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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section - pages 13-16

KAUTZMANN LEADS DEVILS TO TITLE WITH 3 WINS

Devil Boys Rise From Ashes, Burn CHE for State A Crown

By BRUCE JOHNSON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Given up for dead by many after a 60-point loss to Shawnee in late December, the Westfield High School boys swim team completed an amazing comeback Sunday, capturing the NJSIAA A Division state championship with an 89.5-80.5 victory over Cherry Hill East at the College of New Jersey.

Coach Martha Heintzelman's Blue Devils (14-2) had entered the tournament with 3550 power points, well behind state powers like Bridgewater-Raritan (3800-plus), Shawnee (3900-plus) and Cherry Hill East (4000-plus). But timing is everything, and WHS clicked at the right time.

After scorching Scotch Plains-Fanwood 105-65 in the North Jersey sectional final, the Devils stunned Bridgewater 86-84 in the state semifinals last Thursday, earning a spot in Sunday's final. The Bridgewater meet was the highpoint of the season for WHS (until Sunday, that is), which swam 50 lifetime bests out of 60 swims, and power-pointed at 4131.

But that was surpassed 70 hours later as most of the Devils — some on their second, third or even fourth shave in 10 days — continued to have major time drops. Westfield managed six first places against Cherry Hill East, its arch-rival in the 1970s for state supremacy and an 87-83 winner over three-time defending state champion Shawnee in the South Jersey sectional final.

Senior tri-captain Scott Kautzmann was involved in three of them, capturing the 50 (22.67) and 100 (49.97)

freestyles, and anchoring the meet-clinching 400 free relay (3:27.82, with freshman Zack Coppa, senior Turner Yevich and fellow captain Kyle McCloskey joining him).

The other WHS firsts were by junior Cliff Haldeman, a lifetime best 2:03.65 in the 200 IM, senior Paul Kolterjahn, a coasting 5:02.80 in the 500, and junior Matt Vidovich, who overcame two seasons of battling nagging injuries to post a 1:01.82 in the 100 breaststroke, good for fourth on the WHS Top 15 All-Time List. Haldeman was right behind in 1:02.40 (No. 6 All-Time), giving Westfield a 79.5-76.5 lead entering the final relay.

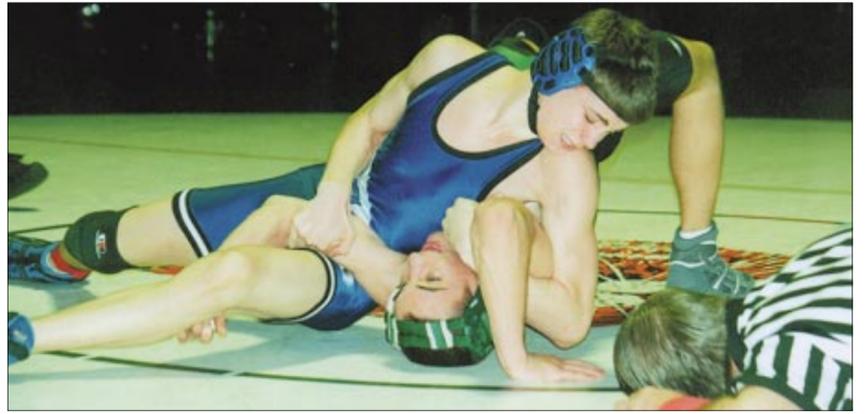
Since Cherry Hill East had already posted a 3:21 this season, and Westfield's best was a 3:31, it appeared the Blue Devils would need to win the meet by taking second and third. But freshmen Sean Baran (52.51) and Coppa (53.07) put both WHS relays in the lead after the opening leg. Yevich (52.52) expanded the lead, while sophomore Devin Power (52.37) held on for second after two legs. McCloskey's 51.22 split gave the "A" relay an insurmountable lead with Kautzmann (51.01) on the anchor, while Kolterjahn (52.65) and tri-captain Matt Cahill (51.83) brought the "B" home in third, just a fraction of a second from a 1-2 finish.

Spurred on by members of the Bridgewater-Raritan and Scotch Plains-Fanwood teams they'd just beaten, the Blue Devils posted 45 new lifetime bests, giving them an unbelievable 95 best times in a 72-hour period. Many of the outstanding swims

came on "C" relays, with freshman Andrew Ruotolo topping the charts with a pair of 24.6 50-freestyle relay splits on his fourth shave!

Cherry Hill East won the opening relay by .05 of a second and maintained that lead as WHS whittled away at it with one super swim after another. First it was Kolterjahn (1:52.03), McCloskey (1:53.80) and Power (1:55.10) going 2-4-5 in the 200; Haldeman coasted in the 200 IM, but Vidovich got a lifetime best 2:08.46 for a key third, because se-

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PLACING A TIGER IN DEEP TROUBLE...Raider Lucas Francavilla, top, has South Plainfield Tiger Dave Butrica in a pinning situation in the 127-lb. final bout. Although a little late, the referee looks to see if Butrica's shoulders are pinned to the mat. Butrica eluded the ref's impending hand slap on the mat and escaped to win 6-5.

RAIDERS PLACE THIRD; FRANCAVILLA, GRABEL TAKE SECONDS

Cousar Grabs Outstanding Wrestling Award at District 12 Mat Tournament

By DAVID B. CORBIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Host South Plainfield received all the glory by producing 11 champions and winning its 16th team title in a row, totaling 290.5 points, at the District 12 Wrestling Tournament on February 26. However, Scotch Plains-Fanwood — third-place finishers with 139 points — provided the Outstanding Wrestler in 191-lb. junior Gary Cousar who defeated — you bet! — one of South Plainfield's most heralded wrestlers Dan Kunst, who placed seventh in the state last year

in the same weight class. Cousar, seeded second, began his march toward the crown by clamping Mike Echan of New Providence in just 10 seconds. Then, in a rematch of last year's semifinal bout with

Fred Williams of Governor Livingston, which Cousar eked out in overtime, he scored two takedowns, an escape and two nearfalls before showing Williams the lights in 3:43.

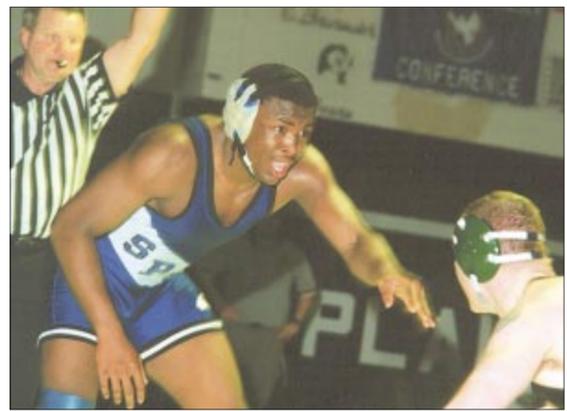
"Last year we went to overtime. This year the coach said 'motion because he is big and not so good on his feet,'" said Cousar. "I kept reaching for the half (nelson)," for the pin.

Another rematch! Kunst, having defeated Cousar, 16-7, in last year's finals, sashayed onto the mats with confidence, but eyeballed a very determined Cousar. Never again! Cousar swept Kunst off his feet and onto the mat for a takedown. Kunst scored a reversal but Cousar escaped and added another takedown to take a 5-2, first-period lead.

Cousar was awarded a penalty point in the second period after Kunst performed a very uncouth, unsportsmanlike act. From that point, Kunst added an escape and was awarded an uncertain takedown to narrow the score to 6-5. Cousar escaped in third, then with 11 seconds remaining, Kunst tied the score with a takedown. The will to win emerged when Cousar escaped with :04 left to seize an 8-7 victory.

"Coach said 'motion, motion! Because he is one of the quickest 89-pounders around. If I kept moving, he would not be able to use his big moves on me,'" commented Cousar. "I was confident that I was going to win."

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AN INTENSE AND DETERMINED RAIDER...Raider Gary Cousar knew what he was up against when he faced Tiger Dan Kunst in the 191-lb. finals and rose to the occasion to win 8-7 and to win the Outstanding Wrestling Award.

DEVILS SINK W. WINDSOR; FALL SHORT TO CHE, 86-84

Judges Shirk Rules; CHE Tops Devil Girls for 'A' Swim Title

By BRUCE JOHNSON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

This was not the way they wanted their high school careers to end, but it was almost poetic justice that with the meet — and the NJSIAA A Division championship — on the line, Westfield had twins Jesse and Abby Coxson on the anchor legs of its "A" and "B" relays, trying to squeeze out a 2-3 finish that would give the Blue Devils the title.

Over the past four years, coach Bev Torok had come to expect the Coxsons to pull out meets. Earlier this year, they had teamed up on the decisive winning relay at the Pirate Invitational. But this was for the all the marbles, against WHS's bitter arch-rival Cherry Hill East. Westfield had an 80-76 lead, but the Cougars had — at least on paper — the faster 400 freestyle relay, having gone 3:44 while Westfield's winning time at Pirate was 3:49.

Torok had to choose between go-

ing for the win, where the eight points would clinch the meet, or splitting her "A" and "B" relays to go for a 2-3 and get six points, also good enough to win the meet. If she kept her "A" team of Ashley Saul, Alexa Vantosky and the Coxsons together, they would have a shot at winning and a certain second place, but the "B" relay of Stephanie Kolterjahn, Kerry Hart, Heather Lane and Chrissy Schwebel would have likely only gotten fourth, even with all best times.

So Westfield split its relays, going with Saul, Hart, Vantosky and Jesse Coxson in one, and Kolterjahn, Lane, Schwebel and Abby Coxson in the other. As expected, East's "A" team coasted to victory in 3:46.25. Westfield's Saul-Lane-Vantosky-J. Coxson team was a comfortable second, but Abby Coxson went in well behind East's "B" anchor. The senior, who battled back from shoulder surgery that forced her to miss her entire

junior year, tried valiantly to make up the 10-yard deficit she started with, but fell about a second short.

The relay gave East a wild 86-84 victory before a packed house at the College of New Jersey. But the result didn't become official for nearly 24 hours. Cherry Hill East had handed in its entry cards with girls listed in the wrong lanes for the first four events. That's illegal according to the National Federation rules, and normally is cause for disqualification. At worst, the East girls in the 50 freestyle who were listed in the incorrect lanes should have been disqualified from that event, because that was when the error was discovered at the scorers' table.

But, after meeting with the coaches, athletic directors and meet director Dave Prutow, the meet officials let the meet continue with no disqualification. On Monday the

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SETTING UP THE GUILLOTINE ON A BULLDOG...Blue Devil Mike Kivetz, top, begins to sever relationships with Isiah Crowley of Shabazz by setting up a guillotine pinning combination in his 173-lb. bout.

KIVETZ GETS 2ND; CAPRARIO, WILLIAMS TAKE 3RD

Devils Advance 3 to Region 3 Wrestling Tourney in Union

By DAVID B. CORBIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Three Westfield High School wrestlers, Mike Kivetz, Dan Caprario and Brian Williams, advanced to the Region 3 Tournament in Union and two, John Leonardis and Justin Reyes, just missed their opportunity at the District 11 Tournament held in Westfield on February 25-26. Defending Champion Rahway took top honors with 207 points while the Blue Devils finished seventh with 55.5 points.

Kivetz, a senior, was the only Blue Devil to make it to the finals. With a 20-6 record, he received the second seed in the 173-lb. class and began

his march to the finals with an 18-2 technical fall over a highly spirited — but on the brink of poor sportsmanship — Isiah Crowley of Shabazz. Kivetz made good use of his barrel roll takedown, but punished Crowley with a series of single grapevine, power-half nelson pinning combinations. The technical fall came in the third period when he severed relationships with Crowley using a guillotine nearfall.

"The kid had a lot of heart. He wanted to win real badly. I give him respect for that but he went a little too far," said Kivetz. "I hit him with a barrel roll early. Then I put two legs in

and started ranking on the power half and then I worked the guillotine."

In the semifinals, Kivetz won a rock-and-tumble, 15-11, decision over Bill Bennett of Cranford. Facing Colonia's Ed Zappulla in the finals, Kivetz initiated a barrel roll but got caught out of position and was quickly pinned in 39 seconds before he could recover.

Caprario suffered a mid-season injury but has been a terror since returning to the lineup two weeks ago. Seeded fourth at 142, he defeated Sean Daly of Colonia in the quarterfinals, scoring with three

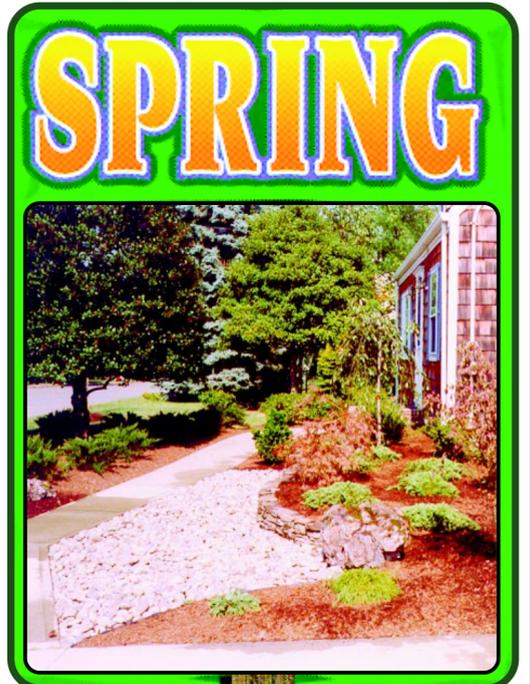
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