

# Sports



## Throwers make history

■ Roze, Eucker notch memorable marks in javelin at Penn Relays. **85**

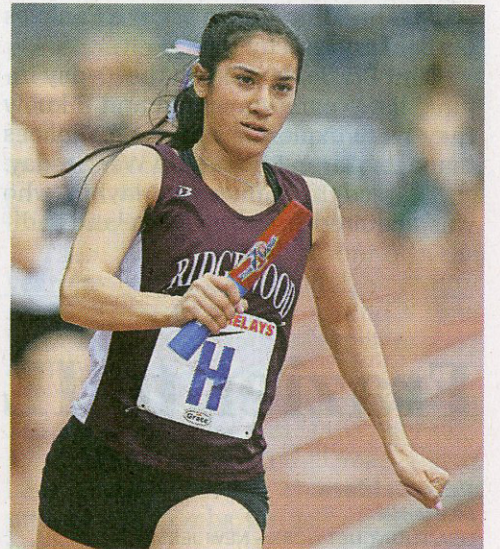
# North Jersey Sports

## How to report scores

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Karina Roze of Glen Rock placed fourth in the javelin competition. PHOTOS BY CHRIS PEDOTA/NORTHJERSEY.COM-USA TODAY NETWORK



Katherine Muccio of Ridgewood runs the distance medley relay on Thursday. CHRIS PEDOTA/NORTHJERSEY.COM-USA TODAY NETWORK

## Ridgewood girls run sensational, joyful DMR

Maroons don't medal, but nearly set new best

**Paul Schwartz**  
North Jersey Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

PHILADELPHIA — The three Ridgewood seniors who returned to the distance medley relay at Penn Relays Thursday evening ran with the abandon they did not show last season. And the result was the second-fastest time in Bergen County history, joy and redemption.

The Maroons didn't medal, finishing eighth, but ran 11:54.22, one of the top dozen times in the country this year and second only to the 2012 Ridgewood team that won the national championship.

"We had a lot to prove to ourselves because last year didn't go that well," said Cassie Keyes who led off the race by running 3:41.32 for 1,200 meters, nearly four seconds faster than she had ever run the distance before. "It's been something we wanted all year and we worked hard to get there."

Katherine Muccio ran the best 400 split of the race by nearly two seconds and her 56.79 left the Maroons in fifth place on the handoff. This came nearly eight hours after she ran in the first high school race of the day, tying for seventh in the 400 hurdles in a personal best 61.33.

"The middle of the day was rough," said Muccio, who left school at 6 a.m. to get to her 10:20 a.m. event. "But my teammates got here around 2 or 3 and that gave me even more motivation."

Virginia Morley followed with an almost too enthusiastic start, running out of a box after running a 66.1 opening lap and actually taking the lead with 250 to

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# Monster throws put locals in limelight

Roze, Eucker make school history in javelin at Penn Relays



**Local Sports**  
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PHILADELPHIA — Karina Roze picked a great time to bloom.

Then Glen Rock junior came up with a throw of 43.05 meters (141-feet, 2 inches, for you non-metric types), to claim fourth in the javelin at the 125th Penn Relays Carnival Thursday under dank, but friendly skies. It was a personal best for Roze, and the 12th-best throw in Bergen County history. It also gave her the first Penn Relays medal for a Glen Rock individual athlete.

"It just worked," smiled Roze. "It was a nice thing."

Bergen Tech sophomore Alianna Eucker put up a throw of 41.92 meters in the finals to finish fifth. It was satisfying for Eucker, who was sixth last year at Penn Relays, and like Roze, it's the first individual medal for an athlete from her



Alianna Eucker of Bergen Tech placed fifth in the javelin competition.

school.

"This is big for me," said Eucker, a Township of Washington resident. "And hopefully, I will have two more years for this."

Penn Relays prides itself on running ahead of schedule on the track inside Franklin Field, but the efficiency didn't carry over to the throws. A computer problem delayed the start of the high

school javelin by almost 30 minutes. Roze said she didn't take her third warm-up throw, but also felt the delay didn't impact her.

It only took one round for the championship to be decided. Skylar Ciccolini of Mifflin County High School (Pa.), the top seed, broke her own Penn Relays record with a throw of 56.14 (184 feet, 2 inches) on her first try. How big was that throw? It was mere inches off the college record at Penn Relays. Ciccolini's is the second longest high school throw ever.

"Professionals, yes, but definitely not a high school girl," said Roze when asked if she'd ever seen a longer throw.

That meant everyone else was battling for second place, and both Eucker and Roze were in danger of not even making the finals in the 19-girl field heading into their final throws of the prelims. Roze, the seventh seed, then uncorked her monster throw to qualify. Eucker, the sixth seed, went 40.84

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TRACK AND FIELD

# Best of the Week: Comet update, conference ahead

**Paul Schwartz**

North Jersey Record  
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

## Clifton wins Comet Relays

Ramapo's boys were confirmed as the overall winner and the small schools winner at the Comet Relays last week with 90 points, but a recording error was corrected Sunday and as result, Clifton edged Bergen Tech for the large schools title, 89-85.

The eight points for third place in the triple jump was mistakenly awarded to CSI/McCown of Staten Island, the team right below Clifton in the scoring table. The error was reported and the correction made awarding the trophy to the Mustangs.

That gave Clifton a sweep of the large school titles and Holy Angels won the small schools and overall girls title.

## NJIC championships at Emerson

The annual NJIC divisional

championships are Monday and Tuesday with the Patriot and Liberty meets on Monday and the Meadowlands and Colonial on Tuesday.

**PATRIOT:** Park Ridge girls have won two straight meets and Cresskill boys have won six in a row.

**LIBERTY:** Lyndhurst has six straight boys wins and five straight girls titles. Guilia Pezzola of Lyndhurst goes for three straight 800 and 1,600 titles.

**MEADOWLANDS:** Hasbrouck Heights has won six straight boys and girls titles. Stephen Henke of Becton goes for a third straight 110 high hurdles boys title. Jeremy Bronstein of Dwight-Englewood, who has won the last three Patriot 800 races, shoot for a fourth straight divisional title in a different division.

**COLONIAL:** Glen Rock has won the last four boys and girls divisional titles. Sarah Hutchins of Glen Rock (100), Madison Wynbeeck of Eastern Christian (shot) and Karina Roze of Glen Rock (discus) are looking for three straight divisional titles in the girls meet and An-

drew Laguttuta of Glen Rock (1,600/3,200) and Ramon Bermudez of Lodi (triple jump) are doing the same in the boys meet.

## Big North championships

The Big North championships began Wednesday with the Liberty and Independence divisions at Clifton.

**LIBERTY:** The Clifton boys broke Passaic Tech's seven year streak last year but the Bulldogs should return to the title this year. Clifton has won the last two girls meets. Sophia Wolmer of Bergen Tech (3,200), Ashley Martinez of Passaic Tech (high jump) and Sydney Shannon of Passaic Tech (pole vault) go for three straight divisional titles.

**INDEPENDENCE:** The Lakeland boys are the defending champs and will try and repeat without injured star Hasson Klingen. Fair Lawn shoots for three girls wins in a row. Gabriela Manjarrez of Fair Lawn (200) and Kalleen Rose Ozanic of West Milford (high jump) go for triples of their own.

The Freedom and United meets will be held Thursday at BF Middle School in Ridgewood.

**FREEDOM:** Ridgewood has won seven of eight boys titles here and the last three girls crowns. Michael Connor of Ramapo shoots for his third straight javelin title. Ellie Veenhof of Ridgewood looks for a third straight girls high jump title (although she tied with her sister Lizzie last year).

**UNITED:** Bergen Catholic broke Don Bosco's seven year stranglehold on the boys meet and Holy Angels hopes to repeat over 2017 champ Paramus Catholic in the girls competition. Two of the best boys in North Jersey, Rahmir Johnson of Bergen Catholic (100/200) and Connor Mathis of Don Bosco (shot) try for third straight titles. Lots of triple chances in the girls meet -- Tiffany Bautista of Paramus Catholic (100/long jump/triple jump), Mackenzie Hughes of Holy Angels (1,600/3,200), and Isabelle Dely of PC (100 hurdles). And Bautista, the defending state champ, goes for a fourth straight high jump crown.

## Ridgewood

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go.

"I was really really excited but I was all in," said Morley, who held it together to split 2:21.77 for her 800 leg, keeping Ridgewood in the race. "I was in such a slump all winter I thought I might never get out of it. But running like this today boosts my confidence and now I know the slump is over."

That left it up to freshman Camryn Wennersten, running her first Penn Relays and admittedly nervous.

"I tried to block it out and just concentrate on what I was doing," said Wennersten, who has had an amazing first high school year. "I thought of my teammates and how much this meant to all of us and kept going."

All the way to a terrific 4:54.35, running the second two laps faster than the first two.

"Now it's on to counties, sectionals, groups, states and nationals," said Wennersten.

"We're gonna to get that record, too," said Keyes.

## Three mini-wheels go back to Bergen

It's been two years since a Bergen County team had taken home a mini-wheel plaque representing a win in one of the signature 4-x-400 races that is the centerpiece of the Penn Relays.

Thursday, three teams won plaques within 15 races, and for NV/Old Tappan and Holy Angels it was the first win ever.

Both the Golden Knights and Angels went wire-to-wire behind great leadoff legs.

Junior Nicole Barbaro continued her stunning breakthrough season running a 57.18 opening 400 to break open Holy Angels race. Senior Abby Sheehan, freshman Eliza Hoover and junior Maris Rodriguez ran the rest of the way, un-

tested and ran a school record 4:01.67.

"I was so excited when I got the baton with a big lead and I thought to myself, 'Don't mess this up,'" said Rodriguez, who also anchored the school record 50.01 4-x-100 relay. "I tried to get it under four minutes but there was no one to push us."

Three races later, senior Taylor Newman led off the NV/Old Tappan team with a 60.07 leg, propelling the Golden Knights to a 4:06.78. Freshman Cara Hilboki ran 59.81 and seniors Serena DeBenedetto and Taylor Dolan finished off the win.

"Coach (Dave) Burns told me to get out hard," said Newman. "I did and the other girls showed the dedication and determination to finish it."

Ramapo completed the triple despite the absence of junior Sophia Schwartz and went wire-to-wire behind sophomores Cortney Lander, Megan Schneider and Sophia Vernieri and senior Sarah Adams, running 4:00.58.

"It's been a great experience coming

here every year," said Adams, who'll be at Dartmouth next year. "I enjoyed running anchor as a freshman and it's exciting to win another plaque."

Waldwick, Northern Highlands, Wayne Valley, Hackensack and Ramsey also earned medals.

## Notes and quotes

Daisy Liljegren of Northern Highlands, finished 15th in a 25-girl field in the 3,000 meters in 9:57.70, fourth all time in Bergen history at the Penn Relays and just three seconds slower than teammate Monica Hebner ran in this race last year.

"I'm so happy to be healthy and running well this year, and this gives me confidence for the rest of the year and going in to next year," said Liljegren, who battled injury and illness.

Paramus Catholic (48.79) and Ramapo (48.80) had season leading 4-x-100 races to lead area teams.

## Cooper

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to advance on her last throw of the first round.

Roze was unable to improve her position in the finals, but Eucker threw a 41.92 on her first throw of the finals to jump up from sixth to fifth and earn a medal. She did a small hop for joy when her measurement was announced.

"I felt really good, because I'm com-

ing back from my injury and I've only been doing this a couple of weeks," said Eucker, who had stress fractures in her back last fall. "It's been slow, so to be able to hit a PR for the season was really nice. I still have a lot to do, but the fact that I'm almost back to where I was last year is a huge morale boost."

Roze started throwing the javelin as a freshman after being coerced by a coach. Her first attempt was 90 feet, and her track future was booked. She talked at length about refining her form and how her personal record throw was like

'aiming through a window.'

"I wanted to show what I could do and this is the meet to do it," said Roze.

New Jersey has already seen what Paramus Catholic star Tiffany Bautista can do. Bautista won three gold medals at the State Meet of Champions last year, but was involved in a freak accident and injured her ankle in January at the Hispanic Games. Bautista was busy again on Thursday, finishing 10th in the long jump and anchoring the Paladins 4-x-1 relay.

"I would say it's like 85 percent," said

Bautista, "but it's slowly getting there, so hopefully by the time states get started I will be fully back."

Paramus Catholic had two competitors in the long jump. Isabelle Dely was ninth after a jump of 5.37 meters (17 feet 7 1/2 inches) and Kennedee Cox was 12th. Northern Valley/Old Tappan's junior Marisa DiGia was one of seven girls to clear 11-feet 5 3/4 in the pole vault and finished tied for 11th. Northern Valley/Demarest junior Jada Sewell placed 15th in the shot put.