

Neenah runners cop Fort Atkinson meet

FORT ATKINSON — Placing five men in the top 15, the Neenah High School cross country team won its fourth invitational in five starts by chalking up 32 points here Saturday.

Madison Memorial was second with 63 and Milwaukee Thomas More had 73. Menomonee Falls East collected 83, Monroe 83, Janesville Craig 161, Kenosha Tremper 191 and Beloit Memorial 212.

Paul Gooch was Neenah's top finisher with a fifth place in 15:36.

Steve Verkuilen was sixth in 15:40, Rick Schmidt 12th in 16:05, Dan Schaller 14th in 16:09, Dave Kierstead 15th in 16:11, Mike Charron 32nd in 18:39, Pete Danielson 33rd in 18:39 and Jack Champaigne 47th in 17:04.

Rick Kallen of Menomonee Falls East was the individual winner in 14:58.7. Dick Baldwin, Madison Memorial, placed second; Mark Glessner, Monroe, third; and Randy Stafford, Madison Memorial, fourth.

Coach Tom Jensen said Neenah's third, fourth and fifth runners passed a lot of others in the last several hundred yards.

Neenah entered two junior varsity teams and they finished first and second with 41 and 88 points.

The winning sophomore unit was composed of Mark Kleman second, Bill Neer third, Dave Morin sixth, Todd Thede 14th, Pat Murphy 16th, Phil Edmonds 20th, Tom Fishel 25th and Carl Hildebrand 61st.

The second place team was made up of Kevin Dickson fourth, Steve Blank fifth, Fritz Hildebrand seventh, Joe Kaski 3rd, Randy Bauer 27th, Tom Hicks

30th, Tony Edmonds 40th and Ben Kierstead 50th.

The Rockets will defend their Fox Valley Association championship at High Cliff Wednesday afternoon.

NHS rated 3rd in harrier rankings

NEENAH — The Neenah High School cross country team has moved up to third place in the large school poll announced today by the Wisconsin Cross Country Coaches Association.

The Rockets, who moved up from sixth place, trail Menomonee Falls North and Racine Case in the second ratings.

They are unbeaten in four meets — three invitationals and a dual.

Racine St. Catherine is ranked fourth, followed by Green Bay Preble, Appleton East, Milwaukee Thomas More, Monroe, Nicolet and Wauwatosa East.

Loyal heads the small school class and Verona is ranked first among the medium schools.

Rocket runners capture title

SHAWANO — Neenah High School's cross country team won the Shawano invitational meet Saturday with a total of 35 points.

Appleton East, with 58, finished second in the 14-team large-school division.

Neenah's Steve Verkuilen finished second to Manitowish's Ben Dalton (15:13 for 3 miles) in the race for individual honors. The Rockets' Paul Gooch was third.

Other team scores behind Neenah and AHS-E: Manty, 102; Wisconsin Rapids, 146; Rhinelander, 158; Wausau West, 172; Antigo, 193; Stevens Point, 200; Oshkosh West, 256; Kaukauna, 281; Oshkosh North, 297; Wausau East, 323; Green Bay West, 436; and New London, 456.

The top 10 individuals: Dalton; Verkuilen; Gooch; Mark Oliver, Stevens Point; Eugene Phillips, Stevens Point; Mike Swanson, Wausau West; Gene LeFevre, Appleton East; Lee Allinger, Appleton East; Dan Schaller, Neenah; Dave Kierstead, Neenah. Other leading finishers for AHS-E were Mike Fitzpatrick, 11th; Bruce McKenzie, 14th; Stu LeFevre, 18th.

De Pere won the medium school title, with 57 points. Shawano finished third. Other area team finishes included: Hortonville, fifth; Kimberly, eighth; Seymour, ninth; and Clintonville, 10th.

Brillion finished fifth in the small school competition, which was won by Brookwood.

Neenah won the junior varsity meet, with 63 points. John Schubert won the JV individual title for Appleton East, which finished fifth, overall.

NHS harriers edge East

KAUKAUNA — The unbeaten Neenah High School cross country team received its biggest scare of the season but had an edge in the tiebreaker to win over Appleton East in a quadrangular here Tuesday afternoon.

The Rockets had 17 points, Appleton East 20, Kaukauna 92 and Oshkosh North 103.

Both teams had 28 points with the first five places counted but under the new tiebreaker rules, the first four are used to break the deadlock and Neenah had the edge.

Paul Gooch of Neenah was the winner in 16:46. Teammate Steve Verkuilen finished second in 16:53.

Other Neenah times were Dan Schaller, fifth, 17:08; Rick Schmidt, ninth, 17:16; Dave Kierstead, 11th, 17:28; Jack Champaigne, 13th, 17:33; and Mike Charron, 16th, 17:58.

Appleton East runners finished third, fourth, sixth, seventh and eighth.

"They shocked us a bit. They're an improved team," Rocket Coach Tom Jensen said of the Patriots. "We don't meet them again until the conference meet in two weeks," he pointed out.

The victory was the fifth in a row for the Rockets, who previously won three invitationals and a dual.

Neenah's Jayvees were first with 16

points. Kaukauna had 55, Appleton East 72 and Oshkosh North 80.

Neenah's Mark Kleman won the event in 18:15. Todd Thede was second in 18:22.

Bill Neer took fourth, Phil Edmonds fifth, Jeff Morin sixth, Dave Farin eighth and Tom Fishel 16th.

Neenah's next meet will be in the large school division of the Grafton Invitational Saturday.

Other entries are South Milwaukee, West Allis Central, Milwaukee King, Brookfield Central, Green Bay Preble, Racine Horlick, Waukesha South, Kenosha Bradford and Milwaukee Pulaski.

Rockets sweep regional

NEENAH — The Fox Valley Association champion Neenah High School cross country team swept to first place in the Fond du Lac WIAA regional with 31 points Tuesday afternoon. Manitowoc was second with 65 points,

followed by Fond du Lac 85, Two Rivers 91, Menasha 140, Oshkosh West 143 and Oshkosh North 160.

Manitowoc's Ben Dalton was the individual winner in 15:41. Jim Rogola of Two Rivers placed second.

Paul Gooch of Neenah was third, 11 seconds behind Rogola, in 15:56. The Rockets' Steve Verkuilen took third in 15:58.

The three top teams and five leading individuals qualify for Saturday's sectional at Mishicot.

Other Neenah finishes were Dan Schaller, sixth, 16:07; Rick Schmidt, seventh, 16:07.5; Dave Kierstead, 11th, 16:28; Mike Charron, 21st, 17:05; and Pete Danielson, 26th, 17:15.

Gary Van Handel led the Bluejays with a 17th place. Pat Nichols was 18th, Rick Hills 20th, Mike Northam 42nd, Bob Swichtenberg 43rd and Larry Bowers 46th. Scott Abel didn't finish.

For the Rockets, the victory was their sixth of the season. Previously, they won four Invitationals and the FVA title.

"It's hard to enjoy the victory because by far our toughest meet is coming up," Neenah Coach Tom Jensen said.

He was referring to Saturday's sectional where the Rockets run into Appleton East and Green Bay Preble.

Preble handed the Red and White its lone defeat of the season and Neenah won over East after a tiebreaker in one of their meetings.

East then beat Preble by 20 points in their regional meeting Tuesday.

"It's the toughest sectional in the state and will be a real challenge for us," Jensen said.

"Schaller ran a good race. He is showing rapid improvement. Verkuilen also had a good effort," the winning coach said.

He also was pleased that two of the Neenah runners finished in the top five.

Menasha Coach Russ Leitz was disappointed with Menasha's performance. He felt his team had a chance of getting to the sectional.

"I would have to classify it as our worst meet of the year. We were out of it," Leitz said.

"We had a respectable year, finishing above .500," Leitz said. "We lost to some of the best teams in the state. We ran against ranked teams and others were ranked after we faced them," the Menasha coach pointed out.

Gooch leads Neenah to FVA cross country crown

With Paul Gooch placing first and four other Neenah High School runners finishing in the top 10, the Rockets annexed their second straight Fox Valley Association cross country championship at High Cliff Wednesday afternoon.

The Rockets, who have won the title four times in the six years the meet has been contested, collected 27 points.

Appleton East, which had four runners among the top 10, placed second with 37 points while Menasha was a distant third with 114.

Other team totals included Appleton West 124, Oshkosh West 134, Kaukauna 154, Oshkosh North 162 and Kimberly 116.

Gooch, who led all the way, came into the chute after traveling the cold and windy course in 15:26.

Kelly Green of Oshkosh West finished second, trailing Gooch by five seconds. Neenah's Steve Verkuilen garnered third place, one second behind Green.

Other Neenah scorers were Dan Schaller fifth, Rick Schmidt eighth and Dave Kierstead tenth.

Bruce McKenzie, with a fourth place, was East's top finisher. Mike Fitzpatrick took sixth, Lee Allinger seventh, Gene LeFevre ninth and Dave Wallace 11th.

Menasha was led by Gary Van Handel's 12th place finish while Pete Kunz paced the Terrors in finishing 16th. Kaukauna's Steve Pomeroy was 14th. Kimberly's best was a 31st by Jeff Vandenberg.

Neenah made it a grand slam by easily winning the junior varsity race with 19 points.

Appleton East totaled 77, Kaukauna 79, Appleton West 89, Menasha 124, and Oshkosh North 149. Kimberly and Oshkosh West didn't enter.

Mark Kleman of Neenah was first in 16:41. East's Paul Berg was second and the Rockets claimed the next five places.

NHS runners in sectional

NEENAH — Neenah High School's cross country team bids for a state meet trip through Saturday's Class A Sectional at Mishicot. The race will begin at 11 a.m. on the Fox Hills Country Club course.

Neenah Coach Tom Jensen regards the sectional as the toughest in the state since three of the top five ranked teams are entered.

Green Bay Preble, in the final rankings, finished second. Neenah was third and Appleton East fifth.

"We could be No. 1 or No. 3," Jensen said. Only the two lowest-scoring teams will gain state berths.

The Rockets won the Fond du Lac regional while East finished first in the Luxemburg-Casco meet.

Preble, which dealt the Rockets their only defeat of the fall, had a poor day

and its fifth runner finished ahead of its usual second, third and fourth runners.

Team qualifiers, in addition to the Rockets, Hornets and Patriots, are Manitowoc, Fond du Lac, Green Bay East, Green Bay Southwest, Shawano and Ashwaubenon.

Individual qualifiers include Jim Rogola, Two Rivers; Kelly Green, Oshkosh West; and Keith Christensen, De Pere, winner in the L-C meet regional.

Neenah's entries are Paul Gooch, Steve Verkuilen, Dan Schaller, Rick Schmidt, Dave Kierstead, Mike Charron and Pete Danielson.

Manitowoc's Ben Dalton was the individual winner at Fondy while Rod Bucholz of Southwest won at Oconto.

The first five individual finishers, in addition to the two teams, will earn positions in the state test next Saturday at Wausau.

Preble harriers deal Rockets first loss

GRAFTON — Green Bay Preble edged Neenah by seven points, dealing the Rockets their first cross country loss of the fall, in the Blackhawk Invitational here Saturday.

The Hornets chalked up 29 points to the Rockets' 36. West Allis Central had 106, Sout Milwaukee 108, Brookfield Central 123, Racine Horlick 163, Milwaukee Pulaski 179, Waukesha South 208 and Kenosha Bradford 242.

Menasha finished eighth in the third division, won by Menomonee Falls North with 47 points. The latter's Jim Stinzi set course record of 14:14.

Oak Creek had 84, Sussex Hamilton 105, Hartford 115, Milwaukee Thomas More 123, Menomonee Falls East 144, Whitefish Bay 156, Menasha 169, West Bend West 269, Oshkosh West 290, Oshkosh North 294 and Wauwatosa West 295.

"We had them with 200 yards left in

the race," Coach Tom Jensen said of the Rockets' duel with Preble.

"But then three of their key boys passed three of our key boys and that made the difference seven points," he added.

"We ran an excellent race and they (Preble) ran exceptionally well," Jensen said, noting that the Rockets were ranked third and Preble fourth in last week's ratings. Last year Neenah won the meet with 39 points, three more than it accumulated Saturday.

Neenah's Paul Gooch was the individual winner in 15:06.

Steve Verkuilen was seventh in 15:27, Rick Schmidt eighth in 15:30, Dan Schaller ninth in 15:38, Dave Kierstead 11th in 15:48, Mike Charron 20th and Jack Champaigne 25th.

Preble's runners finished second, fourth, fifth, sixth and 12th. Neenah was leading the fourth, fifth and sixth

placers at the 200-yard mark.

Gary Van Handel led Menasha in its division with a 22nd place.

Rick Hills was 32nd, Larry Bevers 37th, Pat Nichols 38th, Mike Northam 40th, Bob Swichtenberg 59th and Scott Abel 61st.

Bluejay Coach Russ Leitz said his team "did a real good job," pointing out it only finished 46 points behind Thomas More, which is ranked among the top 10 in the state.

Preble also won the junior varsity meet in the large school division with 35 points. Neenah was second with 61.

Brookfield Central had 74, Milwaukee Pulaski 93, South Milwaukee 96, West Allis Central 167, Waukesha South 189 and Kenosha Bradford and Milwaukee King didn't score.

Phil Edmonds led the Rockets with a ninth place in 16:34. Bill Neer was 10th, Pat Murphy 13th, Todd Thede 14th, Mark Kleman 15th, Jeff Morin 20th and Tom Fishel 24th.

Menasha was ninth in Division III, won by Menomonee Falls North with 23 points.

Thomas More totaled 62, Hartford 88, Oak Creek 91, Sussex Hamilton 144, Whitefish Bay 145, Menomonee Falls East 150, West Bend West 238, Menasha 260, Wauwatosa West 276 and Oshkosh North 308.

Chris Riska was 26th for Menasha with Greg Skibba 53rd, Mark Pelton 59th, Rich Steffens 60th, Kerry Ruhnke 62nd, Randy Metzger 73rd and Tom Janowski 74th.

NHS runners keep perfect FVA mark

KAUKAUNA — The Neenah High School cross country team maintained a perfect record against Fox Valley Association opposition by winning a quadrangular on the Oakwood Hills Course Tuesday afternoon.

The Rockets posted 19 points. Oshkosh West was a distant second with 58, followed by Kaukauna's 65 and Kimberly 103.

Neenah's Paul Gooch was the individual winner in 16:26. Steve Verkuilen placed second in 16:32, followed by Dave Kierstead fourth in 16:54, Dan Schaller fifth in 17:00, Rick Schmidt seventh in 17:19, Jack Champaigne eighth in 17:22 and Mike Charron ninth in 17:44.

The only non-Neenah runners in the top nine were Kelly Green of Oshkosh West, third, and Steve Pomeroy, Kaukauna, sixth.

Coach Tom Jensen pointed out that Neenah's Bob Menning won the confer-

ence meet on the same course last year in 16:36. Gooch was second in 16:50, thus he improved that performance by 33 seconds.

Neenah's Jayvees swept to a 16-43 victory over Kaukauna. Oshkosh West and Kimberly didn't have enough runners.

Mark Kleman of Neenah won the event in 19:05. Bill Neer was second, Jeff Morin third, Phil Edmonds fourth, Tom Fishel sixth, Pat Murphy seventh and Carl Hildebrand 13th.

The Rockets' make their next start in the Fort Atkinson Invitational Saturday.

Other teams in the meet include Monroe, Appleton West, Beloit Memorial, Janesville Craig, Janesville Parker, Kenosha Tremper, Madison East, Madison LaFollette, Madison Memorial, Madison West, Oshkosh North, Milwaukee Thomas More, Waukesha North and Waukesha South.

NHS ranked third

NEENAH — Neenah High School's cross country team was ranked third in the final weekly ratings of the Wisconsin High School Cross Country Coaches Association.

Menomonee Falls North retained the No. 1 ranking. Green Bay Preble is second and the Rockets moved into third ahead of Racine Case.

Appleton East is rated fifth, Racine St. Catherine sixth, Madison Memorial seventh, Nicolet eighth, Wilmet ninth and Oak Creek 10th.

Neenah, Preble and Appleton East all will compete in the Class A Sectional at Mishicot Saturday.

Verona is the medium school leader and Loyal finished first among the small schools.

Rockets cop two sectional crowns

NEENAH — Neenah High School athletes brought home two sectional championships Saturday, rounding out a successful weekend of competition for Rockets.

Cruc Tom Jensen's Back-of-cross country team captured first place in the WIAA sectional at Mishicot Saturday, and coach Bob Meyer's volleyball unit took first place in its sectional at Kaukauna High School.

And those two successes to the varsity football team's 21-9 victory over Appleton West and Rocket fans have to be pretty happy about the weekend's activities.

"This was competition," said Harrier coach Jensen following Neenah's comfortable win at Mishicot. "Three

of the top five ranked teams in the state were there and our boys really did an outstanding job."

Neenah's harriers compiled 30 points, easily winning the meet over second place Green Bay Preble with 72 points. Other team point totals were: Appleton East 81, Manitowoc 114, Green Bay Southwest 127, Fond du Lac 142, Green Bay East 148, Shawano 213, Ashwaubenton 226.

The meet's top finisher was Ben Dalton of Manitowoc who was clocked at 15:23. Keith Christiansen of DePere took second at 15:30 and Jim Rogala of Two Rivers took third at 15:36, but only Dalton's finish counted in the team standings since the other two were running independently.

Thus, Neenah's Paul Gooch was credited with finishing second in the meet, with a clocking of 15:46. Dan Schaller took fourth at 15:53, Steve Verkuilen placed fifth at 16:00, Rick Schmidt finished ninth at 16:10 and Dave Kierstead was 10th at 16:11. Pete Danielson took 23rd at 16:39 and Mike Charren was 33rd at 16:56.

Neenah will go into the state meet at Wausau's American Legion Golf Course next Saturday as one of the favorites.

"Menomonee Falls North would have to be rated the top team," said Jensen of the state finals, "but we're not going down there to lose. We're setting our sights pretty high."

with three very important wins over Kaukauna, 15-12, 15-6 and 15-8. Neenah needed just one win in three games with Antigo to clinch the title. Antigo won the first game, 15-6, and the last game, 15-10, but in between the Rockets got the one they needed, 15-5.

Greg Stern was Neenah's leading scorer with 30 points, Tom Crist added 21, and John Volkmann, Randy DeMarco, Herreid and Kurt Johnson each added 16. Prichett led in blocks with 31 and Herreid added 30. Crist registered 20 and DeMarco and Murray Meyer 13 each.

Volkmann was tops in sets with 86 and Meyer had 55. Herreid led in spikes with 57. Crist had 48, DeMarco 43 and Prichett 40.

Neenah's volleyball team will now go on to compete in the state finals next Saturday at Kolf Sports Center on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

Neenah harriers sixth in ratings

NEENAH — Neenah High School's cross country team is ranked sixth in the large school division of the first ratings announced by the Wisconsin Cross Country Coaches Association.

Menomonee Falls North was accorded first place in the initial balloting.

Racine Case was second, Appleton East, whom the Rockets defeated at Oshkosh Tuesday, third, Racine St. Catherine fourth and Green Bay Preble fifth.

Completing the first 10 were Monroe seventh, Nicolet eighth, Madison Memorial ninth and Wauwatosa East 10th.

The votes were tabulated before the Rockets won the Oshkosh meet.

Rocket runners take third meet

NEENAH — Neenah High School's cross country team came up with another outstanding effort in winning the Shawano Invitational meet Saturday.

It was the third straight multi-school meet triumph for the Rockets, who previously copped at Rhinelander and Oshkosh.

Placing five runners in the top 12, the Rockets scored 36 points. Appleton East was a distant second with 58.

Other toils were Manitowoc 102, Wisconsin Rapids 146, Rhinelander 158, Wausau West 172, Antigo 193, Stevens Point 200, Oshkosh West 256, Kaukauna 281, Oshkosh North 297, Wausau East 323, Green Bay West 436 and New London 456.

Ben Dalton of Manitowoc won the race in 15:13. Neenah's Steve Verkuilen was second in 15:25 and Paul Gooch third in 15:26.

Other Rocket finishers were Dan Schaller, ninth, 15:45; Dave Kierstead, 10th, 15:54; Rick Schmidt, 12th, 15:56; Mike Charron, 23rd, 16:04; Kevin Dickson, 34th, 16:15; and Jack Champaigne, 53rd, 16:28.

"This is probably the best start we've ever had," Coach Tom Jensen said. He noted that Neenah hadn't won the Shawano meet in three years and last fall lost to East by 20 points there, place time of last year. We're a pretty good cross country team," Jensen said.

He was extremely pleased with the individual performances, noting that there were 112 runners in the race.

Neenah entered two junior varsity teams and the No. 1 unit placed first with 63 points and No. 2 was third with 87. Manitowoc finished second with 70.

Finishes of the No. 1 unit were Mark Kleman, seventh, 16:56; Phil Edmonds, ninth, 17:04; Bill Neer, 12th, 17:07; Pat Murphy, 18th, 17:16; Todd Thede, 19th, 17:22; Tom Fishel, 24th, 17:35; Jeff Morin, 31st, 17:45; and Dave Farin, 57th, 18:30.

No. 2 finishes were Pete Danielson, sixth, 16:45; Steve Blark, 13th, 17:10; Tom Hicks, 14th, 17:11; Fritz Hildebrand, 15th, 17:12; Tony Edmonds, 39th, 18:00; Randy Bauer, 42nd, 18:06; and Dan Kierstead, 60th, 18:32.

The Rockets entertain Menasha Tuesday afternoon on the course on the Armstrong campus.

Rocket harriers champions again

HIGH CLIFF — The showdown of Fox Valley Association cross country powers Neenah and Appleton East, for the fourth time this fall, was won by the Rockets here Wednesday afternoon.

Placing five runners among the first 10 finishers, the Twin Citians successfully defended their FVA championship on the chilly and windy High Cliff course, posting a 10-point edge over the Patriots.

It was the Rockets' fourth league championship in the six years the journey has been held.

Neenah collected 27 points while East had to settle for 37.

Host Menasha finished third with 114 points to tie its previous best finish.

Other totals were Appleton West 124, Oshkosh West 134, Kaukauna 154, Oshkosh North 162 and Kimberly 216.

Paul Gooch, who was third in the meet a year ago, won the individual championship in 15:26. He led all the way.

Kelly Green of Oshkosh West, who used to live in Neenah, finished five seconds behind Gooch and a second ahead of the Rockets' Steve Verkuilen.

Dan Schaller was fifth in 15:39, Rick Schmidt eighth in 15:42, Dave Kierstead 10th in 15:52, Pete Danielson 18th and Mike Charron 21st.

Menasha was led by Gary Van Handel with a 12th place. He probably would have been finished higher but took a spill while running through the woods and lost time.

Other Menasha scorers were Rick Hills 19th, Pat Nichols 20th, Mike Northam 24th and Scott Abel 39th. Chris

Riska placed 40th and Bob Swichtenberg 42nd.

"The kids did a heckuva job," a jubilant Rocket Coach Tom Jensen said. "They all performed well."

Jensen said Schaller ran his best race and Schmidt did well despite being hurt. He also lauded the performance of Kierstead.

Neenah's first two runners finished ahead of East's first and its top three were home before the Patriots' second placer came through the chute.

Jensen noted that three of East's runners are sophomores. "Our kids are a little older and a little stronger and mature at this time of the season," he said.

"They were right in back of us," Jensen noted. The Rockets' fifth place scorer placed 10th; East's 11th.

The Rockets picked up six of the first seven places to sweep the junior varsity meet with 19 points.

Appleton East had 77, Kaukauna 79, Appleton West 89, Menasha 124 and Oshkosh North 149.

Mark Kleman of Neenah was the winner in 16:41.

Bill Neer was third, Jeff Morin fourth, Phil Edmonds fifth, Pat Murphy sixth, Todd Thede seventh and Tom Fishel 13th.

Menasha places were Rich Steffens 18th, Greg Skibba 20th, Kerry Ruhnke 24th, Dale Danielson 30th, Mark Pelton 32nd, Randy Metzger W 40th and Larry Bevers 41st.

The Twin City varsity runners are idle until next Tuesday when they'll compete in the WIAA regional at Fond du Lac.

Big NM sports weekend

NEENAH-MENASHA — The final big sports weekend of the fall proved to be the most productive overall for Twin City teams.

For example, Menasha High School by beating Oshkosh North, 20-0, in the mud at Calder Stadium Friday night annexed a share of the Fox Valley Association football crown, its first grid title in 17 years.

The Rockets of Neenah upended Appleton West, 20-0, to finish with a 5-3 record while St. Mary Central picked up its fourth triumph in a row with a 20-0 verdict over Two Rivers in the Cool City Saturday afternoon.

The Zephyrs and Bluejays will conclude their schedules against each other Friday night on the Calder field, the final game of year.

Off the gridiron, Neenah's cross country team came up with its best performance of the year in winning the Mishicot Class A Sectional, qualifying for the state meet at Wausau Saturday.

The Rocket boys' volleyball team earned a state meet berth for the first

time in eight years of trying by winning the sectional at Kaukauna.

Menasha's Jody Gilbert gained a berth in the girls' state swimming meet with a first place in the 50-yard freestyle in the Appleton West Sectional.

The Bluejays were FVA grid champions for a couple of minutes when they learned they had to share it with Kaukauna, which went into overtime to edge Oshkosh West, 3-0.

The Menashans finished 6-1 in the conference and take a 7-1 composite mark into their Friday finale.

Neenah Coach Gary Parker declared that the Rockets dedicated their game to the seniors and said the victory was a credit to them.

Steve Bylow tallied three times, including an 89-yard gallop with the opening kickoff. It was his second return of the year for a touchdown.

The Zephyrs, who lost their first five games, are now 4-5. Tim Kettenhofen scored one touchdown and passed for two others.

The Rocket cross country team scored

30 points to run away with the Mishicot Sectional. Green Bay Preble was a distant second with 72.

Neenah's Paul Gooch was second in 15:46.

Other team finishers were Dan Schaller fourth, Steve Verkuilen fifth, Rick Schmidt ninth, Dave Kierstead 10th, Pete Danielsen 23rd and Mike Charron 33rd.

Their times included Schaller 15:53, Verkuilen 16:00, Schmidt 16:10, Kierstead 16:11, Danielsen 16:39 and Charron 16:59.

"No question about it, it was our best race. This was for the whole season. In fact it was one of the best performances of any team I've had in my eight years here," Neenah Coach Tom Jensen said.

Jensen noted that only 25 seconds separated Neenah's first and fifth place runners. He was especially pleased with the improvement of Schaller.

"We're coming along at the right time. We're not overly optimistic," Jensen added, referring to the state meet.

Verkuilen places fourth

NEENAH — Outstanding efforts by juniors Steve Verkuilen and Rick Schmidt highlighted the performances of Neenah High School harriers in the United States Track and Field Federation cross country meet at Madison Saturday.

Verkuilen was fourth among 189 runners in the junior division. Schmidt finished 13th in 17:17. Last year, their times on the same course were 18:04 and 18:24, respectively. They were the only two Neenah juniors entered.

In the senior class group, Paul Gooch was 16th in 17 minutes and Dave Kierstead 32nd in 17:25. They also improved on last year's times. Neenah entered two seniors among the 168 running.

Mark Kleman led the four-runner sophomore contingent with a 21st place in 18:23. Phil Edmonds was 25th, Pat Murphy 51st and Bill Neer 87th. There were 158 runners.

Dave Farin was the only frosh entry. His time was 20:54.5.

Schools were permitted to enter four runners in each class division. It was an individual affair and no team scores were kept.

"An encouraging day" is how Neenah Coach Tom Jensen viewed initial meet. He said the boys entered were the ones who worked hardest this summer.

The regular schedule opens Saturday in the Hodag Invitational at Rhinelander.

Rockets, Patriots duel for FVA harrier title

MENASHA — Neenah and Appleton East, the only two schools to win the Fox Valley Association cross country championship, again are expected to duel for first place in the circuit's sixth annual meet on the High Cliff Golf Course Wednesday afternoon.

The junior varsity meet will begin at 4:30 p.m. on the upper part of the course with the varsity test slated to begin about 5 p.m. Menasha High School is host.

The Rockets won the first conference meet in 1970 and they and the Patriots tied for first in 1971.

East captured crowns in 1972 and 1973 and the Rockets reclaimed it by four points last fall.

Neenah beat the Pats by eight points in the Oshkosh Invitational in their first meeting of the fall and won by 22 in the Shawano "Invite."

They tied in a FVA quadrangular at 28 points apiece but the Rockets won the meet on the basis of the tiebreaker installed by the WIAA this year.

Neenah is led by Paul Gooch, who finished third last year. Dan Schaller, Steve Verkuilen and Rick Schmidt are other Rocket standouts.

East's leading runners have included Bruce McKenzie, Mike Fitzpatrick, Dave Wallace, Lee Allinger, Steve Barnett and Gene LeFevre.

Menasha and Appleton West lead the rest of the field bidding for other state division berths.

The Bluejays have a strong contender for individual honors in Gary Van Handel while Scott Schuldes paces the Terrors.

Kelly Green of Oshkosh West and Steve Pomeroy, Kaukauna, are other top runners.

Rocket runners 1st again

OSHKOSH — Placing four runners in the top 10, the Neenah High School cross country team won its second major meet in four days here Tuesday.

The Rockets compiled 42 points, eight less than runnerup Appleton West, for first place in the Oshkosh North Invitational. Last Saturday, they copped the Hodag Invitational at Rhinelander.

Other totals Tuesday included Manitowoc 70, Sheboygan South 183, Sheboygan North 188, Green Bay East and Appleton West 185, Wausau West 193, Menasha 223, Kaukauna 280, Oshkosh North 276, Kimberly 310 and Oshkosh West 311.

Ben Dalton of Manitowoc was the individual winner, posting a 14:21 on the 2.85 mile course.

Neenah's Paul Gooch was third in 14:45, 10 seconds off the pace of runnerup Mike Swanson of Wausau West.

Neenah's other places were Steve Verkullen, sixth, 14:58; Rick Schmidt, seventh, 14:56; Dan Schaller, 10th, 15:02; Dave Kierstead, 16th, 15:13; Mike Charron, 27th, 15:29; and Kevin Dickson, 37th, 15:37.

Menasha's places were Gary Van Handel, 23rd; Rick Hills, 33rd; Pat Nichols, 44th; Mike Northam, 62nd; and Scott Abel, 74th. Bob Swichtenberg and Larry Bevers didn't finish.

Rocket Coach Tom Jensen was very pleased with the performance of his team, noting that most of the runners had much better times than last year.

Neenah's seventh place runner came in at 15:37 while a year ago the Rocket second placer chalked up a 15:31.

"Verkullen led them for the first two miles and pulled them along," Jensen said. "He dropped back at the end but was only 10 seconds off third place."

Jensen said Schmidt ran a fine race and Schaller is starting to come along. Gooch had a great performance, the coach declared.

Bluejay Coach Russ Leltz said Van Handel, Hills and Nichols also showed big improvements over their times of a year ago.

Neenah runners go after fourth conference title

MENASHA — Neenah High School bids for its fourth Fox Valley Association championship in the six-year history of the circuit's cross country meet Wednesday afternoon on the High Cliff Course.

Menasha High School is host for the meet, which begins with the junior varsity test at 4:30 p.m. The varsity runners will take off from the starting line about 5 o'clock.

The Rockets dethroned Appleton East by four points last year. The Patriots won the 1972 and 1973 meets. Neenah won the first crown in 1970 and the two schools were deadlocked in 1971.

Menasha Coach Russ Leltz is hoping his Bluejay runners can take third place. They've done well against all of

the conference schools except East and Neenah.

The Rocket runners are led by Paul Gooch, who finished third last year. Teammate Bob Menning won the meet and Joe Nabbefeld of East was second. The latter is still in school but hasn't competed against the Rockets in any of the three meets between the Fox Cities adversaries. Neenah won all three.

Other Neenah contestants are expected to include Steve Verkullen, Rick Schmidt, Dan Schaller, Mike Charron and Pete Danielson or Jack Champaigne.

Menasha, which finished fifth last year, is paced by Gary Van Handel, who has placed high in meets involving conference schools.

The rest of the Bluejay seven is expected to include Rick Hills, Pat Nichols, Bob Swichtenberg, Mike Northam and Chris Riska.

Larry Bevers, one of the club's leading runners, has been hampered by breathing problems in recent meets and isn't expected to run.

Following the conference test, the schools will embark on the WIAA journey trail next Tuesday.

Neenah entered two junior varsity teams and they finished fourth and fifth.

Team totals were Manitowoc 65, Appleton East 68, Wausau West 89, Neenah No. 2 92, Neenah No. 1 100, Sheboygan South 144, Sheboygan North 204, Oshkosh North 232, Green Bay East 254, Appleton West 264, Kaukauna 278, Menasha 302 and Oshkosh West didn't have enough finishers.

The No. 1 team was composed of freshmen and sophomores and places included Mark Kleman third, Bill Neer 13th, Phil Edmonds 23rd, Pat Murphy 30th, Todd Thede 31st, Jeff Morin 32nd and Tom Fishel 41st.

The No. 2 squad, made up of juniors and seniors, included Jack Champaigne fourth, Pete Danielson ninth, Steve Blank 12th, Fritz Hildebrand 33rd, Randy Bauer 34th, Tom Hicks 37th and Tony Edmonds 43rd.

Menasha's jayvee places were Chris Riska 35th, Rich Steffens 60th, Mark Pelton 63th, Greg Skibba 69th, Tim Krautkramer 73rd, Kerry Ruhnke 76th and Tom Jankowski 84th.

Dave Wallace of Appleton East won the jayvee race.

Menasha faces Valders and Kewaunee at Valders Thursday while Neenah's next meet is the Shawano Invitational Saturday.

NHS runners open in Rhinelander meet

NEENAH — With five lettermen returning from last year's Fox Valley Association champions, the Neenah High School cross country team is looking forward to a good season.

The Rockets will debut in the Hodag Invitational at Rhinelander Saturday morning. Last year they finished second to Thomas More of Milwaukee.

Although it will be the first official start for the Neenah harriers, Coach Tom Jensen took several runners to the USTFF meet at Madison last weekend and they fared well.

Returning lettermen are Paul Gooch and Dave Kierstead, seniors; and Steve Verkuilen, Rick Schmidt and Dan Schaller, juniors.

Kevin Dickson, Mike Charron and either Staevs Blank or Pete Danielson will make up the squad for the varsity meet at Rhinelander.

Jim Goodman, another senior and letterman last year, will miss the season because of knee surgery.

Other varsity candidates are Jack Champaigne, Fritz Hildebrand, Tony Edmonds, Dan Kierstead, Randy

Bauer, Tom Hicks and Joe Kaski.

The jayvee team of 10 freshman and sophomores is working out at Shattuck High School under Coach Glen Severson.

Last year's Neenah team won the conference meet by four points over Appleton East, placed first in the regional and sectional and was fourth in the WIAA state Class A meet.

The performances of the juniors are expected to be the key to the season, according to Jensen.

"We have a good balance between juniors and seniors. Last year we relied mostly on seniors," Jensen said.

"This group has worked harder than any I've had. Some of the boys ran between 600 and 700 miles during the summer," the successful Neenah coach added.

The harriers work out twice a day,

coming for the first workout at 6:30 a.m.

Jensen is somewhat concerned about the depth at the lower places and said injuries at the top could hurt.

He again expects Appleton East to be strong in the conference and sees Thomas More and Rhinelander as the biggest challengers in the opening meet.

The Rockets will hold a dual against Menasha and all other conference meets will be quadrangulares. That move permits more open dates for big meets. The Rockets are entered in six invitationals.

The schedule:

Sept. 13 — Hodag Invitational; Sept. 14 — Oshkosh North Invitational; Sept. 20 — Shawano Invitational; Sept. 21 — Menasha home; Sept. 30 — Appleton East, Oshkosh North, Kaukauna at Kaukauna; Oct. 4 — Grafton Invitational; Oct. 7 — Neenah, Oshkosh West, Kimberly at Kaukauna; Oct. 11 — Fort Atkinson Invitational; Oct. 15 — Fox Valley Association meet; Oct. 21 — WIAA regional; Oct. 25 — WIAA sectional; Nov. 1 — WIAA meet.

Neenah harriers topple Bluejays

NEENAH — Neenah High School's unbeaten cross country team won its fourth straight meet, topping Menasha, 18-45, in a dual held on the Armstrong Campus Tuesday afternoon.

It was the Fox Valley Association opener for both schools. Neenah, in its previous three starts, had won invitatio-

nal meets at Rhinelander, Oshkosh and Shawano.

Paul Gooch was the individual winner on the three-mile course, posting a record 16:03. The old standard of 16:14 was established by Bob Menning last fall.

Steve Verkuilen of the Rockets finished second in 16:12 while the Bluejays' Gary Van Handel ran another fine race and took third place in 16:14.

Van Handel's third prevented the Rockets from compiling a perfect score.

Rick Schmidt of Neenah 16:20, was fourth in followed by Dave Kierstead in 16:22 and Mike Charron fifth in 16:31.

Other Rocket finishers were Dan Schaller seventh and Kevin Dickson eighth.

Menasha's other places were Rich Hills ninth, Pat Nichols 10th, Scott Abel 11th, Chris Riska 12th and Mike Northam 13th. Larry Bevers didn't finish.

Neenah Coach Tom Jensen was pleased with Charron's performance, noting that to have a strong team the Rockets need scoring at the lower positions.

Schaller, who usually finishes higher, is hampered by foot problems.

Neenah scored a grand slam in the junior varsity race, posting a 15-50 triumph.

Mark Kieman was the winner in 17:30, followed by Bill Neer, Todd Thede, Pat Murphy, Phil Edmonds and Tom Fishel.

Menasha's Bob Swichtenberg was seventh and Jeff Morin, Neenah, eighth. Then came Rich Steffens, Greg Skibba, Mark Pelton, Kerry Ruhnke, Pete Danielson and Tom Jankowski of the Bluejays.

Rocket runners capture 'Hodag'

NEENAH — Neenah High School's cross country team got its season off to an outstanding start by winning the Hodag Invitational at Rhinelander Saturday.

Not only did the Rockets take the varsity meet but they also finished first in the freshman-sophomore division and captured second place in the junior varsity meet.

The varsity squad posted 36 points. Milwaukee Thomas More, to whom the Rockets finished second the last two years, was runnerup with 58 points.

Rhinelander had 83, Wisconsin Rapids 108, Wausau West 136, Shawano 167, Appleton West 183, Wausau East 185, Stevens Point 207 and Antigo 218.

Steve Gehring of Wausau West was the individual winner in 15:05.

Neenah's Paul Gooch finished second and Steve Verkuilen was third in 15:14 and 15:19, respectively.

Other Neenah places were Rick Schmidt ninth, Dan Schaller 12th, Dave Kierstead 13th, Mike Charron 25th, Kevin Dickson 35th and Pete Danielson

42nd.

The Rockets posted 53 points and Rhinelander No. 1 had 64 to lead the fresh-sophomore meet.

Phil Edmonds of Neenah won the race in 16:25. Teammate Mark Kieman was second in 16:32.

Pat Murphy placed 12th, Todd Thede 18th, Tom Fischl 20th, Bill Neer 23rd, Jeff Morin 30th and Dave Farin 31st.

Thomas More won the junior varsity test with 49 points. Neenah collected 50. Neenah's Jack Champaigne won the meet in 16:24. Steve Blank was third, Fritz Hildebrand 10th, Tom Hicks 15th, Tony Edmonds 21st, Randy Bauer 24th and Dan Kierstead 27th.

"We really had an excellent day," Neenah Coach Tom Jensen said.

Jensen said Gooch and Verkuilen ran well and Schmidt ran an 'exceptional race' in placing ninth.

The Rockets compete in the Oshkosh Invitational Tuesday. Appleton East and Manitowoc are other leading contenders in the meet.