis), 42.85; 2. Novi, 42.98; 3. Franklin, 43.03; 4. Churchill, 44.02; 5. Northville, 45.31; 6. Canton, 45.47; 7. S.L. East, 45.98; 8. South Lyon, 46.08.

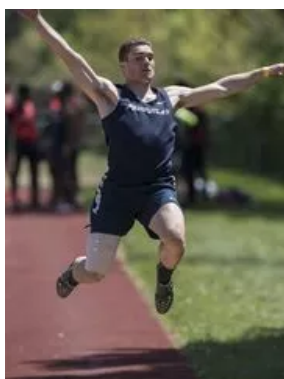
800 relay: 1. Salem (Patrick, Phillips, Ryan Young, Davis), 1:28.52; 2. Franklin, 1:29.21; 3. Churchill, 1:29.42; 4. Canton, 1:30.70; 5. Novi, 1:31.90; 6. Northville, 1:34.30; 7. Wayne, 1:34.55; 8. S.L. East, 1:37.39.

1,600 relay: 1. Canton (Dirk Thornhill, Caleb Moraw, Srikar Komanduri, Jemal Vaunado), 3:26.58; 2. Churchill, 3:26.83; 3. Franklin, 3:31.02; 4. Novi, 3:33.64; 5. Salem, 3:35.67; 6. Wayne, 3:35.89; 7. Northville, 3:36.26; 8. S.L. East, 3:40.44.

3,200 relay: 1. Novi (Josh Landy, Aric Landy, Scott McPherson, Nate Wood), 8:00.96; 2. Churchill, 8:06.17; 3. Plymouth, 8:15.62; 4. Northville, 8:16.14; 5. Stevenson, 8:20.15; 6. Salem, 8:25.08; 7. John Glenn, 8:32.00; 8. Canton, 8:33.07.



Livonia Stevenson's Ian Knoph scales the bar to win the high jump. (Photo: MICHAEL VASILNEK)



Northville discus thrower Patrick Long prepares to launch. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographe)

Livonia Franklin's Jacob Cast competes in the long jump. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographe)



Competing in the preliminary of the 110-meter high hurdles is Novi's John Stefan. (Photo: Bill Bresler | staff photographe)



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