

Cherokee's Nick Kuenkel runs 2nd-fastest time ever in Cherokee Challenge Sophomore race!!!!

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Cherokee's **Nick Kuenkel** ran the second-fastest time in the meet's 25-year history Saturday, winning the 3,200-meter sophomore race at the Cherokee Challenge in 9:49. Kuenkel edged Peyton Shute of Gateway/Woodbury Co-Op by six seconds in the first sophomore race in meet history where two runners dipped under 10 minutes.

Racing in perfect conditions, Kuenkel missed the sophomore race course record of 9:48 by one second. That was set in 2012 by Steve Garrett of Tatnall School in Wilmington, Del.

Here's a look at the top-10 sophomore times in meet history:

9:48 ... Steve Garrett [Tatnall School], 2012
9:49 ... Nick Kuenkel [Cherokee], 2021
9:55 ... Peyton Shute [Woodbury/Gateway], 2021
9:55 ... Matt Nelson [Barnegat], 2010
9:56 ... Mike Vitez [Haddonfield], 2007
9:59 ... Zach Michon [Robbinsville], 2013
9:59 ... Chris Spisak [Cherokee], 2017
10:00 ... Dave Forward [Shawnee], 2007
10:00 ... Marc Pelerin [Cherokee], 1999
10:02 ... Sebastien Reed [Pitman], 2017

Other South Jersey runners in the top 10 in the boys sophomore race were Ethan Mitnick of Mainland [4th in 10:37], Owen Karsch of Eastern [8th in 10:46] and **Robert Poplau** of Cherokee [10:47 for 10th].