

Shawnee and Bucs take titles

Both rally to win

By Reuben Frank
BCT sports writer

BRIDGETON — Cinnaminson trailed Kingsway by 11 points with two events left. Shawnee trailed Eastern by 11 points with three events left.

Big deal.

Because it's not where you are early in the day or late in the day, it's where you

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are at the end of the day. And when everything was added up yesterday, the Pirates and Renegades were on the winner's stand at the South Jersey track and field sectionals.

Cinnaminson won its second Group 2 title in the last three years, edging Kingsway, 94-87. Shawnee, second to Willingboro the last two years, finished with a 104-85 win over Eastern to win its first Group 4 championship.

In Group 1, Maple Shade was second even though one of its top athletes didn't show up for the meet, with Florence fourth and Palmyra fifth. A young Willingboro team placed a strong third in Group 4, but this was Shawnee's day. Even though it didn't seem that way for a while.

"We knew we were pretty far behind Eastern for a while, but we didn't panic," Shawnee half-miler Chris Tarello said. "We knew we were going to score some points in the last few events. We knew if we all did our jobs, we'd be OK."

Shawnee clinched its title by placing three 3,200-meter runners in the top five. The Renegades extended their final margin by taking fourth in the relay while Eastern was being disqualified.

"When they took that big lead, I started looking around and thinking, 'Hey, maybe they have a better team than we thought,'" Shawnee coach Tim Gushue said. "But our guys did what they had to do. That 3,200 was fabulous. That was really the difference in the meet."

Shawnee senior Ed Loges was spectacular, scoring 28 points and producing personal-bests in three events (see related story). But it wasn't until the 3,200 that Shawnee was able to put Eastern away. Junior Aaron Totten-Lancaster took second, junior Scott Teske was third, and senior Jason Douglas — earlier third in the 1,600 — placed fifth.

And just like that, a one-point deficit became an insurmountable 15-point



BCT staff photo/Dennis McDonald
Shawnee's Tamara Gehris crosses the finish line first in the Group 4 1,600-meter run at the South Jersey Sectional Meet yesterday.

Willingboro's dynamic duo leads path to championship

Van Wright, Butler 1-2 in sprints

By Phil Chappine
BCT sports writer

MEDFORD — The Willingboro High School girls track team used the one-two punch to win the South Jersey Group 4 championship yesterday.

Willingboro athletes finished first and second in three events, sparking the Chimeras to 110 points. Toms River North was second with 51 points and host Shawnee was third with 50.

ond in the 100-meter dash, then did the same in the 200. Nicole Abrams and Marsha McCleary placed first and second in the discus throw.

Abrams and McCleary then went first and third in the shot put. Willingboro finished second in four other events and two fourth-place finishes rounded out the team effort.

GIRLS SECTIONALS

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■ SHAWNEE/From C1

"We push each other in practice and we did the same thing (in the race)," Teske said. "The goal was for all three of us to place in the top six and advance to the state meet. Where we placed among us wasn't as important as just getting in the top six."

In the searing heat, Loges won the 200-meter dash and long jump and ran second in the high hurdles. Junior Jason LaBarbera gave Shawnee its only other win, a first in the javelin. But the Renegades outscored Eastern, 38-0, in the three long track races, and that was the difference between winning and placing among the top six for the 10th time in the last 11 years.

"My main goal was just counting heads in front of me and making sure I was in the top six," Douglas said. "We feel we definitely have one of the strongest (distance teams) in the state and this is exactly what we wanted to do."

Totten-Lancaster didn't repeat his sectional championship of last year, but he did lead the parade of three Renegade distance runners who finished within nine seconds of each other.

"We all draw off each other and we all push each other," Teske said. "It's a good feeling knowing the other guys are right in there. I know if I'm right behind Tott that I'm running a good time and I just need to stay where I am."

Shawnee, second in the indoor state meet, has won everything it's entered since losing to Eastern in the Bridgeton Relays. It was that meet, the Renegades say now, that inspired them to work even harder.

"That made us realize nothing was going to be handed to us this year," said junior Jim Angermeier, who was second in the intermediate hurdles. "We learned we were going to have to work for what we wanted to accomplish. It wasn't going to be easy."

Eastern yesterday scored 18 points in the pole vault and got two wins from hurdler Vince Rawlins. But Shawnee got seconds from Angermeier, Tarello, and Totten-Lancaster; and thirds from the rapidly