

Three under 1:56, FIFTEEN under 2:00 in wild 800 at Haddonfield Distance Night!!!!

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PR's all over the place in a wild 800 Monday at Haddonfield Distance Night.

Kingsway junior Kyle Rakitis continued his hot racing with a 1:53.41 win, leading three half-milers under 1:56 and an incredible 15 under two minutes. Five others ran under 2:02 and a total of 26 ran 2:03 or faster.

The race produced 12 of the 16 fastest 800 times in South Jersey this year.

This was a half-mile lover's dream.

Let's take a look:

1. KYLE RAKITIS [KINGSWAY], 1:53.41: Rakitis, who is already No. 2 in New Jersey at 4:10.15, ran a PR of 1:53.41, the No. 5 time in New Jersey this year and fastest by a South Jersey runner. It's No. 32 in South Jersey history and No. 6 in Gloucester County history, fastest since 2014. It's also No. 2 on the all-time Kingsway list, behind Derrell Manhertz, who ran 1:51.02 at the 2013 state Group 3 meet at South Plainfield. It's also fastest by any South Jersey junior since 2016, when Moorestown's Kevin Fox ran 1:52.60 at a previous Haddonfield Distance Night.

Here's a look at the all-time Gloucester County top-10:

1:49.72 ... Rich Caton [Woodbury], 1979
1:49.74 ... Fred Sharpe [Paulsboro], 1997
1:51.02 ... Derrell Manhertz [Kingsway], 2013
1:52.76 ... Kevin Cianfarini [West Deptford], 2014
1:53.04 ... Xavier Fraction [Washington Twp.], 2009
1:53.41 ... Kyle Rakitis [Kingsway], 2021
1:53.44y ... Tony Uzdavines [Williamstown], 1977
1:53.43 ... Bill Dolan [Clearview], 2014
1:53.49 ... Steve Butenewicz [Delsea Reg.], 2011
1:53.4y ... Wayne Jenkins [Deptford], 1968
1:53.61 ... Steve Morrone [Washington Twp.], 2010

2. BRADY SHUTE [WOODBURY], 1:55.26: The Woodbury junior, who has already run 4:18.07 and 9:21.93, made it a 1-2 Gloucester County finish, thanks to a 56.7 second lap. The Cornell-bound Shute had a previous 800 PR of ... well, according to MileSplit he had never run an 800 before. Not sure about this, but his time could be the fastest by a Woodbury half-miler since Rich Caton ran 1:49.72 in 1979. Anybody else run a fast 800 for Woodbury? Matt Singleton maybe? It's No. 2 in South Jersey this spring.

**** 3. BRETT SHEA [CHEROKEE] 1:55.80:** Shea lowered his PR from 1:56.60, which he ran in a dual meet earlier this month. His time is fastest by a Cherokee runner since 2013, when Shawn Wilson ran 1:55.41 at Group 4 states at Egg Harbor. He's now No. 3 in South Jersey this year.

4. TYLER GREENE [OCEAN CITY], 1:57.33: Greene's 800 PR was 2:03.36 from 2020 indoor sectionals at the Bubble. He's Ocean City's fastest half-miler since legendary Brett Johnson ran 1:53.49 at the 2008 state Group 3 meet at South Plainfield. He moved up to No. 7 in South Jersey this year.

5. DAVID KENNY [ST. AUGUSTINE], 1:57.46: Kenny just missed his PR of 1:57.16, which he set in March at Cherokee. He's already St. Augustine's fastest 800 runner since Chris Gough ran 1:57.08 in 2011. His time is No. 8 in South Jersey.

6. JOSHUA THALER [TIMBER CREEK], 1:57.52: Thaler followed his PR 1:57.32 from his Camden County Championships win with a near PR. He's Timber Creek's fastest 800 runner since Dominick Munson ran 1:57.26 in 2015. He's No. 9 in South Jersey this spring.

7. MICHAEL HENRY [TIMBER CREEK], 1:57.92: In his first-ever serious 800, Henry lowered his PR by nearly six seconds and ran the No. 11 time in South Jersey this year. He had run 2:04.60 in a dual meet back in March.

8. ANDREW BAYNA [HADDON HEIGHTS], 1:57.97: A nice PR for Bayna, who had run 1:59.53 at the Camden County Championships last weekend. Not sure what Haddon Heights' school record is, but the Garnets' haven't had anybody run this fast in at least 20 years. No. 12 in S.J.

**** 9. NICO GRILLI [CHEROKEE], 1:58.14:** The Burlington County 1,600 champ dipped down for a rare 800 and smashed his PR of 2:04.21 from the 2019 Haddonfield Distance Night with the No. 13 time in South Jersey this year.

10. JEFF HEINEMAN [KINGSWAY], 1:58.41: The second underclassman to cross the line, Heineman dropped his PR from 1:58.69 from the Cherokee Winter Distance Festival with the No. 14 time in South Jersey.

11. AIDAN WINKLER [EGG HARBOR TWP.], 1:58.66: Huge PR for Winkler, whose previous best was a 2:03.85 in the winter of 2020 at the Bubble. He's now No. 15 in South Jersey this year.

**** 12. CONOR JACOB [CHEROKEE], 1:58.86:** Jacob, the first sophomore across the line, ran sub-2:00 in his first serious venture at 800 meters. His time is No. 2 among South Jersey 10th-graders this spring, behind only Bryce Tucker of Pennsauken [1:56.07], and No. 16 in South Jersey.

13. LATHAN BROWN [DEPTFORD], 1:59.45: Brown, another sophomore, dropped more than three seconds from his PR of 2:02.70 from last month in Metuchen. Brown is the No. 4 sophomore in South Jersey this year.

14. COLE KOLODZIEJ [WASHINGTON TWP.], 1:59.52: Kolodziej, who has run 9:42.83 for 3,200, trimmed more than four seconds off his 800 PR.

15. TOBIAS JANSSEN [HADDONFIELD], 1:59.53: Janssen has run 4:18.08 and 9:23.20, and added an 800 PR to his outstanding junior season. His previous PR was a 1:59.64 on the same track in March.

Also under 2:03 were Ocean City senior Drew Tarr [2:00.58], West Deptford junior Jacob Cobb [2:00.68], Ocean City junior Owen Ritti [2:01.02], Audubon junior Scott Hubbard [2:01.13], **Cherokee freshman Nick Kuenkel [2:01.25]**, Pitman junior Cole Sharpnack [2:02.05], Cherry Hill East senior Aidan Groff [2:02.10], **Cherokee sophomore Thomas Bromley [2:02.46]**, Highland senior Cole Wassell [2:02.79], Brendan Schlatter [2:02.84] and Eastern freshman Owen Karcsh [2:02.97].