

Giusto wins national cross country title

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SAN DIEGO — San Mateo High School's Matt Giusto peaked at just the right time this season — Saturday, at the Kinney National High School Cross Country Championships at Balboa Park.

Giusto surprised the field and several thousand spectators, winning the boys' race by a stunning 10.4-second margin.

In the girls' race, Mountain View sophomore Shannon Clark finished 17th.

Giusto finished only third in last week's Kinney Western Regional meet in Fresno, so he wasn't expected to win Saturday's fifth annual national race —

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let alone by such an impressive margin.

The two-time, Central Coast Section champion completed the 5,000-meter course in 14:54.1. The Western Regional champion, Tracy Garrison of Klamath Falls, Ore., finished second in 15:04.5.

Giusto assumed the lead after completing a hilly mile and outdistanced Garrison, the pre-race favorite, over the final two-thirds of the course.

The third-place finisher was Simon Gutierrez of Del Norte High in Albuquerque, N.M. Gutierrez, who had fin-

ished fourth in the Western Regional, completed the course in 15:05.4.

In the girls' division, Janet Smith of Evans High in Edison, N.J., completed the course in 16:43.7, beating runner-up Melissa Straza by 33.8 seconds.

Mountain View's Clark, like Giusto a two-time CCS champion, finished in 18:08.7.

Although Kinney's regional and national meets are not sanctioned as official high school events, Giusto's claim to the national title is legitimate because Saturday's races included the top 32 boys and top 32 girls from last week's four regional meets.

The top eight boys and top eight girls in the regional meets qualified for Sat-

urday's national meet.

In the girls' race, Smith took the lead after the first 200 yards and completed the first mile in an impressive 4:54.

In the past two years, Smith had led at the halfway point only to place fifth both times. This time she arrived in San Diego a week early, running the course every day to acquaint herself with it.

Straza, a sophomore from Bloomington High in Bloomington, Ill., finished in 17:17.5. Cathy Schiro of Dover High in Dover, N.H., completed the course in 17:25.4. to take third place.

More than 200 college coaches were in attendance Saturday, including Bob Larson of UCLA and Harry Groves of Penn State.

Cross country

KINNEY
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
CHAMPIONSHIPS
At Balboa Park, San Diego
(5,000 meters)

Runners' home towns are listed in parentheses, not their high schools.

Boys

1, Matt Giusto (Foster City) 14:54.1; 2, Tracy Garrison (Klamath Falls, Ore.) 15:04.5; 3, Simon Gutierrez (Albuquerque, N.M.) 15:05.4; 4, David Halle (Rockford, Ill.) 15:08.4; 5, Chris Zinn (Pottersville, Mo.) 15:09.7.

Girls

1, Janet Smith (Edison, N.J.) 16:43.7; 2, Melissa Straza (Bloomington, Ill.) 17:17.5; 3, Cathy Schiro (Dover, N.H.) 17:25.4; 4, Kathleen Smith (San Antonio, Tex.) 17:34.1; 5, Kirsten O'Hara (Patons Verde) 17:38.7.

Peninsula finisher — 17, Shannon Clark (Mountain View) 18:08.7.

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