

Cranford Cougars Stun Raider Gridders, 34-14

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16-yard reception, added respective TD runs of four yards and 36 yards in the first half and finished with a total of 127 yards on six carries. Running back Donavin Walker (No. 36) carried 17 times for 62 yards. Ed Norton had two receptions for 20 yards and Jack McCaffrey had one for 17 yards. The Raiders stuck exclusively to the ground in the first half, with the exception of one short pass that ended up in a fumble, and ground out 135 yards on 17 carries. The wheel spinning in the second half yielded only 29 rushing yards and Thomas managed to complete seven passes for 69 yards. Of those completions, tight end Ryan Jensen had three receptions for 20 yards and wide receiver Jordan Jones had two receptions for 22 yards. Thomas carried 22 times for 87 yards, including a 25-yard TD run. White carried nine times for 72 yards, including a 40-yard TD run on the first offensive play of the game after a fine kickoff return from Jones, to give the Raiders a 7-0 lead with just 24 seconds off the clock. The Cougars responded with an eight-play (3 successful pass plays), 72-yard scoring drive ending with Oblachinski's 15-yard TD strike to Christiano to knot the score.

"Our coach said it's not how hard you get hit, it's whether you get back up," Christiano said. "Our coaches had a great game plan. We took it down, got a good drive. John quarterbacking made a great throw." "Coach in his pre-game speech was about getting hit in the face and coming back from that. We got punched, but the team responded. We drove down the field the first time we had the ball. That's the mindset we have going into the game. Every time we have the ball, we want to score. Our defense played great, gave our offense a little bit of a break," Oblachinski said. "First play, I was like Oh man! We messed up a little bit, but I told the defense just to keep going. Next play, we will get it going. That's exactly what we did. Our offense got the touchdowns and that gave us a little momentum," Cougar co-captain/defensive lineman Rob Delsandro said. The Cougars followed up with an eight-play, 62-yard scoring drive, concluded with Christiano bolting four yards for the TD with 2:30 left in the first quarter. The point after failed. A quarterback gang sack of minus nine yards forced the Raiders to punt where Cranford got the ball at its own 38. Four plays later, Christiano burst

through the middle then slanted right for a 36-yard TD with 4:39 left in the half, making the score, 20-7. "It was great blocking on the perimeters. My receivers do a great job blocking. I saw the holes and I was able to get in," Christiano said. The Raiders got right back into the game with a seven-play, 68-yard scoring drive when Thomas scooted 25 yards for the TD just before the half. Both teams were sputtering offensively throughout the third quarter and into the fourth. The Cougars got the ball on their own 36, ran six plays and had a fourth down and eight on the Raider 30. DeLayo performed his magic and the momentum went in the Cougars' favor from there. "Fourth and long. We were taking a shot. We needed a big play and he made it. After that, we went down and scored and put the game away," Oblachinski said. "We just had to keep grinding to the end, never give up and keep working at it," Christiano said. "They are a good team. Their quarterback and number 8 [Kobe White] are fast kids. We came out, we hit hard. That's what we do," Delsandro said.

Cranford	13	7	0	14	34
Sc. Pl.-Fanwood	7	7	0	0	14



REALLY TO PONCE ON THE BALL...Blue Devil goalkeeper Kiera Loftus, No. 1, prepares to smother the ball and teammate Lauren Rigney, No. 21, keeps a Highlander from getting to it. The Blue Devils defeated the Highlanders, 4-0, on Senior Day, October 15. See more photos at www.goleader.com/Ballyhoo_Sports.

FRIEDMAN 2 GOALS; HELFAND, LUZZI 1 GOAL EACH

Blue Devils Rap Highlanders On Soccer 'Senior Day', 4-0

By DAVID B. CORBIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times
"Senior Day" definitely had "Senior" connections when seniors scored the first three goals and another senior assisted on the fourth in the Westfield High School girls soccer team's 4-0 shutout of Governor Livingston at Gary Kehler Stadium in Westfield on October 15.

However all four goals were not without freshmen connections and a sophomore's valuable input. Senior Carly Friedman set up freshman forward Taylor Morgan, who rifled a shot that banged the crossbar and dropped straight down just out of the reach of the Highlander goalie. Senior Jenna Helfand rushed to the ball and tapped it in for the score with 6:00 on the clock in the first half. "It was really great, because before the game we were talking about playing for us the seniors. Taylor assisted me and then [freshman] Hannah [Liddy] assisted Carly. So it was great

having the freshmen helping us. One minute into the second half, Liddy brought the ball down the left center and crossed to Friedman, who drilled a shot into the net from 15 yards out. "We always practice what we call the 'Bangoo Play' where one dribbles in close and the other makes an angled run. So when she headed down the sideline, I just tried to get that supporting angle. She got it to me and I followed through with it," Friedman said. Liddy also played a major role in the third goal that showed up on the scoreboard less than six minutes later. Liddy lined a shot off the near post, Friedman quickly charged in and ripped in the goal from just five yards out. "Following up is a huge point like my coach always emphasizes. When I saw the ball coming out, I knew I had to do whatever I could to get my foot on it," Friedman explained.

Late in the game, senior co-captain Mary Randazzo looped a corner kick into the box and sophomore Olivia Luzzi was there to make a slick back kick into the net for the final goal. "It's been a rough year for the seniors. Three of the seniors have ACL tears. They haven't played all year. Mary Randazzo has been out for the last month and a half. She comes back today. She gets an assist. It's nice on Senior Day of all days to have these girls goals, assists and play a part in this game," Blue Devil Head Coach Alex Schmidt said. Luzzi has had a knack of positioning herself at the right place at the right time. "All 'Liv' does, I think she has four goals this year. They all came off corner kicks. Maybe it's the basketball in her, find the open space," Coach Schmidt said. The 4-0 score seems to have come too easily against a Highlander team

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TRYING TO GET PAST A COUGAR...Raider Kobe White, No. 8, tries to scoot past Cougar Nick Ballas, No. 65. White scored the first touchdown of the game with a 40-yard sprint. See more photos at www.goleader.com/Ballyhoo_Sports.



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