

## Gardner advances to 2 national fencing meets

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WARREN TWP. — Eric Gardner, a sophomore at Watchung Hills Regional High School and a township resident, had quite a weekend for himself in Junior Olympic fencing during the Thanksgiving Day weekend as he qualified for a pair of national competitions.

Fencing epee, Gardner captured the gold medal in the 30-man field of the Junior Olympic (JO) qualifier Nov. 27 at Rutgers University, and then came back the following day to claim the silver medal in the field of 50 in the U20 JO qualifier.

A member of Medeo Fencing Club and School where he is coached by Yakov Danilenko, Gardner also fences for Watchung Hills.

Facing Cooper Schumacher of Pompton in the U17 final, Gardner pulled out a 15-14 victory to earn the title, while he advanced to the U20 title round before bowing to Ricky Eschenbach of Millburn.

Aris Altomare of Warren also qualified for the national JO U20 epee tournament by taking fifth place in the competition. Qualifiers for the Junior Olympics will compete in a national tournament in mid-February in Dallas.

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