

Bill:

1961 was an exciting Cross Country season for all of us. As has been said many times, looking back, we owe so much to Coach Ault. There is no way even so talented team as this could have pulled off the State Championship without him.

The road to the State Championship was an exciting one for the team. The meet results are shown on the attached summary. In Cross Country, you total the places of the first 5 runners from each team. The low score wins the meet. 15 points is the lowest possible score, (1+2+3+4+5=15). We started off the season with two wins including a 15 point shutout of Morton, led by Jim Weinert. There was a short period from late September to early October where Jim was out with a hip injury. In the first race without Jim, we took third in a triangular meet against New Trier and Palatine. New Trier never beat us again including their dual meet, Suburban League and District. While Jim was out, the 1-2 punch of Joel Lewitz and Chuck Redman stepped up to lead us to three more wins including another 1 through 5 shutout of Waukegan.

Jim Weinert rejoined the team for the Suburban League meet which he won, with Joel Lewitz finishing 4<sup>th</sup>. It wasn't enough to beat Evanston, however. HP took 2<sup>nd</sup>, 39 to 47. Then came 2 more dual meet victories including a defeat of arch track and cross country rival New Trier and another 15 point shut out beating Niles.

The Evanston dual meet was right before District and everyone knew this was the showdown going into District and State. Jim Weinert won, Evanston's best runner, Chuck Schultz was 2<sup>nd</sup> and Joel Lewitz finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, but HP lost a close meet, with Evanston scoring 25 to HP's 32.

The District meet was held at Maine West on a cold, blustery Saturday in late October. Even though the meet included all the schools in the District, the first 3 finishers in the Evanston dual meet repeated at District with Jim Weinert 1<sup>st</sup>, Chuck Schultz 2<sup>nd</sup> and Joel Lewitz 3<sup>rd</sup>. We took second in District to Evanston by 2 points, 63 to 65.

A sidelight to the District meet was that Tom Huxley was sick and did not run. Had he been able to run, we would have been able to make up those 2 points.

Another interesting sidelight to the District meet was that Jim Weinert's younger brother Wally was running for Deerfield HS as a freshman. Deerfield was a new separate high school by the time we were seniors. Wally Weinert finished 20<sup>th</sup>. If he had been running for HPHS, we would have beaten Evanston by 15 points.

The Lake County meet was between District and State. I don't have the scoring results, but I have a recollection that HP finished 1 through 5 to shut out the entire County. I think the well known photo of the smiling team with the proud coach smiling back was taken at the Lake County meet.

This is my favorite team photo, because in retrospect, it says it all not only about the mutual respect we all had for Coach Ault and each other, but how much fun we had that season.

Going into the state meet at the Champaign/Urbana Golf Course, defending Champion Glenbard West was picked to repeat. Evanston looked good, too, having never lost to us.

The final score was HP 96, Glenbard West 97 and Evanston 98. The closest score in the history of the State Meet up to that time and probably to this day. I remember that it took a long time for the final score to be verified and announced. I have a vivid recollection of Coach Ault anxiously waiting for the results to be announced, puffing nervously on a Kent cigarette which the former US Olympian had a habit of smoking.

An outstanding team won the State Championship. Jim Weinert went undefeated the entire season. Joel Lewitz was consistently HP's #2 runner. Chuck Redman, Tom Huxley, Barney Olson, Mike McLaughlin and Jeff Goldman were always solid and contributed all year. I've always felt that the come-through performance of the State meet was Robert Picker's gutsy 12<sup>th</sup> place, which was an incredible effort in a 1.9 mile race for a sprinter who still holds the HPHS sophomore 100 yard dash record. If anyone had taken one place higher, there would have been no Championship.

We all credit Coach Ault for leading us to the State Championship even though the odds were against us. He motivated everyone to come through in the State meet. His coaching was the difference that gave us the State Championship that day, Saturday, November 4, 1961, almost exactly 45 years ago from the day you have chosen to honor our fine team with induction into the Highland Park High School Athletic Hall of Fame. Thank you.

Joel Lewitz

**HPHS '61-'62 State Championship Season**

HP won every dual meet except Evanston  
 2nd to Evanston in Suburban League and District  
 WON the Lake County Meet

**WON the State Meet**

dual WON		dual WON		triangular meet	
<i>HP</i>	22		10:19	THIRD	
<i>Glenbrook</i>	37	Jim Weinert	1	Tim Renn (NT)	1
		Joel Lewitz	2	Joel Lewitz	2
		Chuck Redman	3	Chuck Redman	8
		Bob Picker	4	Tom Huxley	9
		Barney Olson	5	Barney Olson	13
		<i>HP</i>	15	Bob Picker	16
		<i>Morton</i>	47	<i>New Trier</i>	37
				<i>Palatine</i>	41
				<i>HP</i>	48

		10/6/1961		10/10/1961	
dual WON		Friday		Tuesday	
	9:35	dual WON		dual WON	
			10:19		9:39
Joel Lewitz	1	Joel Lewitz	1	Joel Lewitz	1
Chuck Redman	2	Chuck Redman	2	Chuck Redman	2
Tom Huxley	5	Tom Huxley	3	Mike McLaughlin	3
Barney Olson	6	Barney Olson	5	Tom Huxley	4
Jeff Goldman	11	Bob Picker	6	Barney Olson	5
<i>HP</i>	25	<i>HP</i>	17	<i>HP</i>	15
<i>Oak Park</i>	31	<i>Proviso East</i>	42	<i>Waukegan</i>	45

	10/13/1961		10/17/1961		10/20/1961
Friday		Tuesday		Friday	
<b>suburban league meet</b>		dual WON		dual WON	
	9:49		9:02		10:02
Jim Weinert	1	Jim Weinert	1	Jim Weinert	1
Joel Lewitz	4	Joel Lewitz	2	Joel Lewitz	2
Tom Huxley	11	Chuck Redman	5	Chuck Redman	3
Chuck Redman	13	Tom Huxley	6	Tom Huxley	4
Mike McLaughlin	18	Bob Picker	8	Mike McLaughlin	5
<i>HP</i>	47	<i>HP</i>	22	<i>HP</i>	15
<i>Evanston</i>	39	<i>New Trier</i>	37	<i>Niles</i>	60
@ Proviso East					

	10/28/1961		11/4/1961
dual LOST		Saturday	
<i>Evanston</i>	25	<b>District Meet</b>	
<i>HP</i>	32		10:11
		Jim Weinert	1
		Joel Lewitz	3
		Chuck Redman	10
Lake Count Meet		Bob Picker	14
WON		Barney Olson	37
		<i>HP</i>	65
		<i>Evanston</i>	63
		@ Maine West	
		Saturday	
		<b>State Meet</b>	
			10:11
		Jim Weinert	1
		Joel Lewitz	10
		Bob Picker	12
		Chuck Redman	27
		Tom Huxley	46
		<b>HP</b>	<b>96</b>
		<b>Glenbard West</b>	<b>97</b>
		<b>Evanston</b>	<b>98</b>
		@ Urbana	

*Illinois State Champions*



*1961 Highland Park High School Cross-Country Team  
Richard Ault, Coach*

The old photos show just how close the meet was. One place either way could have made the difference in the final result. HP 96, Glenbard West 97, Evanston 98.



Outside the motel on the way to the state meet. Left to right, Coach Ault, Jim Weinert, Mike McLaughlin, Joel Lewitz, Chuck Redman, Bob Picker, Tom Huxley, Barney Olson, Jeff Goldman.



The start, Champaign/Urbana Golf Course, November 4, 1961.



Tom Huxley #116, sprinting for the finishing chute. HP's #5 finisher. Look at how close the other runners are behind him. Great effort from Hux!

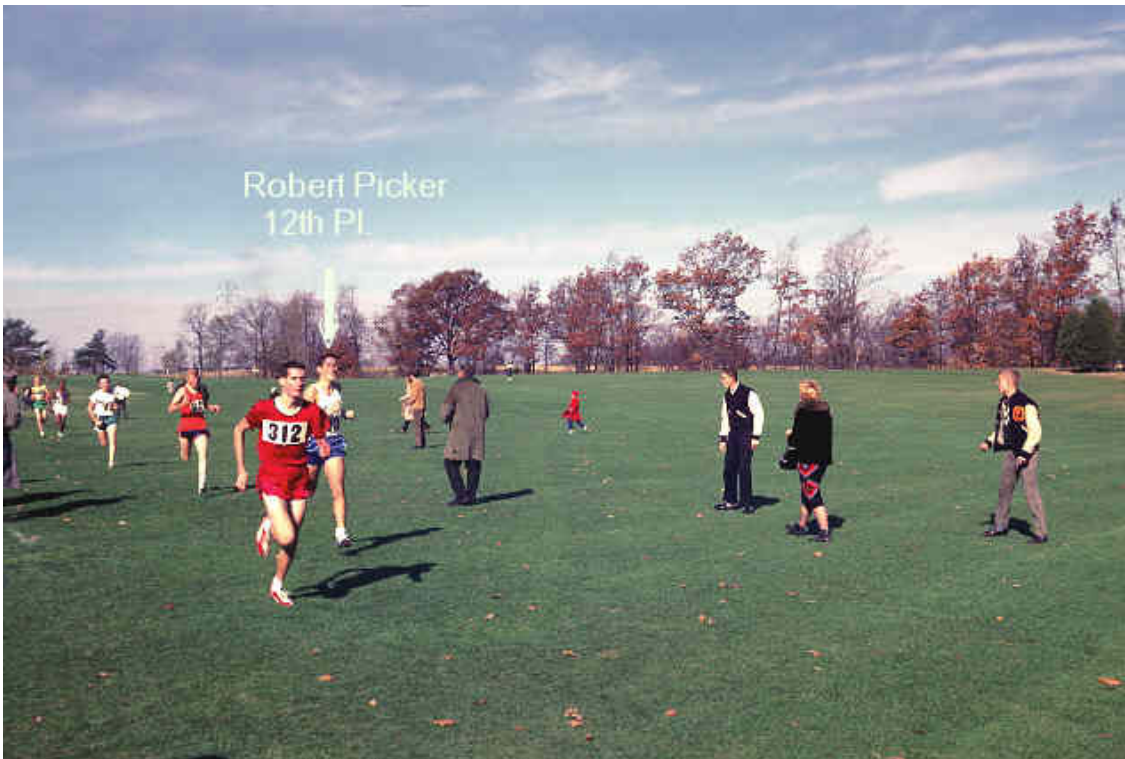


Chuck Redman #112 in white hat, finishing. HP's #4 finisher. Could be an Evanston runner just ahead in orange cap. Great job Redman!



**Above:** Key late race moment, typical of the close battle between HP, Glenbard and Evanston. Bob Picker, white top, blue shorts, just behind an Evanston runner. Robert recalls: *“the runner right in front of me was Jimmy Holman from Evanston, who ironically enough, I knew as an 10-11 year old when we both attended the same YMCA Camp Echo in Michigan for 2 summers. At the State Meet, as I passed by him in the race, I turned and smiled at him, said 'Hi Jimmy!' and then turned on the gas to make my point. His only comment, which I will always remember, was "Christ, Picker!". I think he was a bit shocked to see me there, and not too happy at the reunion.*

**Below:** Bob Picker, HP's #3 finisher sprinting for the finish. Just behind him is an Evanston runner (looks like Holman). Behind Holman, could be a Glenbard West runner. The whole race could not have been closer!!!





Joel Lewitz #111, finishing. HP's #2 finisher. The red hat ahead of him is Craig Boydston, future Big 10 mile champ and Bob Picker's future teammate at Northwestern. Glenbard West runner #81? is ahead of Boydston. Another Glenbard West runner is on Joel's right shoulder. A close race all the way to the finish. Bob Picker is behind Joel just to the right of the runner with the red shirt.



State Champion, Jim Weinert, winning the race. Behind him, placing 2<sup>nd</sup> looks like Evanston's #1 finisher, Chuck Shultz. Can't say too much about Jimbo! He was the best.



**Above:** The State Champs, after the race. Standing left to right, Chuck Redman, Mike McLaughlin, Jim Weinert, Jeff Goldman, Joel Lewitz. Kneeling left to right Tom Huxley, Bob Picker, Barney Olson.

**Bonus photo:** Teammates reunite. Second from right is Jim Sternfield, HPHS 1962 State Discus Champion. Jim set the state discus record in his victory. To my knowledge, he is the only HPHS athlete in the history of the school, other than Jim Weinert, to hold both an individual Illinois State Championship and Illinois State High School Record.

Highland Park High School, class of '62  
40th year reunion  
Teammates and Champions forever



*Barney Olson, Tom Huxley, Jim Weinert, Joel Lewitz, Jim Sternfield, Bob Picker*

**Double Bonus photo:**

Teammates re-unite 42 years later, left to right, Robert Picker, Tom Huxley, HPHS Hall of Famer Ron Joseph and Joel Lewitz.

*June 22, 2003, Stanford University*



Highland Park High School Track Team  
at the USA Track and Field Championships

