

Cherokee's Tyler Jackson runs the race of his life ... but the result is not what he expected!!!

Reuben Frank, March 9, 2020 [sjtcaweb](#)

In a bizarre twist resulting from an inexcusable official's error Sunday, Cherokee senior Tyler Jackson became a Meet of Champions winner on Monday.

The Meet of Champions 1,600 was held in two sections Sunday at Ocean Breeze, and Jackson was in the first section.

He ran a heck of a race.

With two laps to go he was in sixth place and came through the 1,200 at 3:15.3. He was still in sixth and a good eight meters back when he came through 1,400 meters at 3:47.7. Even as the pack hit the final backstretch he was in sixth. But he began picking guys off on the back straight and had moved into fourth when they hit the final turn.

He hit the final straight in third but in contact with leaders Rodolfo Sanchez of St. Peter's Prep and Myles Plummer of Union Catholic. Sanchez dropped back and Jackson began chasing Plummer, who briefly gapped Jackson. But Jackson kept hammering and edged Plummer at the line in 4:18.83.

The FAT splits are messed up, but from the video it looks like ran his final 400 in about 63.5 and his final 200 in 31 seconds.

His 4:18.83 is No. 5 in Burlington County history and a nearly five-second PR for the 1:56 half-miler, who had run 4:23.41 at states.

Normally, a 4:18 will get you onto the medal stand. Jackson's former teammate, Justin Kelly, ran 4:18.48 two years ago and placed seventh. In 2017 a 4:18 would have won the race.

So Jackson walked off the track with the fastest 1,600 by a South Jersey runner this year and set out to watch the seeded heat to see where he would wind up.

Instead, he saw disaster strike the second section of the 1,600.

When an official inexplicably rang the bell for one lap to go with TWO laps to go, the lead group kicked over the next 200 and stopped when they crossed the line.

Liam Murphy of Allentown and Shaw Powell of CBA were leading the group and with the crowd booing and yelling and screaming they realized what happened and regrouped and ran another lap.

Murphy came through 1,400 meters in 3:37.40 and Shaw in 3:38.29, with Kingsway's Stone Caraccio in third at 3:42.67. Murphy actually went on to run 4:17 and change including his pit stop.

But on Monday the NJSIAA ruled that they would consider the two sections separate Meet of Champions finals and hand out two sets of medals, one for the first eight runners in the 1,600-meter first section and another for the first eight in the 1,400-meter second section.

So Murphy is the Meet of Champions 1,400 winner, Jackson is the Meet of Champions 1,600 winner, and 16 milers will get medals. And in case you're wondering, the South Jersey 1,400 record now belongs to Caraccio.

For more on this story, read Jim Lambert's outstanding coverage on New Jersey MileSplit below the following list:

ALL-TIME BURLINGTON COUNTY INDOOR 1,600 LIST

4:13.56y ... Marc Pelerin (Cherokee), 2002
4:16.71y ... Dave Forward (Shawnee), 2009
4:18.48 ... Justin Kelly (Cherokee), 2018
4:18.50 ... Shawn Wilson (Cherokee), 2012
4:18.83 ... Tyler Jackson (Cherokee), 2020
4:18.91y ... Jon Anderson (Cinnaminson), 2004
4:19.97 ... Steven Burkholder (Cherokee), 2010
4:20.09 ... Austin Gabay (Cinnaminson), 2019
4:20.46y ... Brian Tetreault (Cinnaminson), 2007
4:20.93 ... Ryan Garvin (Lenape), 2008
4:21.1h ... Eric Lorenz (Holy Cross), 1988
4:21.32 ... Shawn Wilson (Cherokee), 4:21.32
4:21.43 ... Ethan Wechsler (Cherokee), 2020
4:21.54 ... Mark Miller (Shawnee), 2017
4:21.70 ... Isaiah Curbelo (Rancocas Valley), 2016
4:22.19y ... Rob Novak (Bordentown), 2005
4:22.24 ... Kevin Lauer (Lenape), 2018
4:22.36y ... Mike Sheehan (Holy Cross), 2008
4:23.15 ... Dave DeJong (Shawnee), 1998
4:23.27 ... Jon Anderson (Cinnaminson), 2003
4:24.69 ... Joshua DeJesus (Rancocas Valley), 2016
4:24.6y ... Paul Friedman (Moorestown), 1976
4:24.9y ... Johnny Englehardt (Willingboro), 1976
4:25.0y ... Vance Watson (Willingboro), 1983
4:25.0h ... Keith O'Brien (Shawnee), 1992

For Whom Did The Bell Toll? Boys MOC 1600 Results In Doubt

1

Jim Lambert NJMileSplit, Mar 8, 2020

The winner of the boys' 1,600-meter run at Sunday's NJSIAA Meet of Champions remains undetermined after the bell was sounded a lap too early at the 52nd annual meet at Ocean Breeze on Staten Island.

As a result, runners in the seeded heat briefly stopped after 1,400 meters before they resumed running,

Liam Murphy of Allentown was on potential sub 4:10 pace with Shaw Powell of CBA a few meters back in second when they crossed the line after seven laps. Coaches and spectators, knowing the runners still had a lap to go, began yelling for them to keep going.

Murphy, after a few seconds of not realizing what was happening, started running again and the others soon followed his lead. Murphy crossed the finish line first after 1,600 in 4:17.35.

In addition to that, the clock started before the race began, which contributed to the chaos.

So will the NJSIAA count the results? Will the NJSIAA order the race to be re-run?

Those were among the questions raised by coaches, fans, and runners after the race.

The answer is expected to come on Monday.

"I will be meeting with Larry White (the Executive Director of the NJSIAA) tomorrow and we will make a decision," said co-meet director and NJSIAA Track and Field Tournament Director Al Stumpf. "I will recommend that there are two sets of medals handed out, one for the 1,600 results as the currently stand, and another set of medals for where the runners finished at 1,400."

Stumpf said that bringing back the 1,600 runners for a re-run at Ocean Breeze this week isn't realistic.

"With the (New Balance) National Championships next weekend (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at the New York Armory), most of the runners wouldn't come back to do a re-run," said Stumpf.

Murphy, who came back later to complete a sensational double by winning the 3,200 for the second straight year in an epic battle with Jack Jennings of Mendham, 8:58.16 to 8:58.19, said a re-run doesn't fit in his plans.

"I'm doing the DMR on Friday and the two-mile on Sunday at nationals, so that wouldn't work out for me," said Murphy.

Murphy said he was confused about what was going on after he finished the seventh lap.

"I'm not a lap counter, so when the bell rang I just went all out to the finish," said Murphy.

"When everyone started screaming that we had another lap, I started running again with what I had left."

What does Murphy think should happen with the results?

"I'd be ok with being the 1,400 winner and I am not really sure what should happen with the results for the 1,600," said Murphy, who hit the 1,200 mark in 3:10.2.

Murphy and everyone else in the building knows that Murphy was headed for a red hot time before the premature bell.

"The disappointing part is knowing I was on pace to maybe break 4:10 before that happened," said Murphy.

What Murphy did by coming back and winning the 3,200 in 8:58.16 as he rode an emotional will down in state history as one of the greatest accomplishments and one of the most memorable moments ever!

To comeback mentally and physically after what happened in the 1600, and run as fast as he did to win the 3,200 is simply epic on so many levels!!!!

If Stumpf's recommendation is accepted by White, Murphy would probably become the first ever state 1,400 champion in U.S. history!!! How crazy is that???

And if Murphy is officially awarded the 1,600 title, he would be just the third boy in meet history to win the 1,600 and 3,200 at the same meet, joining Brian Boyett of Parsippany Hills (2001) and the legendary Craig Forys of Colts Neck (2005).

NJSIAA Will Award Two Sets Of Medals For Boys MOCs 1600m

Jim Lambert, NJMileSplit, Mar 9, 2020

Two sets of medals will be awarded as a result of the unfortunate early bell in the seeded section of the boys 1600m run at Sunday's Meet of Champions at Ocean Breeze on Staten Island, Co-Meet Director and NJSIAA Track and Field Tournament Director Al Stumpf announced on Monday.

Stumpf said the times and places through 1600m in the seeded heat won't count because of the error that occurred when an official sounded the bell a lap too early, causing the runners to stop after 1400m before they resumed running after realizing there was a lap to go.

"We've decided to award medals to the top eight finishers in the unseeded section of the boys 1600m, and because we want to recognize and be fair to the runners that were impacted by what happened with the bell, we will also give out medals to the top eight finishers in the seeded section based on where they were after 1400m."

That means that [Liam Murphy](#) of Allentown, who was first after 1400m in 3:37.40 and still ran 4:17.35 to finish first over the full 1600m after stopping, will be awarded a gold medal for being the 1400m champion.

And [Tyler Jackson](#) of Cherokee, who finished first in the unseeded section ([watch here](#)) of the 1600m with a PR run of 4:18.83, will be listed as the 1600m champion.

Boys 1600 Meter Run

Name	Year School	Finals	H#
1 Jackson, Tyler	12 Cherokee HS	4:18.83	
2 Plummer, Myles	10 Union Cathol	4:18.99	
3 Marran, Sam	12 Mendham HS	4:19.64	
4 Sanchez, Rodolfo	11 St. Peter's Prep	4:19.86	
5 Armstrong, Nathan	11 Pompton Lakes HS	4:19.96	
6 Ritti, Owen	10 Ocean City HS	4:20.43	
7 Hill, Troy	12 Christian Br	4:20.89	
8 True, Austin	12 West Windsor	4:22.63	

Boys 1400 Meter Run

Name	Year School	Finals
1 Murphy, Liam	12 Allentown HS	3:37.40
2 Powell, Shaw	12 Christian Br	3:38.29
3 Caraccio, Stone	12 Kingsway HS	3:42.67
4 Langon, Marco	10 Bridgewater-	3:42.75
5 Mehari, Philmon	12 Livingston HS	3:43.11
6 Counsell, Oscar	11 Montclair HS	3:43.99
7 LoCurcio, Joseph	12 Freehold Boro HS	3:44.59
8 Cadmus, Christian	12 New Providence HS	3:45.32

Stumpf said there just wasn't a better solution.

"It was an unfortunate mistake and we are trying to be as fair as possible to all the runners by handing out a second set of medals," said Stumpf. "And re-running the race this week really wasn't an option. The coaches didn't want that."

Coaches and runners didn't want a re-run because New Balance Nationals Indoor are scheduled for this weekend.

So, the question will always remain-who would have won and how fast would the times have been without the premature bell?

We will obviously never know, and the court of public opinion can always debate that, but it appeared that Murphy and Powell were headed for a 1-2 finish with the winner probably very close to and possibly under 4:10, and the runner-up probably close to 4:10 as well.

Something that can't be debated and should never get lost in all the chaos of the 1600m is Murphy's epic and historic double on Sunday.

After the 1600m debacle that took a toll on him mentally and physically, the Villanova-bound Murphy came back about an hour later and won an all-time classic battle to the line with future college teammate Jack Jennings of Mendham in the 3200m, 8:58.16 to 8:58.19! Jennings passed Murphy coming off the final turn, but Murphy responded and caught Jennings right before they crossed the line and crashed to the track.

Talk about guts, heart, and talent, Murphy showed it all!

So regardless of what time is or isn't listed for Murphy in the 1600m or which medal he receives or doesn't receive, one thing is for sure - Murphy's distance double at the Meet of Champions is the kind of stuff that NJ legends are made of!