



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
STIRRING UP A CLOUD OF DUST...Blue Devil Cali Chambliss plows into second safely as Cougar second baseman Jen Shore checks the other base runners in the fifth inning in Westfield on April 2.

SCARANO HR; FERRARA 2 HITS, 2 RUNS; VERRILLI 3 RBI

Blue Devil Softballers ‘Chill’ Cougars, 4-3, with Hr in 9th

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

Nine innings on the mound was not quite enough for junior pitcher Elena Scarano to pick up the win, so she decided to blast a solo home run in the bottom of the ninth inning to give the Westfield High School softball Blue Devils a 4-3 victory over the Cranford Cougars in their home opener on April 2.

Despite the low score, the game had three lead changes and a tie before Scarano topped it off with her leadoff homer over the leftfielder's head. On the mound, Scarano yielded seven hits and two walks, while striking out two. Cougar ace Julie Siragusa recorded eight strikeouts and walked none, while allowing nine hits.

"Elena pitched very well and really picked up her teammates after we made a few errors. Elena's last plate appearance is the kind of thing that you hope happens for every athlete you coach – You hope they play with confidence and that eventually it trans-

lates into success – that's what happened with Elena yesterday. She really got a hold of that one and was able to bring it home for us," Blue Devil Head Coach Caitlin MacDonald said.

Julia Criscuolo led the Blue Devils with three singles and an RBI in her four plate appearances, and Chrissy Ferraro went 2-for-3 with a double and two runs scored. Leadoff batter Sarah Seitz went 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run scored. Cali Chambliss had an RBI single.

Shortstop Allison Verrilli, who went 3-for-4, drove in all the 0-1 Cougars' runs. Catcher Victoria Mettlin ripped a pair of singles in four at-bats. Siragusa and Julia Salinaro each had a single, and Maggie McKay, Julie Schott and Kerry Wischusen each scored once.

The Blue Devils posed a bit of a scoring threat in the bottom of the first inning when Seitz drilled a lead-

off single and Criscuolo chopped a one-out single past short, but Siragusa fanned the next two batters.

Small ball ruled the Blue Devils' third inning. Ferraro led off with a bunt single, advanced to second on Seitz's sacrifice bunt, sped to third on Chambliss' groundout to second and scored on Criscuolo's single to right field.

The Cougars answered with emphasis in the top of the fifth to grab a 2-1 lead. After Mettlin reached first safely to start the inning, McKay drew a walk, Schott hit into a force out then Siragusa singled to load the bases. Verrilli stepped up and lined a two-run single to center.

The Blue Devils' response was quick in the bottom of the inning. With Ferraro at the plate, the Cougars were expecting another bunt. Instead, she fooled them all and bopped a double over the third baseman's head.

"Definitely! I knew I needed to get on base anyway I could. They all

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ROGERS TOPS THOMPSON IN FIRST SINGLES BATTLE

Blue Devils Top Raiders, 4-1 In Boys Tennis Showdown

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Several days before the dual meet between the hosting Westfield High School Blue Devils boys tennis team and a highly improved Scotch Plains-Fanwood squad there has been quite a buzz as to which team may be the top dog in Union County.

"Everybody came out to play. Everybody returned from last year. Last year was basically a setup for this year. With all these guys back and playing the way they are, led by Jeffrey Rogers, I really think that we can have a Union County championship," Raider Head Coach Gary Wasserman said a few days prior to the April 5 showdown with the Blue Devils.

"Friday, we will know exactly where we are at. We had two tough matches. We played McNair on Monday. We played Pingry yesterday (April 2), which is a real big win for us. That's the first time we actually beat a private school, and we beat them 4-1 handily," Coach Wasserman said just before the Raiders' match with New Providence on April 3.

The Raiders did defeat the Pioneers, 4-1, but even after the match with Westfield, their county tour would resume.

"We have Summit next week. This year will be the first year that a lot of [Union County] matches will be played before the tournament," Coach Wasserman said.

In the match with the Blue Devils, all eyes would be on two of the top first singles players in the county, Blue Devil Scott Thompson and Raider sophomore Jeffrey Rogers.

"You have four tough guys. You have Jorge Del Rey from Elizabeth. You have Scotty Thompson. You have Max McDonald from Summit. So it's going to be very important the way the seedings go," Coach Wasserman said.

A large crowd of fans surrounded the tennis courts at Tamaques Park and Coach Wasserman did get to find out exactly where his team stood as the Blue Devils won, 4-1, but not without highly contested matches.

Blue Devil freshman Tyler Roth was the first singles player off the court when he registered a 6-0, 6-2 win over Andrew Leischner at third singles. Rogers topped Thompson, 6-3, 6-2, and Blue Devil Adam Greene

defeated Mike Rosenheck, 6-4, 6-3.

"Nice crowd today! This is a Westfield/Scotch Plains rivalry, and I know they will be even tougher the next time we see them and in the counties. Scott played a tough match, but Mr. Rogers is an exceptionally good player. Adam took a little while to get going then he played very well. Tyler Roth just had a great match. He's a very good player and he's been playing a lot of different kinds of players. Mr. Leischner is an exceptionally good athlete and plays a different kind of match. Tyler handled it very well," Blue Devil Head Coach

George Kapner said.

Blue Devils Justin Cafiero and Ben Cymbala walked off the court with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over Alex and Jesse Ozdamar. The very last match to be completed ended in a 6-4, 7-6 (8-6) victory for Blue Devils Matt Osment and Jack Siegel over Josh Lopez and Matt Haas.

"First doubles played exceptional. They were right on top of it. Second doubles is a work in progress, but they won," Coach Kapner said.

The victory for the Blue Devils was especially rewarding since they

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BATTLE AT FIRST SINGLES...Raider Jeffrey Rogers, top, and Blue Devil Scott Thompson, bottom, had a tough battle at first singles. Rogers prevailed, 6-3, 6-2, at Tamaques Park on April 5.



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