

WF Arley Rojas Rolls 300 At Woodbridge Invitational

Westfield High School senior Arley Rojas bowled a perfect 300 game in the Woodbridge Invitational on January 26, to help his team place third in the tournament with a total of 3,062. Jefferson took the team title with a 3,079 and Woodbridge was second at 3,064.

"It was interesting that Arley was slumping of late and I decided to replace him in the starting lineup," said Blue Devils Head Coach Mike Tirone.

Rojas entered the first game in the seventh frame as a substitute and proceeded to throw five straight strikes and finishing with an eight-count. In Game 2, Rojas rolled 12 more strikes in a row for the 300 game. Rojas was given credit for a 196 in Game 1 and finished with a 687 series.

Jesse Embry had games of 210, 254 and 224 for a 688 series. Co-captain Eric Curialle had games of 227, 231 and 174 for a 632 series.

In the team competition, Westfield was matched against North Brunswick.

"They have been rated in the top ten by *The Star-Ledger* all year. We knew it was going to be difficult to beat them," said Curialle.

In Game 2, the Blue Devils shot a tournament-high totaling 1,167.

"That game is the new school record," said Coach Tirone.

Embry opened with 254 and Curialle followed with 231, Matt Marcus shot 214, Rojas had the 300 and Brett Ettinger shot 168. That game propelled Westfield into the team lead with 2,135, when added to their first game total of 968. The Blue Devils defeated North Brunswick, 3,062-

2,794. The 3,062 earned first place in the first flight, but in the afternoon Jefferson shot a 3,074 to win the tournament and Woodbridge shot a 3,064 to place second.

On January 22, the Blue Devils defended its first-place position in the Watchung Conference by defeating second-place Elizabeth, 7-0, - match score of 3,096-2,757 - to improve to 15-0 and jump its conference point total to 73-4. Elizabeth scored two points in each of the two previous meetings. The Blue Devils 3,096 is the highest conference total this season.

The Blue Devils won Game 1, 984-932. Ettinger led the team with a 242 game. Embry shot 234. In Game 2, Westfield won, 1071-913, as Embry rolled a 245, Curialle and Marcus rolled 227 and 214, respectively. Game 3 featured Marcus with 228, Ettinger with 219 and Embry with 214, as the Blue Devils won 1041-912.

The JV team also defended its first place position by defeating second-place Linden 7-0, with a match score of 2,683-2,453. Kevin Murphy led with a 556 series. Josh Ettinger (239 game, 532 series) and Trevor Yee, (224 game, 551 series) assisted. The JV point record is 73-4 in conference play.

See photos of Sports: on www.goleader.com
UCT Wrestling Tournament
West/Linden Girls Hoops
SPF/Shabazz Girls Hoops
Westfield/Union Wrestling
UCT Girl Track



WHS Swimmers Look For More County Gold

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

State individual/relay champions: 112; runnerup Trenton has 87. County championships: 53; runnerup Pingry has two.

County individual/relay champions: 323; more than the combined total of the rest of the county.

And that's just the boys team.

Since the girls program started in the late 1970s under legendary coach Marilyn Diamond, WHS has won 25 county titles (out of 30), had 95 county individual/relay champions and also won 10 state team championships (trailing only Cherry Hill East's 11).

People in Cherry Hill can ponder how great they would be if they were just one school. But Cherry Hill Township has over 70,000 residents spread over 24 square miles (WHS is 29,000 plus over 6.8 square miles), so that's not a realistic comparison. Even Bridgewater-Raritan is a combined 50,000+ residents over 35 square miles.

It would take somebody with more knowledge than The Den to explain Westfield's ability to produce more outstanding swimmers, year in and year out, than anywhere else. And this weekend's Union County championships at Elizabeth High School figure to be a showcase for WHS. The boys meet is tomorrow, starting at 5 p.m., while the girls meet is Saturday, beginning at 10 a.m.

The boys have won 53 of the 56 county championships that have been held. WHS won 42 consecutive titles from 1957-98 (there were co-titles with Pingry in 1962 and Summit in 1986) before the streak was ended in 1999 by SP-F. WHS has won the last eight and figures to make it nine in a row tomorrow.

Senior Matt Green (50 free), junior Chris DeLaFuenta (100 butterfly) and sophomore Matt Meserole (100 backstroke) are all returning county champions for WHS. Freshman Larry Zhang is a threat to win the 100 breaststroke. And that foursome will each be swimming a second event: Green the 100 free, DeLaFuenta the 200 free, and Meserole and Zhang both in the 200 IM. But WHS always wins this meet with depth — the state champion 2000 team and the 2005 team each won just one event at counties — and that's where guys like seniors Matt Blutfield (fly, breast), Matt Gelmetti (breast), Jon Holt (50 free), Luke Granstrand (100 free) and Matt Haddad, juniors Evan Paulan (fly, back), Matt Morgan (IM, 500) and Max Blum (200, 500), sophomores Mike Oster (200, 100), John Taylor (fly, back) and Andrew Cordiero (500), and freshmen Nick Boyle (50 free) and Jack Lorentzen (50 free) will help pile up points Saturday. Summit is the likely runnerup, with SP-F, Union Catholic and Oratory battling for third.

After graduating arguably the strongest class in school history, the WHS girls figured to have yet another tight battle at counties with SP-F. But after last month's resounding dual-meet victories over SP-F, and then top-ranked Mount St. Mary, it looks like it would take a miracle to keep WHS from its

16th straight title.

Senior Alexi Kuska (200, 500 freestyle) and junior Suzanne Lemberg (50, 100 freestyle) are returning county champions and own the school records in their specialties. They are a 1-2 combination that is very reminiscent of the boys' Chris McFadden (200, 500) and Aaron Weber (50, 100) two decades ago.

The highlight of the girls county meet could come early, in the opening medley relay, where WHS's school record (1:52.02) has stood since 1982. Look for coach Brooke Smith to use Liz Hawkins (back) and Kate Heffernan (breast) with Lemberg (fly) and Kuska (free) and take a run at it. Last year's foursome of Hawkins, Katie Morgan, Brittany Reyes and Lemberg went 1:52.55, and earlier this year Hawkins, Heffernan, Lemberg and Kuska went 1:53.21.

As on the boys side, there are many good individual swimmers in the county but WHS's depth is staggering. In addition to the above four girls, helping at counties will be juniors Catherine Maguire (IM, breast), Stephanie Albright (500 free) and Lauren Sullivan (50 free), sophomores Meredith Smith (200 free, back), Elaine Anderson (fly, breast), Emily Budnick (50, 100 free), Kyle Higgins (500) and Kelsey Wilson (100 free), and freshmen Becky DeLaFuenta (200 free, fly), Ally Rose (IM), Olivia Scrofani (IM), Kylie Bangs (back) and Meg Kaveney (50 free).

The SP-F girls should earn the runnerup spot, with Kent Place and New Providence, coached by former WHS swimmer Chris Driscoll, close behind.

TO T OR NOT TO T

Let me make sure I have this right. It's OK to walk the halls of WHS wearing pajama bottoms or with the inappropriate dress that many of today's teens wear on a regular basis. But the girls swim team is told they can't wear T-shirts that say this:

(Front): It's not easy being the team that all the other teams want to beat.
 (Back): Especially with all the distractions on deck.

Under that is a picture of the four boys swim team captains in assorted muscle poses. They are wearing ... are you sitting down? ... Speedos! Swimmers in Speedos, gasp!

What am I missing here? Maybe the girls swim team being "punished" because of the Hi's Eye's "We put out weekly" t-shirts. Those were far more suggestive but, really, still no big deal for high school kids in the 21st century. Pajamas, microskirts and low-hanging spaghetti tops are OK, but an innocent T-shirt is a no-no? Did I miss an issue of *The Leader* with the story on Westfield becoming part of the Bible belt?

DEN JEOPARDY ANSWER

Marilyn Lange.

ANOTHER PERFECT GAME

Whether it's baseball or bowling, perfect games are not an easy thing to accomplish. WHS senior Arley Rojas, using a one-day-old ball, accomplished the feat with a 300 game Saturday at the

Devil of the Week Alexi Kuska Swimming

Woodbridge Classic. It was the first perfect game by a WHS bowler since Scott Bridgeman's perfect in the 1997 sectional meet. And, of course, it's the second perfect game by a member of WHS's Class of 2008, baseball's Evan Shapiro having turned the trick last spring in the county tournament against Summit.

RELATIVELY SPEAKING

Former WHS swimmers Kyle ('00) and Keith McCloskey ('03) are the nephews of Dave Pryor, the starting center on WHS's unbeaten 1977 football team. ... Current WHS swim captain Matt Blutfield is the grandnephew of Tony Triano ('35), a fullback on the 1933 WHS football team and also the former owner of the late, great Glenview Manor (later Seymour's and now Charlie Brown's).

IN THE (E)MAIL BOX

In response to faithful reader Jeanne Fitzpatrick at the House on the Hill, Mount St. Mary in Watchung: First, thank you for a beautifully written letter expressing your opinion. I checked it closely for spelling and grammar and it was perfect.

For the record, I have many longtime friends who were educated the same as you: catholic school all the way. That's fine and never a problem. I was writing to Westfield athletes whose parents may be thinking a catholic/private education is some kind of fast track to a college scholarship. I was talking about kids who go to public school until they reach high school age and then their parents think that going to the Mount, Pingry, St. Joseph, Seton Hall, Delbarton, St. Peter's or any of the rest will get them into a better college than if they had stayed at WHS. That's not saying any of those schools are bad; just saying that the WHS experience will get any student or student/athlete into any college just as well-prepared, and far cheaper.

Thanks for reading and sorry (not really) that your team lost to WHS last week.

DEN JEOPARDY QUESTION

Who is the former Westfield High School student, Class of 1970, who was *Playboy* magazine's 1975 *Playmate of the Year*? (She was a draft pick of the Chicago Sting pro soccer team and had a tryout in 1976, so she qualifies for The Den. She was also briefly married to Jeff Pelosi, a member of The Critters rock band.)

DEVIL OF THE WEEK

This week's free sub from Al the Owner at Westfield Subs (261 South Avenue East) goes to swimmer Alexi Kuska. No stranger to free subs from Al, the University of Richmond-bound senior rebroke her school record in the 200 freestyle and finally erased Mei-Mei Caroe's 19-year-old 500 freestyle record, then swam on a record-breaking relay in a win over SP-F. A week later she swam on two more record-breaking relays as WHS upset top-ranked Mount St. Mary.

The Devil's Den appears Thursday in *The Westfield Leader* during the school year. Contact us with comments, complaints and suggestions at bj1019@aol.com. WHS FOREVER!

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years with her husband and three children, and they are an active part of the community. Kristine began her professional life after graduating from Lehigh University in 1987 and has been a Realtor for the past five years, earning her Accredited Buyer Representative (ABR) designation in 2004. As a Union County Specialist, she is always happy to help you with all of your buying and selling needs. Please feel free to contact her at (908)803-4572 to discuss all of your Real Estate needs!



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