



David B. Corbin (1999 files) for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*
A RAIDER STAR...Former Raider running back Nate Jones, No. 22, broke several school rushing records. He recently had his number retired. See photo on *The Times* front page.

Nate Jones' Uniform Retired At SPF Meet Coaches Night

Nathan Jones, a former football and track star and 2000 graduate of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School (SPFHS), was honored by having his football uniform retired at the Second Annual Meet the Coaches Night at SPFHS on June 13.

In addition to the special honor, the annual Meet the Coaches Night was established to inform parents and stu-

dent athletes about the Athletic Department, athletic protocols, paperwork, and to meet their prospective coaches.

Jones, a running back/safety who wore No. 22, in his senior season, rushed for 2,439 yards and 35 touchdowns and added another 227 yards receiving and another touchdown. From his safety position, he led the Raiders with 59 solo tackles and five interceptions.

On October 2, 1999, Jones broke the SPF rushing record with 318 yards against Westfield. Two weeks later, he rushed for 307 yards and four touchdowns and added a 75-yard touchdown reception in a 35-0 swamping of Linden.

On November 13, Jones broke his own record, rushing for 345 yards and six touchdowns in the classic, 42-41, sectional playoff victory over Parsippany Hills. Jones rushed 269 yards in the first half and also had two receptions for 58 yards.

Jones was also a two-time *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times* Scholar Athlete of the Month. He was also named Union County Offensive Player of the Year by *The Star-Ledger*.

Jones' high school stats are listed in *The Westfield Leader* 1999 archives - www.goleader.com.

Jones earned a scholarship to Rutgers for Football and Track wherein he earned four letters in football and one in track. In 2003, he was named to the National Scholar Athlete Class and was named an Academic All-American. Jones earned his degree in Finance in 2004.

Devil's Den

O'Rourke, Haley Share Devil of the Year Award



Devils of the Year
James O'Rourke
Brennan Haley

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

This is the time of the season that I've come to both love and hate. It's never easy, saying goodbye to each year's class of seniors. It was especially difficult during the years I coached the WHS swim team, when I was up in Westfield almost every day and was quite on top of things. But that's been over for two complete graduating classes now. It's also tough because it's time to pick our sixth Devil of the Year award.

This award goes annually to the senior athlete - male or female - who goes above and beyond, who reaches back for that something extra, who represents the school, the town, their family and their coaches the right way.

As much as you might think it's an easy thing to do, trust me, it isn't. Once again, it's a special senior class that moves on, loaded with many talented athletes, and special people.

So, what exactly is it that sets our winner(s) apart this year? We actually asked the winner(s) to answer some questions about their time at WHS and what it meant to them, and about their biggest moments in their sports. We also had two questions as tiebreakers, and wouldn't you know they each got one right.

How do you split a tie between athletes like James O'Rourke and Brennan Haley? Their sports couldn't be more opposite: O'Rourke, football and baseball; Haley, swimming and golf.

O'Rourke set school football records for carries in a season (259) and interceptions for a career (13), while tying the single-season pick record (9). In addition to hitting .412 and .446 during his two years varsity, he played some of the best center field ever at WHS, including a catch in the 2011 state Group 4 final that ranks as maybe the best I've ever seen.

Haley was the spark who carried WHS to its state-best 23rd state title, including Top 15 List times in the 100 fly (ninth 53.49), 500 free (fourth 4:47.55), 100 back (fourth 53.39), medley relay (fifth

Nate Jones continued

In 2004, Jones was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys. He played in Dallas, Denver, Miami, and last year for New England. He also continued to work for a variety of charitable organizations, while playing to include visiting Dallas High Schools for the Play it Smart Program. He is currently an executive producer for television shows and continues to be an inspirational leader.

and 10th), and 400 free relay (10th). And WHS might not have been county and/or state champs if not for his career-best 48.91 and 48.7 third-leg splits on the meet-clinching 400 freestyle relays.

Here then are your 2012 Devils of the Year with their responses to some questions.

JAMES O'ROURKE
 Devil's Den: Describe your four years at WHS. Was it all you'd been led to believe it would be?

James O'Rourke: I couldn't have asked for a better four years at WHS. Being a part of the football and baseball teams these past years has by far exceeded my expectations of what I had hoped it would be. I couldn't ask for better coaches or teammates and it's something I am definitely going to miss.

DD: What was it like as a cornerback, being 6-9 inches shorter than most of the guys you were covering?

JOR: I knew coming into every game that I would be covering receivers who tower over me but it was something I just couldn't think about. I knew there were some players that I wasn't going to out-jump to make a play on the ball so I had to adjust my game plan. It also helped going up against Mike Stravach in practice every day. He is 6-foot-3 himself so it definitely got me used to covering tall receivers.

DD: If you could have back one sports moment at WHS, what would it be?

JOR: No question it would be our (football) playoff game against Bayonne. Coming off such a great win against No. 9 Immaculata the week before, it was devastating for the season to end the way it did. A win in that game would have given us another chance against Elizabeth in the semifinals on our home turf, which is something I really wanted.

DD: Where are you going to college, and which sport will you be playing?

JOR: I will be playing football for Gettysburg next year along with my teammate Mike Stravach.

DD: Who is the one person from history you would like to meet, maybe share a (moment) with?

JOR: Chris Farley. I loved his comedy and all the movies he was in.

DD: Where are you in 10 years, and what are you doing?

JOR: It may seem unrealistic to other people but I can't see myself doing anything else but playing football for a living. I see a player like Danny Woodhead come into the NFL and I think to myself, "Why can't that be me?" No one gave him a chance because of his size and I know it's going to be the same struggle

with me. But he is a great example of how hard work can pay off and I know if I keep working at it I can be some team's Danny Woodhead one day.

BRENNAN HALEY
 Devil's Den: Describe your four years at WHS. Was it all you'd been led to believe it would be?

Brennan Haley: Going into high school, I wasn't sure what to expect. Sure, you hear stories about people, but you never really know until you get a taste freshman year. My four years in high school were amazing. I honestly wouldn't change anything. It was better than I thought it would be.

DD: What was it like at counties and state finals? Where you nervous? Focused? Nervous and focused?

BH: To start off, swimming as a whole was more than I could have hoped for. The camaraderie was unlike any sport I have played in my life. I'm closer with the people on my team than most people are with their family members.

Counties and state finals will be two of the most memorable moments of high school for me. The atmosphere is unlike anything else that I have experienced athletically. You are competing not only for yourself but your team and your school. I was nervous and focused, but more focused than anything. I just kind of got in the zone and all the nervousness went away.

Until the 4(00) free relay in each meet, that is. I'm pretty good at not letting my nerves get to me, but I couldn't help but get nervous behind the blocks those meets. The experience was unreal. After those meets I was in a state of euphoria that I've never experienced before.

DD: When did you find out you had mononucleosis? When did it start kicking in?

BH: I found out like a week and a half before (Y) Nationals. I actually took the blood test after state finals, because I didn't want to know the answer. By the time I found out, I was no longer contagious. It turns out I had been swimming with it all through the state tournament and into March. I have no clue how I was able to do that. I was napping every day after swimming, which probably helped.

I started to feel it right before sectional semifinals. Great time to get it, right? The doctor told me I was good to swim as long as I didn't go off the blocks, because my spleen was enlarged.

DD: Who is the one person from history you would like to meet, maybe share a (moment) with?

BH: I'll take a soda, actually... and the person I'd like to meet would have to

be Jackie Robinson.
 DD: Where are you in 10 years, and what are you doing?

BH: Hopefully I'll be working on Wall Street with a wife and maybe a kid. As for location, I have no clue. Haven't thought about whether I'll be in Westfield or not.

In the tiebreaker questions, O'Rourke got a quick lead when he picked White Diamond over White Castle ("definitely one of my favorite spots," while Haley had never been there). But things were even after Haley went for Dr Pepper (as a backup for Coke, over Pepsi). The third tiebreaker - favorite restaurant - was a wash because I had never been to either Theresa's (Haley) or Cranford's Il Gabbiano (O'Rourke).

And to be honest, I didn't want to break this tie.

BREWS FOR BREW
 It was the greatest gathering of baseball talent from the town of Westfield in history. On Saturday, June 9, some 28 of the best players of the '80s, '90s and '00s got together at Molly Maguire's Pub in Clark to honor WHS coach Bob Brewster. In addition to his winning career game No. 500 win this spring, he also won the ninth Union County Tournament championship.

"A great time was had by all," Brewster said. "Jay did a great job putting it all together."

Taking time to be there for Brewster were, chronologically: Chuck Mueller and Mike Varano '87, Clint Factor and Kevin Zippler '88, Ryan Mann '95, Brian Ciemniecki '96, Marcus Mattielli, Bill Hedden and Quinton Redding '97, Greg Freisen '98, Nick Geissler '01, John Leonardis, Blair Richardson, Brett Picaro, Ben Koket, Josh Ludmer, Jay Cook and Jim McKeon '02, Brian Butts and Mike Dubitsky '03, John Boyd and Steven Meyer '04, Bill Hearon '05, Mike Murray and Mike Diaz '06, Tom Bonard '07, Justin Olsen '08, and AJ Murray '11.

"I probably forgot somebody, but I hope not," Brewster said. "I'll tell you what, you could probably put together a pretty good team with those guys."

Sorry I had to miss the event. How perfect: three or four hours at Molly's, then go next door to the White Diamond for two large cheeseburgers, with pickles and onions.

The Devil's Den appears in *The Westfield Leader* on the first and third Thursday every month during the school year. Contact us with comments, complaints and suggestions at bj1019@aol.com. And remember, win or not, Whs4evr!

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Niki Fry

OPEN HOUSE: SUN., 6/24 1-5PM



MOUNTAINSIDE. This Dramatic Contemporary has hardwood floors flowing throughout the main rooms and set off a dramatic double hearth fireplace. A fully updated Eat In Kitchen features new SS appliances, granite countertops and custom glazed cabinetry. Five generous sized bedrooms and three full bathrooms, including a master suite with walk-in closet. There is an in-law suite with kitchen and full bath with direct no stairs entry from the built-in 3 car garage. Directions: SUMMIT RD TO SUNNY SLOPE TO BELAIR #1049. \$799,000.

Associate of the Month



Niki Fry

Top Dollar Volume for the Month of June



Niki Fry

BUILDER CHET MOSCO OF MAJESTIC HOMES



MOUNTAINSIDE. Meticulous craftsmanship is captured by Builder Chet Mosco of Majestic Homes. Recently expanded & completely renovated, you have every modern convenience in this 5 Bedroom, 4 1/2 Bath home. The beauty of natural materials is everywhere, from hardwood floors to stone front detailing to cherry wood cabinets throughout the kitchen. Located in The Gardens close to NYC transportation & downtown Westfield, spaciousness is the hallmark of this Mountain Side retreat. \$1,250,000.



Vivian Cortese-Strano

CUSTOM HOME



SCOTCH PLAINS. Dramatic 2-story entrance foyer and versatile floor plan. This home boasts an impeccable gourmet kit w/center island that seats ten, cherry hard-wood flooring, 17 skylights, vaulted ceilings, 4 fireplaces, and a luxurious master suite w/balcony. A hidden backyard oasis includes an In Ground Pool surrounded by a stone water fall w/built-in slide; gorgeous custom-crafted stone barbeque, and stone patio. This yard also has a full batting cage for your baseball enthusiasts. \$1,800,000.



Susan Devaney

OPEN HOUSE: SUN., 6/24 1-5PM



WESTFIELD. Lovely Expanded Cape in the highly rated Wilson school district boasts an exquisite backyard with 9 lovely rooms. 4 Bedroom, 2 1/2 Bath, Set on .41 acres, this jewel has loads of living space and natural sunlight. High ceilings, spacious closets, hardwood floors, built-ins, fireplace, skylights, sauna, steam shower, 1st fl laundry & brand name appl. The list goes on! This immaculate home with its' stunning backyard is sure to please. Directions: East Broad St to Jefferson Avenue #116. \$889,900.



Kerry McDevitt

CENTER HALL COLONIAL



WESTFIELD. This classic CHC was built in 2007 with every amenity designed for "maintenance free" living. The 1st floor opens with a beautiful blue stone wrap around front porch. Gleaming HWF shine thruout the LR, FDR & Gourmet EIK. Large FR with fireplace & exquisite 3 season room complete this level. The 2nd floor features 4 large Bedrooms, tasteful Master Suite and laundry rm. A walk-up attic can be easily fin for addl BR/Bth. Fin bsmt, 2 car gar and prime loc help to make this complete. \$1,275,000.

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