'New Wave' wins McQuaid race

McQuaid Jesuit's combination of sophomores and freshmen provided the Knights' highlight at the school's 26th annual meet last Saturday at Genesee Valley Park.

Running as a unit for the first time this season, the "New Wave" Knights took on a field of 30 schools and 180 runners and came away with a 59-77 victory over an always-tough St. Michael's of Toronto squad.

Soph Tim Kelley and freshman Adam Reitz led their team up to the top part of the field, running 1-2 for the first mile of the race. They faded a bit in the final stages but still were strong enough to take fourth and fifth. Soph Matt Bunce and freshman Dan Lesser laid off the early pace but came on steadily to wind up 10th and 13th. Soph Dave Rimlinger came up with a strong kick to clinch the winning total in 27th place. Another soph, Jesse Yeager, provided solid backup in 34th.

Lesser and Rimlinger were varsity scorers for McQuaid in last Tuesday's sweep of Aquinas in City-Catholic action. Lesser won his first race in a McQuaid uniform and broke Reitz's one-week-old course record in doing it. Rimlinger placed third behind junior Steve Parrish.

Speaking of his young runners, Coach Bob Bradley said, "Our first

Nate Ruder: winner of the Steve Prefontaine Memorial Award at the McQuaid Invitational.

four would normally have run varsity, but I wanted them to see how strong they are against their own age group. They don't get many chances to do that, and it was good to see them make the most of it."

McQuaid's entry in the unseeded AAA varsity race did not fare well, with the exception of senior John Whittaker, who placed 23rd in a time of 17:08, almost two minutes faster than he ran in last year's meet. "That's a typical indicator of how improved John is this year," said Bradley.

Bradley was also pleased with the tight grouping McQuaid's junior high team managed to come up with in its race. Eighth-graders Nathan Schroeder and Anthony Riley led the way in 39th and 55th, with freshmen Chris Curtin, Jim Barnum, and Joe Perry taking 58th, 60th, and 61st in a field of almost 200 runners.

Warm and windy conditions produced the slowest group of times in the meet's recent history, with fewer than 20 boys breaking 16:00 and no girls breaking 18:00 for the three-mile course.

The top individual award, the Steve Prefontaine Memorial plaque, went to Section 5's outstanding runner, Nate Ruder of Fairport, for the fastest time of the day, 15:06. Jenny Rhines of Liverpool took home the girls' gold cup trophy with her fastest time of 18:03, and freshman Jeremy Naginey of Guilderland captured the Father Michael Wesley Memorial plaque for being the fastest junior high runner in 8:13 for the 1:54-mile course.

This week the Knights go back to their individual two-varsity setup, running in separate races at the Meteor Invitational in Montrose, Pa.
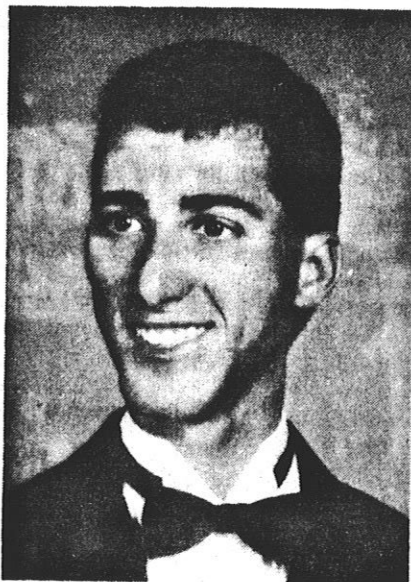
Spagnola wins Lombardi award

McQuaid Jesuit senior Mark Spagnola climaxed a five-year cross-country career last week by being named winner of the Vince Lombardi Memorial Plaque.

The Lombardi award, McQuaid's premier cross-country honor, is given to the runner judged by his teammates and coaches to be exemplary in dedication to his faith, his sport, and his team.

Spagnola, the son of Michael and Carole Spagnola, 10 English Woods, Greece, was co-captain of this year's team. Since beginning as an eighth-grader, he has won three varsity letters in cross country and three in track.

This season he led McQuaid to a narrow victory in the Spencerport Invitational by finishing first. At the Jesuit championships he again led the Knights in fifth place, and he won his first individual sectional patch by placing ninth in the Class A race.

SPAGNOLA: Wins McQuaid's Lombardi award

In track, he has been a key man on McQuaid's championship 3200 relay and, in the young indoor season, has already scored an individual victory in the 100 meters, and has run on three winning relays.

"Mark was an outstanding choice for the award from a group of great seniors," said Coach Bob Bradley. "In addition to his running he's found time to be part of MAGIS, our community service group, as well as being senior class secretary, a member of the National Honor Society, and a coordinator of our Summer 25-hour relay for charity."

Spagnola, a second honors student, has applied to Villanova, the University of Rochester, St. Joseph's of Philadelphia, and SUNY Geneseo.

Before the Lombardi award was announced, a host of McQuaid runners had already been recognized. Senior John Whittaker and freshman Adam Reitz were co-winners of the Royden Smith Memorial as most improved, the first time that two plaques honoring the '84 graduate have been given.

"John was two minutes improved over some courses, and Adam had a remarkable jump up from junior high running all the way to being our top sectional finisher," said Bradley, "so a double award seemed fitting."

Reitz also took home the Bob Bossert Memorial Cup, given to the top Catholic school sectional finisher in honor of the Aquinas runner who lost his life on maneuvers as a Naval Academy midshipman in 1965. It marked the first time that the cup has gone to a freshman runner. A third award for Reitz was a trophy for compiling the team's top finish index in his 13 races this season.

Another multiple winner was freshman Dan Lesser as student-athlete for this year, and also most improved varsity-1 runner during the season. The same honors went to sophomore Jesse Yeager, a varsity-2 runner.

McQuaid's other student-athlete winners were eighth-grader Pat Bernal, junior Steve Parrish, and senior co-captain Dan Gebhardt, who has captured that award each of his four years. Bradley noted that his year's team placed almost 90 per cent of its runners on the honor roll. One of those honor students was sophomore Matt Bunce, wiinner of the Best New Runner award.

Freshman Fred Bush won the Most Improved junior high runner trophy, and teammates Chris Curtin and Nathan Schroeder were co-winners of the Outstanding Junior High Runner awards.