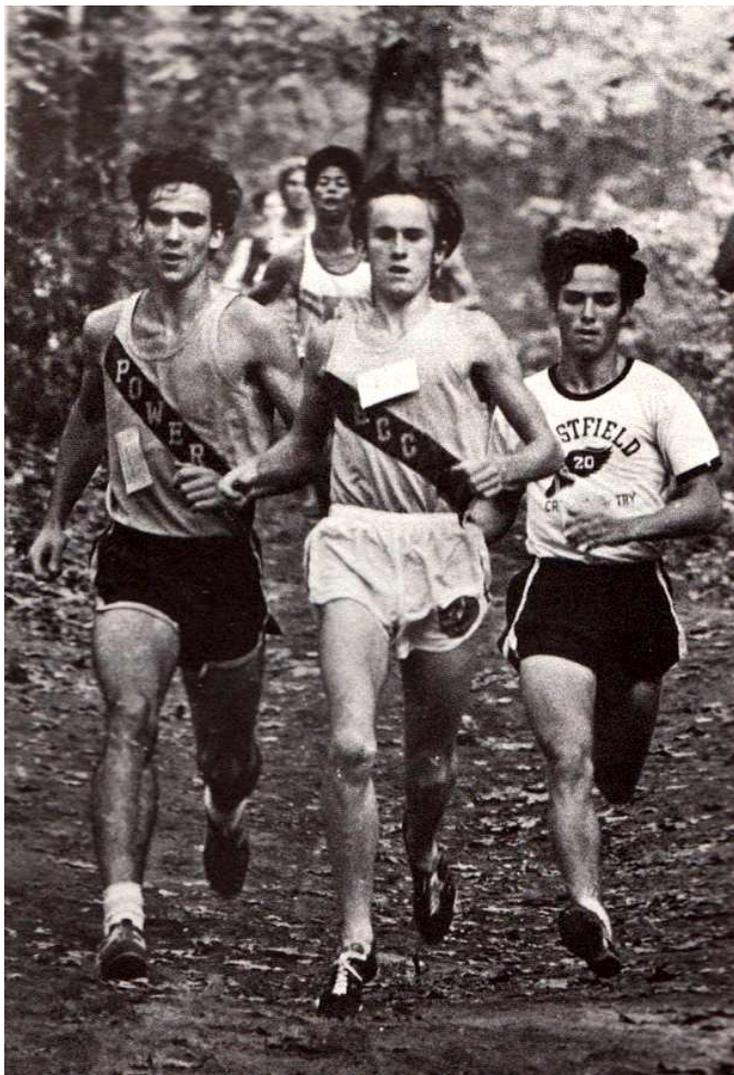


Oliver Wins at Eastern's, Centrowitz Runner-Up St. Joe's of Buffalo Wins Team Title



All in stride: Matt Centrowitz (Power Memorial, NYC), Gordon Oliver (Bethesda Chevy Chase, MD) & Steve Thatcher (Westfield, NJ) lead the way in the back hills of Van Cortlandt Park during the Eastern States Cross Country Championships contested on a warm and muggy October 23, 1971. Over their shoulders, a few yards back, is Mike Brown (LaSalle Academy, NYC).

Oliver was the individual winner in a snappy 12:34.2, the fastest time of the day and the fifth fastest time ever on the course. Centrowitz was runner-up in 12:41.4. Brown clocked in at 12:57, good for 8th place overall. Thatcher, who had run 12:40 on this same course at the NYU meet two weeks earlier, did not cross the finish line. As reported by an eyewitness, "Steve was winning this race before he collapsed within yards of the finish line. It was tough to watch".

St. Joe's of Buffalo won the team title with 122 points. Their top finishers were Alex Trammel, 3rd in 12:50 and Gary Duszynski, 7th in 12:55. Bishop Aquinas of Rochester took 2nd with 158. With 170 points, Bethesda-Chevy Chase finished 3rd in the

team standings. Essex Catholic, the favorite going into the race, was 5th with 234. Defending champion Power Memorial was 7th scoring 292 points led by Centrowitz and teammate Pat Rafferty, 14th overall in 13:02.

With heat and humidity perhaps playing a factor in the day's races, an anticipated threat to Liquori's course record did not materialize. Running in the "B" race, Vince Cartier of Scotch Plains, who ran 12:29 the week before, took a 55-yard lead about 500 yards from the start. He expanded on the lead midway through the hills before coming to a stop. Cartier would finish 24th in 13:27. Mike Butynes of Sterling High (Somerdale NJ) was the "B" race winner in 12:44.6.

Addendum –

Oliver Wins at Eastern's, Centrowitz Runner-Up St. Joe's of Buffalo Wins Team Title

During the outdoor season Gordon Oliver would win the [1972 Penn Relays High School Boys Championship Mile Run](#) clocking an outstanding 4:08.7. Oliver's time established a meet record that stood for 35 years. In a twist of fate, history would join the Oliver and Centrowitz names together again in a 2007 race. [Oliver's Penn Relays Mile Run record was broken by Broadneck \(MD\) standout and future Olympic Gold Medalist Matthew Centrowitz, when he ran 4:08.38](#). Matthew's father Matt is pictured here racing Oliver in 1971.

- Power Memorial's Matt Centrowitz, a junior, ran his fastest VCP time to date at the 1971 Eastern States Championships. Records, fast times and accompanying accolades were still in his future.
- One of New Jersey's best, Steve Thatcher earned "All-State" honors in 1972.
- At the New York CHSAA City Championships, two weeks after Eastern's, La Salle's Mike Brown ran a career best 12:49 on Vanny's tough 2½ mile course.

Photo credit: unknown

<i>Leading Finishers</i>			
SECTION A			
	Time		
1—Gordon Oliver, Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Md.	12:34.2		
2—Matt Centrowitz, Power Memorial	12:41.4		
3—Alex Trommell, St. Josephs, Buffalo	12:50		
4—Mich Scarborough, Bergen	12:51		
5—Tom Hartshorne, Ithaca	12:52		
6—Kent Staver, Bethesda, Chevy Chase	12:53		
7—Gary Duszynski, St. Joseph, Buffalo	12:55		
8—Mike Brown, La Salle, New York	12:57		
9—Carlos Bazo, Essex	12:58		
10—Joe Yates, Pilgrim	12:59		
11—Brian Tolvanen, Pt. Jefferson	13:00		
12—Dave Jackson, Sayville	13:00		
13—Greg Fox, Aquinas, Rochester	13:00		
14—Pat Hafferty, Power Memorial	13:02		
15—Ken Moliski, Christian Brothers, Syracuse	13:03		
TEAM POINT SCORES			
St. Joseph, Buffalo	122	Bergen Path	321
Aquinas, Roch'ter	158	Sayville	274
Bethesda, C. Chase	170	Pope Paul VI	349
Pilgrim	224	Farrell	280
Essex	224	St. Joseph,	
Haddon Township	273	La Salle, N. Y.	403
Power	292	Kecoughton	438
C.B.A., Syracuse	297	St. John the	
Westfield	302	Baptist	441
La Salle, Phila.	316	Loughlin	443
Metuchin	395	Turner	455