

Luke Pash Reflects On His Sizzling Mile, Pursuit Of Sub 4

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After his electrifying performance in the mile last weekend, there's been a lot of talk about whether [Luke Pash](#) of Ridgewood can run sub 4 and possibly break the New Jersey record held by the legendary Marty Liquori.

[Pash](#) solidified his status as a NJ all-time great when he made a strong run at becoming the second runner in state history to crack 4 when the University of North Carolina-bound star burned a 4:03.02 to place third at the RunningLane Championships at Milton Frank Stadium last Saturday night in Huntsville, Alabama.

With that time, Pash moved all the way up to No. 2 in NJ history behind Liquori of Essex Catholic, who ran 3:59.8 when he placed seventh at the National AAU Championships at Bakersfield College's Memorial Stadium in California on June 23, 1967.

Pash, who shattered the Bergen County record of 4:05.69 that [Ben Malone](#) of Pascack Valley ran to place second at the 2013 Penn Relays, ripped a 59.62 final quarter to move from 11th to third on the final lap. Pash, who had split of 61.17, 2:01.82 and 3:03.40 before

closing in sub 60, finished behind [TJ Hansen](#) of Michigan (3:59.02) and [Corbin Coombs](#) of New Mexico (3:59.23).

Pash, who passed some of the biggest names in NJ history on the all-time mile list-like Edward Cheserek of St. Benedict's Prep (4:03.29 in 2011) and Olympian Robby Andrews of Manalapan (4:03.49 in 2009), said it's an honor to be right behind Liquori on NJ's all-time list.

"Having the 2nd fastest time in NJ history is so amazing and I am super blessed to have my name up so high on that list," said Pash. "It is so cool for me that I'm being talked about in the category of the state record in the mile. Marty Liquori was an amazing runner, so having me up there with him is again so cool."

Pash was ecstatic with the way he races and said he learned some things that he feels will help him run even faster and maybe make a run at Liquori's record when he runs the mile at the New Balance Nationals at Franklin Field in Philadelphia on June 21.

"For my race, I felt that it was really good," said Pash. "I went with a plan to have fun and compete and I did just that. I split 48.7 in a 4x400 at sectionals, so when I was farther back with 400 to go I was confident I could still close the race really well. I learned that I can close really well, so focusing on having laps two and three be a bit faster is something to work on. The race definitely gives me confidence to know I can run faster and be in contention to break the state record."

Pash said that while running sub 4 while in high school would obviously be a huge accomplishment, he's not obsessed with it.

"As awesome as it would be to be a part of that club in high school, it's not my total focus for the rest of my season," said Pash. "I love to compete, and that for me is bigger than time. I know if I'm in a great race and run as fast as I can, the time will take care of itself. It would be super cool if I do, but if I don't I'm going into a great program next year where they will set me up to run really fast."



Ridgewood coach Josh Saladino said Pash's ability to not focus on time has helped him perform his best.

"Luke has been and continues to be focused on running great races which is one of the things that makes him such an excellent runner," said Ridgewood coach Josh Saladino. "He's completely focused on the process of running well and isn't overly fixated on a time. When he runs well, the times usually take care of themselves."

Saladino said the rest of Pash's schedule for this season as of now is to run the Group 4 meet this weekend, the Meet of Champions next Wednesday, and compete at the New Balance Nationals.

Saladino also said that Pash, who won the 800 in 1:51.50, the 1,600 in 4:24.00 and the 3,200 in 9:29.32 at the North Jersey, Section 1 Group 4 Championships, will run the 3,200 at the State Group 4 meet tomorrow (Friday) at Franklin High School and then decide whether or not he will come back and run the 1,600 on Saturday.

Last year, Pash won the 1,600 and 3,200 at the Group 4 meet and then ran just the 1,600 at the Meet of Champions where he blasted a meet record 4:04.49, his previous PR before last Saturday.

