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**VANWHY, WICHELNS 13 PTS EACH; McCAFFERY 9 PTS**

# Roselle Catholic Lions Down Lady Basketball Cougars 63-49

By ALEX LOWE  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

The Cranford High School girls basketball team dropped a 63-49 decision to Roselle Catholic (9-2) in a game played on January 18 at Martin Gymnasium in Cranford. Roselle Catholic center Taniya Hanner scored 26 points and dominated the game with interior post play and second chance baskets. The Cougars (5-5) suffered through an eight-minute scoring drought beginning in the middle

went into a deep hibernation after VanWhy connected on a baseline jump shot to make it 11-9 with 4:13 left in the opening quarter.

Cranford would not score again until Roselle Catholic had reeled off 23 unanswered points over the next eight and a half minutes to build a 32-11 lead. It was not until Caroline McCaffery stole a pass and converted a layup with 3:36 remaining in the half that Cranford finally put an end to the Lion onslaught.

don't have that kind of height. But Roselle Catholic is also just a very experienced, well coached team. They execute well in a lot of different areas of play. It wasn't just about the height advantage tonight."

Roselle Catholic took a 34-13 lead into the intermission. They increased the lead to 44-17 four minutes into the third quarter. To their credit, the Cranford players never stopped fighting. The Cougars slowly chipped away at the lead eventually pulling to within



GETTING ON GUARD...Cougars senior Lauren Santarelli, No. 20, prepares to guard against Roselle Catholic Lion Tyara McQueen, No. 3, who is looking for an opening in the Cranford defense.

of the first quarter and spanning well into the second quarter. During that stretch they were outscored 23-0 and saw a two-point lead turn into a 21-point deficit.

"We started the game strong," said Cranford Head Coach Jackie Dyer. "We were hitting our shots early but Roselle Catholic turned up the pressure and we didn't execute very well against it."

Indeed both teams came out firing with Cranford holding an 11-9 lead less than four minutes into the game. Charlotte VanWhy paced the Cranford attack early, scoring nine of the team's first 11 points, including a pair of 3-point bombs. But the Cougar offense

"We always seem to be a team where we have a lot of ups and downs," said junior forward Olivia Speer. "We have our runs during games and we allow runs against us. I think it is really more of a mental thing at this point. We have to bear down and not allow the other team to get into our heads when they start a rally. We allow small bursts to become huge rallies."

Roselle Catholic's Hanner took over the contest during this stretch scoring 11 points and dominating the backboards against the smaller Cranford frontcourt players.

"It is hard to match up against their frontline players," said Dyer. "We

16, at 59-43 with just under two minutes to play.

Cranford got a bit of a spark from Speer, who came into the game and scored seven points and collecting four rebounds, while matched up against the Lions' tall front line players.

"My sister (Isabella) was a big girl and she always drew the tall players to guard," said Speer. "Quickness and foot speed doesn't really run in our family, so I rely on technique and recognition when I get matched up against the other team's taller players."

Tyara McQueen added 14 points and teammate Victoria Jacobs scored 10 points for Roselle Catholic. VanWhy and Camryn Wichelns led Cranford with 13 points each. McCaffery added nine points for the Cougars.

### Comet Cagers Strike Cougar Boys, 52-44

The Hillside High School boys basketball team broke a tie game wide open with a 16-8, fourth-quarter run to defeat the Cranford Cougars, 52-44, in Cranford on January 16. Steve Samuels scored 13 points and Boris Nicolas-Paul scored 11 points for the Comets.

Brian Waldner led the 2-9 Cougars with 15 points and Jeremy Ruka put up 10 points. Anthony Araujo scored six points, Elijah Arroyo scored five points and Anders Myhre scored four points. Matt Fonseca and Matt Medeiros each scored two points.

|          |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Hillside | 11 | 10 | 15 | 16 | 52 |
| Cranford | 9  | 16 | 11 | 8  | 44 |



USATF ATHLETES OF THE YEAR...On January 20, Josiah Cadet (left) and Joshua Cadet, (right) were honored by USA Track & Field NJ (USATF-NJ) as Athletes of the Year. Joshua is the Men's 17-18 year old Sprint Athlete of the Year and Josiah is the Men's 17-18 year old Hurdles Athlete of the Year. Cranford Head Coach John Schiano is in the middle.



BLUE DEVIL SENIORS ON "SENIOR NIGHT"...Family members pose along with Westfield seniors Whitney Shyposh (33), Grace Elliott (12), Josie Greenwood (11), Molly Ryan (22) and Lauren Sgro (32) at "Senior Night".

**RYAN 16 PTS, 10 STEALS; STRAVACH 13 PTS; O'BRIEN 12 PTS**

# Lady Blue Devils Take Down SPF Basketball Raiders, 43-33

By ALEX LOWE  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Senior Molly Ryan scored 16 points and racked up 10 steals to lead the Westfield High School girls basketball team past Scotch Plains-Fanwood on "Senior Night", January 20, at Westfield. The Blue Devil defense set the tone from the opening tip by pressuring the Raider ball handlers, senior Brianna O'Brien and freshman Corrinne Lyght, into frequent turnovers that resulted in easy baskets for Westfield. The Blue Devils led by as many as 17 points at the end of the third quarter before having to hold off a Raider rally that cut the deficit to eight points late in the game.

"I think we came out apprehensive against their defense," said Raider Head Coach Ryan McKenna. "We have broken the press and brought the ball up the court and gotten into our offense with little problem all season long. Tonight we just didn't do a very good job of it."

Westfield stretched the lead to a 17-point bulge at 34-17 by the end of the third quarter. The Lady Blue Devils mixed aggressive defense with sharp shooting to extend the lead. The formula has been highly successful ever since a win over powerful Roselle Catholic helped kick off a three-game win streak, all coming against teams with winning records.

"The win against Roselle Catholic has been a huge boost for us," said Ryan. "They are a very good program and they always are. They had beaten us earlier in the season, so to come back and get a win against them has really done a lot for our confidence. It confirms for us that we can play well and beat anyone when we are on top of our game."

The Raiders, who entered the game with a 9-3 mark, would mount a charge in the fourth quarter. Fueled by a determined rebounding effort from Abbe-Gayle Burton (8 points), the Raiders reeled off eight straight points and cut the deficit to 34-25 with still over four minutes to play. The Raiders inched closer after a Burton layup cut the lead to 39-31 with 1:30 left. But the Raiders could get no closer, plagued once again by turnovers caused by the aggressive Westfield defense.

"We are a pressure defense type of team," said Ryan. "We play the game often with five guards on the floor, so it is just our nature to want to challenge the dribbler and make it hard for them to see floor, while protecting the ball."

Westfield relentlessly badgered the Raider backcourt in the first quarter, disrupting their efforts to get the ball across half court and into the hands of low post threat Nya Downing. The Raiders committed several turnovers on stolen passes, throw aways and traveling calls. The Raiders scored just two baskets in the first quarter, both by Downing, and fell behind 10-4.

"The win against Roselle Catholic has been a huge boost for us," said Ryan. "They are a very good program and they always are. They had beaten us earlier in the season, so to come back and get a win against them has really done a lot for our confidence. It confirms for us that we can play well and beat anyone when we are on top of our game."

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"Obviously we are playing better this year as a team," said McKenna. "A lot of that goes to having better overall health than we did last season when we were just overwhelmed by injuries. I also think that this group has played together for a long time now. We have a lot of seniors. There is better chemistry. It has resulted in more success on the court."

Samantha Stravach contributed 13 points and eight rebounds for Westfield, while O'Brien led the Raiders with 12 points. Downing added 11 points. Westfield came up with 20 steals on the night.

|               |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Sc Pl-Fanwood | 4  | 6  | 7  | 16 | 33 |
| Westfield     | 10 | 12 | 12 | 9  | 43 |

### Blue Devils Upend RC Lady Lions, 42-35

The Westfield High School girls basketball team handed the hosting 8-2 Roselle Catholic Lions their first in-state loss with a 42-35 victory on January 16. Senior Molly Ryan scored 13 points, including trip 3-pointers, and added three steals, two rebounds and an assist for the Blue Devils and senior Grace Elliott sank 10 points and pulled seven rebounds, while adding four assists and two steals.

Samantha Stravach scored 12 points and had five rebounds, two steals and an assist. Caroline Dwyer had four points and three rebounds, Lauren Sgro had three points, six rebounds and a steal and Faith Dobosiewicz had three rebounds, two steals and an assist. Lily Maz had two rebounds and an assist. Jenissa Encarnacion had 12 points for the Lions and Victoria Jacobs scored 10 points.

|                  |    |    |    |   |    |
|------------------|----|----|----|---|----|
| Westfield        | 10 | 13 | 11 | 8 | 42 |
| Roselle Catholic | 5  | 15 | 8  | 7 | 35 |

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