

THE WEEK IN SPORTS

COXSON GRABS 2 INDIVIDUAL, 2 RELAY FIRSTS

Devil Swimmers Capture 7th Straight County Girls Title

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

Lucky number seven arrived for the Westfield High School girls swimmers when they beat out rival Scotch Plains-Fanwood, 254-221, for the Union County Interscholastic Athletic Conference Crown in Elizabeth on February 6. Jessie Coxson won two individual and two relay titles for the Blue Devils.

Coxson breezed through the 200-yard freestyle, finishing in 1:57.65, to easily defeat Jackie Feintheil of Cranford who placed second at 2:02.09. Teammate Chrissy Schwebel took third at 2:04.77 and Raider Missy Canniff touched fourth at 2:05.39. "The 200 was more of an individual race. I needed to do a good time because I knew who I was up against," said Coxson. "I was looking to get the

county record but that didn't happen. But, it was still a good time for me." Coxson's win in the 500-yard freestyle was almost as easy as she touched at 5:13.62, nearly seven seconds faster than Feintheil who finished at 5:20.42. Canniff took third at 5:23.61, Schwebel grabbed fourth at 5:23.69 and Blue Devil Christine Romano touched fifth at 5:40.28.

"The 500, I was just going to go for the win because I wanted to save energy for the 400-free relay," said Coxson. "The 500 can get really tiring."

In the 400-yard freestyle relay, Coxson, Schwebel, Ashley Saul and Kitty Fromtling topped the field in 3:48.71. Raiders Anne Espinoza, Canniff, Dana Berkowitz and Julia Sheffield finished second with a time of 3:50.82.

Saul, Kathryn Bartholomew, Coxson and Fromtling combined to capture first in the 200-yard medley relay with a time of 1:57.82. Raiders Espinoza, Berkowitz, Canniff and Jen Bassman placed second at 1:58.22.

Having been such a close relay, Coxson commented, "I did the third leg. We were behind when I dove in and I caught up with her at the end. Kitty (Fromtling) dove in at the same time as the other girl, then Kitty did really well."

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DAVID B. CORBIN FOR THE WESTFIELD LEADER AND THE TIMES
UNION COUNTY CHAMPS (TIMES) 7...The Westfield High School girls have won the Union County Swimming title seven times in-a-row.

MELENDEZ MAJORS STUEBER, GRABEL WINS IN OT

Hot Indian Matmen Hold Off Raiders, 36-28, in the Teepee

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

Oh boy! A packed house of supercharged fans witnessed two superb wrestling teams give it all they had at the teepee in Rahway on February 5. Raider Head Coach Mike Artigliere and Assistant Coach Dave Bello sized the match ups in each weight class as did Indian Head Coach Fred Stueber and each knew that there was going to be a battle.

In order for one team to win out over the other, the eventual victor would have to maximize their wins and minimize the magnitude of each of their losses. The Indians were able to do just that and seized a 36-28 victory to claim supremacy in the Watchung Conference.

In a showdown between two fine teams, the possibility of two top-notched wrestlers facing off with each other is enhanced. It happened. Two state contenders, Raider Tony Melendez and Indian Shawn Stueber met in center circle at the 135-lb. class for the feature bout of the evening.

Stueber scored first with a Japanese whizzer, but Melendez escaped just before the end of the first period. Melendez got vicious in the second and picked up five back points by nearly beheading Stueber with a guil-

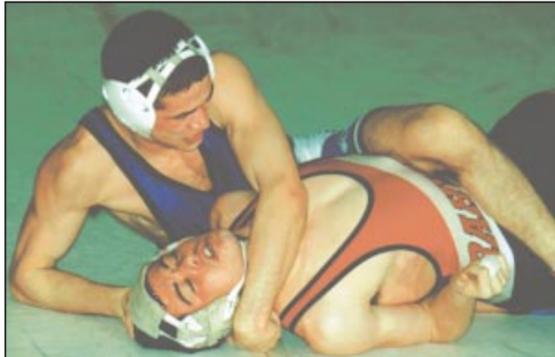
lotine then cranking him with a power half nelson. Stueber scored a reversal to make the score, 6-4, but Melendez escaped and added a double-leg takedown to increase his lead to 9-4 by the end of the second period.

The flurry of action continued with Melendez adding a reversal and a two-point nearfall early in the third period. Stueber escaped, but

Melendez added a takedown, then finally, Stueber escaped but Melendez won a, 15-6, majority decision.

"He got in with a Japanese whizzer, then head butted me as we went out of bounds," said Melendez. "I got him in the scissors and cranked him with a power half. I thought that I had him pinned. I let up on him when he was

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DAVID B. CORBIN FOR THE WESTFIELD LEADER AND THE TIMES
BATTLE OF THE BIG GUNS...Raider Tony Melendez, top, has Indian Shawn Stueber in dire straits as he stretches him out and picks up back points. Both boys are top-notched wrestlers.

TEZUCAR MAJORS, 16-3; KIVETZ, CASTALDO PIN

Unbeaten, 8-0, Indians Chill Blue Devil Wrestlers, 65-16

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

The Westfield High School wrestlers experienced more growing pains when the visiting undefeated Indians from Rahway inflicted a 65-16 defeat upon them on February 3. Veterans Onur Tezucar, Mike Kivetz and Matt Castaldo came through with the wins for the Blue Devils.

After Indian Gene Ronkiewicz received a forfeit at 103, teammate Blake Jackson at 112 pinned Mike Sawicki with a pick-and-twist maneuver in :56. Doug Corso scored an elevator takedown on Blue Devil Dan

Sawicki at 119, then showed him the lights in 1:34 using a headlock. Blue Devil Jim Villane had a tough customer in Louis Ott at 125. Ott used a number of pinning combinations on Villane until he recorded a 20-1 technical fall in 4:19.

Indian Dan Johnson jumped the team score to 29-0 by receiving a forfeit at 130. Situations did not improve when wrestling ace Shawn Stueber stepped onto the mat in the 135-lb. class and flattened Sean Joffe with a pick-and-twist in :30.

Indian Al Tareek Frazier won by forfeit at 140, then Blue Devil Tom

Hanscom lost his battle with Dave Costello at 145. Hanscom got the jump with a Peterson takedown to a two-point nearfall, then Costello got a reversal. With three seconds left in the first period, Hanscom escaped to take a 5-2 lead. Costello scored an escape then tossed Hanscom to the mat and pinned him in 3:35 using a headlock.

Tezucar had a worthy opponent in Tom Petrusko who placed second in the district tournament at 142, but it hardly seemed that way when Tezucar walked off the mat with a 16-3 majority decision to put the Blue Devils on

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DAVID B. CORBIN FOR THE WESTFIELD LEADER AND THE TIMES
RACKING UP THE POINTS...Blue Devil Onur Tezucar, top, works on Indian Tom Petrusko several times as he won by a 16-3 majority decision.



UNION COUNTY SWIMMING CHAMPIONS...Jeff Wagner holds up the trophy to show the rest of the team after the Raiders defeated the Blue Devil boys who have owned the title for 42 years. Raider Head Coach Jessica Hulnik, top center, received a victory dip from the boys.

RUSS, BERKOWITZ (4); WAGNER, ROWE (3) FIRSTS

Nation's Longest Reign Ends; Raider Boys Defeat Devils

By DAVID B. CORBIN
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History has been made. The Nation's longest winning streak of 42 consecutive titles has finally been broken. But it was a battle all the way. The Scotch Plains-Fanwood boys swimming team defeated the fine Westfield High School boys, 323.5-304, to grab first place in the Union County Swimming Tournament in Elizabeth on February 6.

All good things must come to an end and in this case, when it did, none of the Blue Devils should ever be ashamed because they did their best. Therefore, they too were winners. The Blue Devils elevated the bar and set a lofty goal for their Raider competitors to attain. The result was the improvement of both teams.

"It was absolutely incredible," said Raider Head Coach Jessica Hulnik. "It seems like we defied history."

Wrestling with her thoughts, Hulnik added, "I don't know how to describe this. I can't put it into words. When I got into the bus, I just did not know what to say to the team."

Raider senior Dave Russ captured first in the 50-yard freestyle and in the 100-yard freestyle with respective times of :22.47 and :49.66. He also swam the anchor leg on both the

winning 200-yard freestyle and on the 200-yard medley relay. Blue Devil Cliff Haldeman placed second behind Russ in both the 50 and 100-yard events with respective times of :23.52 and :51.92. Blue Devil Chris Smith took fifth in the 50-yard at :24.05 and teammate Scott Kautzman took fourth in the 100-yard at :53.14.

When asked about his technique in his sprint events, Russ explained, "The 50 and the 100 are events where you go as fast as you can go. In the 100, you get a good jump and try to hold the lead." Russ jokingly added, "I believe that I breathe a little more than I should in those two events."

Having been the defending champion in those events, Russ added, "I was pretty confident. I swam against those guys before and we know what we can do."

Russ who anchored both the 200-freestyle relay and the 200-medley relay said, "It was close going in and maybe we were a little behind. So, there was a little bit of pressure but I felt that I could pull it out."

Russ attempted to express his feelings of the team victory. "I don't know how to explain it. I had butterflies in my stomach. It was so great. It was such an incredible meet. They (Westfield) swam well. We swam well."

So many events were unbelievably close between the Blue Devils and the Raiders. Chris Karelus, Chris Smith, Charlie Rowe and Russ had a combined time of 1:33.11 to touch first ahead of Blue Devils Jay Pollack, Seth Burstein, Haldeman and Scott Kautzman who touched second at 1:33.42 in the 200-yard freestyle relay.

Electricity was in the air and it was also zapping in the arteries of the Raiders and Blue Devils. Only :07 made the difference in the 200-yard medley relay. Steve Berkowitz, Chris Swenson, Jeff Wagner and Russ teamed to total 1:43.17 and to win by a knuckle over the Blue Devil foursome of Mike Smith, Matt Vidovich, Burstein and Haldeman who touched at 1:43.24.

Speaking of knuckles, Burstein edged Wagner by a knuckle in the 100-yard butterfly. Burstein touched at :53.22, just .02 off the meet record, and Wagner touched at :53.38. Karelus placed fifth in the event at :56.84 and Blue Devil Kyle McCloskey finished sixth at 1:00.31.

High drama occurred when Burstein placed first in the 200-yard individual medley with a time of 2:01.46, then was disqualified for wearing an illegal swim cap.

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