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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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JACOBS, HOERLE, COMPOSTO, SIMPSON, MILLER, LODER WIN; SCANLAN SECOND; SILBER, HEARD FOURTH

Blue Devils Claim 6 Champs, Win Panther Mat Tournament

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

A real team performance of the decade (or more) indeed! When it came down to describing how well the Westfield High School wrestling team made out at the Annual Roselle Park Panther Tournament featuring 11 teams on December 28, one of the defining comments had to be HUGE! The Blue Devils claimed six champions and easily won the tournament with a 199.5 total.

(WE) with 161.5, followed by Piscataway (Pisc — 2 champs) with 137.5. The hosting Roselle Park Panthers took fourth at 122 and claimed three champions — Gabe Leo (113-lbs), Mark Montgomery (132-lbs) and Elvin Guerrero (145-lbs). West Milford (WM — 1 champ) was fifth at 93.5, Passaic Valley (PV) was sixth at 83.5, Woodbridge (Wd) was seventh at 72, Hillsborough (H — 1 champ) was eighth at 69, Franklin (F) — 1 champ) was ninth at 50, Passaic (Pa) was 10th at 38 and Madison (M)

was 11th at 35.5. Blue Devil seniors Jordan Simpson (170-lbs), Tim Miller (195-lbs) and Brendan Loder (220-lbs), juniors Luke Hoerle (120-lbs) and CJ Composto (126-lbs) and freshman Luke Jacobs (106-lbs) all claimed individual titles, while junior Luke Scanlan (160-lbs) took second. Junior Jeremy Silber (132-lbs) and sophomore John Heard (285-lbs) placed fourth. Sophomore Anthony Ciotta (138-lbs) and senior Theo Dardia (145-lbs) placed fifth. Junior James

Greco placed sixth after a very tight bout for fifth.

Miller, seeded second at 195, began his journey to the finals with a pair of pins — Isaiah Ayala - (F) with a wrist/half nelson in 1:37 and Sam Carsillo (WE) with a takedown to half nelson in 3:39. Miller used his favorite head-and-arm takedown with a snap down in his bout with Carsillo. "I knew from the last match that kid wrestled that he liked front head too, so I wasn't expecting to get too many shots off. So I got that snap down right

off the bat. I was looking for a few tilts but rode him out most of that period," Miller said.

Miller also worked a stretch hammerlock and an underhook in an effort to turn Carsillo to his back.

"I got the hammer, took a little bit of weight off him but I should have been quicker ripping that arm up and getting him flat on his belly. I almost had him but I didn't have the right pressure on that," Miller explained.

Facing Nick Recine (Pisc) in the title bout, Miller overcame a bearhug

takedown in the first period then came through with a head-and-arm takedown to carry a 3-3 tie into the third period. Miller added an escape and followed up with another head-and-arm walkaround takedown to grab the crown with a 6-3 decision.

As the top seed at 220-lbs, Loder unloaded on his first opponent with a 5:00 pin using a double-leg drive to back takedown. In the semifinal bout, Loder worked a single-leg trip, a double-leg tackle and three counter takedowns

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ROONEY SINKS 20 PTS, CROWLEY 12; HOWLAND 6 RBS

Blue Devils Burn WW-P No. In Ridge Hoops Tourney, 45-43

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

Senior Matt Crowley's coordination with junior Griffin Rooney, especially in the fourth quarter, played a major role in determining the outcome of the Westfield High School boys basketball game with the West Windsor-Plainsboro North Knights

in, we knew what we had to do and we were prepared well. Our defense worked really well. We played tight and really executed. Our teammates stepped up, all our bench players stepped up. It was a great team win and a great team effort," Crowley said.

"It was really all the defense be-

In the first quarter, Crowley and Rooney each sank five points and Tommy McGuire (2 blocks, 3 rebounds) scored two points. Crowley, who would finish with 12 points, four assists and five rebounds, knocked down another five points in the second quarter, while Mike Kane and Rooney each banged a 3-pointer.

Assists and stubborn defense came in handy as the Blue Devils won the third quarter, 10-6. Rooney (5 rebounds), who finished with a game-high 20 points, sank six points, including a pair of free throws. Declan McCauley and freshman Logan Howland (4 points) each netted two points and Kane took a charge during their 8-0 run.

Howland was quite impressive under the boards as he pulled six rebounds. Colin Freer also added three rebounds and a steal.

"The freshman got his work today. He got a little bit of time yesterday. Played well. Little bit of jittery. Today he came in. From eighth grade to varsity is a huge jump in speed. He will get it. He's going to be a fantastic player. He helped on the glass where we struggled. He was bouncing all over the place, getting hands on everything,"

Coach McKeon said. The Knights scored the first five points of the fourth quarter to cut the Blue Devils' lead to two points and McKeon called a timeout with 3:09 remaining. Rooney answered with a pair of lay-ups and Will Kessler came

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
GUARDING A KNIGHT...Blue Devils Mike Kane, left, and Matt Crowley, No. 11, pressure a West Windsor-Plainsboro North Knight at the Sepanak Tournament.

in the Len Sepanak Memorial Tournament Round Robin play at Ridge High School on December 27. With a pair of short runs, the Knights turned a seven-point deficit into a two-point lead with 1:06 remaining but with a lay-up by Rooney, successful pressure on an inbound pass and a lay-up by Crowley, the Blue Devils pulled out a 45-43 victory.

Limiting the length of those runs was of major importance to the Blue Devils throughout the game. Trailing 10-5 in the first quarter, the Knights deliberately stepped up the pressure and combined steals with fast breaks to sprint to an 8-0 run, eventually winning the quarter 13-12. The Blue Devils answered with a 10-2 run to take a 27-24 lead at the half then they added another 8-0 run grab a 37-30 lead at the end of three quarters.

"Basketball is a game of runs. We had ours, they had theirs. We really try to make strives to eliminate that run to like six and eight points because in the last games they have been 15-2 runs. So we did better in that aspect. We kind of settled down," Blue Devil Head Coach Jim McKeon said.

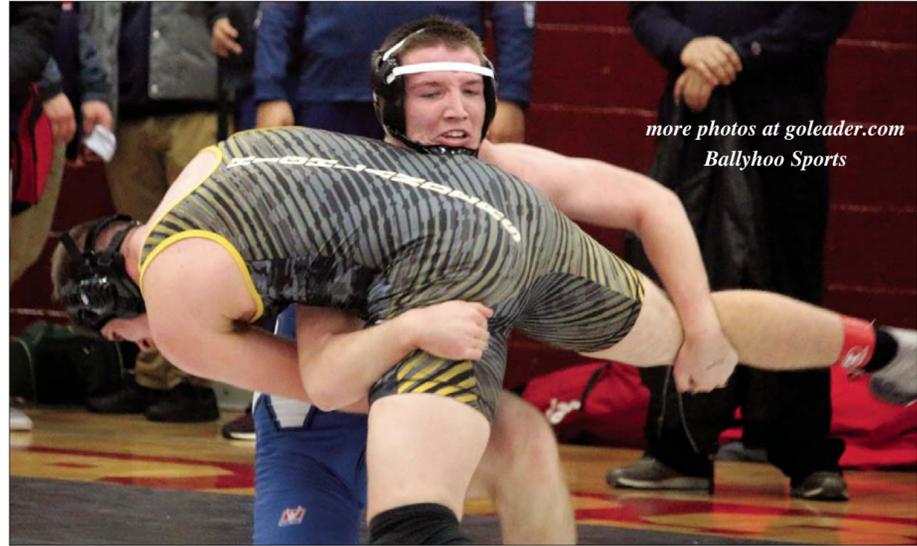
"Our coach said basketball is a game of runs. The winner is going to be whoever is able to stop the runs better. And we were able to stop the run today. We limited their run to only eight," Rooney said.

"We were giving the ball away too easily. They were very scrappy, very good defensive team. We got a little rattled. Fortunately we were able to clean that up towards the end of the game and pull out the 'W'," Crowley said.

The Blue Devils pulled out a huge "W" the day before when they leveled Ridge, 46-28, in their first Round Robin Game.

"Yesterday it kind of clicked for us defensively, offensively. A lot of guys contributed. It's what we want to look like. It all culminated in the three games prior to this and it clicked for us. We had nine guys score. We had 11 guys in the game and that's what we can be if we apply pressure to other teams, make them work for every point. It was nice to watch," Coach McKeon expressed.

"It was a big game for us. We came



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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
GETTING A DOUBLE-LEG TAKEDOWN...Blue Devil Brendan Loder gets a double-leg takedown on Mike Podmoky (West Milford) in the 220-lb championship bout and wins, 9-4, to seize the title at the Roselle Park Tournament.

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