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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section - Pages 11-13

PINIAT RAPS TRIPLE, 2 DOUBLES; THROWS 1-HITTER

Raider Softballers Confound Piscataway Chiefs, 5-1

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

Raider senior Alicia Piniat retired her first 15 batters, toying with a perfect game, but finished with a one-hitter while striking out nine and walking none to lead the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School softball team to a 5-1 victory over

Piscataway on April 14 in Scotch Plains. The 5-1 Raiders collected nine hits which included five doubles and a triple.

Early on, it was quite noticeable that Piniat's pitching rhythm was on. Her mix of well-positioned fast pitches blended well with her mesmerizing change ups.

In the second inning, Raider Head Coach Frank Butz pointed out, "Look at the snap she has on the ball. Against Linden, she didn't have that and she seemed to be throwing meatballs."

"I kept hitting my knee and I was in pain (against Linden)," said Piniat. "But today my change up was working and I felt good."

It had to be Piniat's day because her bat also was on fire. She burned an RBI double in the first inning, blazed a double in the third and smoked a triple in the fifth.

"I was practicing with my dad and a golf ball before the game. We kept working on my stance, and I believe that is what made the difference," said Piniat.

Raider senior Katie Church went 2-for-3 with a run scored and Megan Miller had an RBI double and an RBI sacrifice fly. Left fielder Caitlin McNelis made a spectacular shoelace catch in the third inning and right fielder Lindsay Pennella chased down a shot in the fifth.

Junior Kellie LaForge led off a two-run first inning with a fading single over second. After stealing second, LaForge jogged home on Piniat's RBI double down the left

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OUT ON A CLOSE PLAY AT HOME...Raider catcher Katie Church tags out Piscataway Chief Mary Scymanowicz at home in the sixth inning.

Cougar Nine Pounce All Over Raider Baseballers, 13-0

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

Superb pitching from senior ace Tom Polito and an early jump by the Cougar bats led the 4-2 Cranford High School baseball team to a five inning, 13-0, conquest of 3-2 Scotch Plains-Fanwood on April 16 in Scotch Plains. Only three Raiders - Brian Maroney, Brad Belford and Josh Wexler - managed to get singles off Polito.

Although Polito yielded only one walk and three hits he struck out just three Raiders.

"Polito pitched a good game," said Raider Head Coach Brian Homm. "We did put the bat on the ball though. We were aggressive. We wanted to swing the bat. We knew he was going

to throw strikes and we did swing the bat. We didn't go down looking. That was the positive thing about a game like this. Otherwise, we really didn't look that good. Our pitching wasn't good and we made a few mistakes in the field. That happens! Too bad it had to happen in a game like this."

Prior to the game, the match up between Polito and Raider Maroney would have been thought to be a low-scoring pitchers' duel; however, the Cougars tagged Maroney for four runs in the top of the first. Chris Marmo and Jeremy White both singled, T.J. Ahearn walked to load the bases and Dave Drechsel ripped an RBI single to center. Jim Seeman added an RBI single, Ahearn scored on an error and Drechsel walked

home after Maroney hit Mike Savnik on the helmet.

Maroney hopped a single past short and stole second in the bottom of the inning but was left stranded.

Up jumped the Cougars with an

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Blue Devils Shock Cougar Softballers

The Westfield High School softball team won its fourth-straight game and did it in a big way by shocking Cranford, 3-1, in Westfield on April 11. Junior pitcher Caitlin MacDonald was electrifying as she tossed a five-hitter and fanned four Cougars while walking none.

Senior Courtney Thornton brought home Sara Bobertz, who had two hits and two runs scored, with an RBI single in the first inning then added another RBI single in the fifth. Nicole Seney tapped an RBI single for the 4-1 Cougars in the fifth.

Cranford	000	010	0	1
Westfield	100	020	x	3

Devil Nine Wallop Warriors, 11-2

The Westfield High School baseball team rolled to an 11-2 victory over host Watchung Hills in the preliminary round of the Greater North Plainfield Tournament on April 14. Junior Jay Cook crushed two home runs - a three run blast and a two-run blast.

Ben Koket had three hits and an RBI and Jim McKeon and Mike Sofka each drilled doubles for the 3-1 Blue Devils, who banged out 10 hits.

Westfield	000	236	0	11
Watchung Hills	001	001	0	2



COUGAR STEALING SECOND BASE...Cougar T.J. Ahearn safely slides into second base as the ball eludes second baseman Steve Williams. Brian Schiller backs up second on the play.

MCNELIS GLITTERS WITH THE 'THUNDER STICK'

Raider Softball Ladies Edge BridgeH2O, Rout Shabazz

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

After a busy day of softball, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School girls picked up two more victories - improving to 4-1 - on April 11. The first came in Scotch Plains when the Raiders edged Bridgewater-Raritan, 2-1, then, in Newark, the Raiders routed Malcolm X. Shabazz, 17-2. In both games, sophomore Caitlin McNelis was successful with the "thunder stick" as she scored the winning run against Bridgewater and amassed six RBI with a home run, a double and two singles against Shabazz.

Raider pitcher, senior Alicia Piniat, was devastating in both games, especially against Bridgewater, where she fanned 10 Panthers and scattered five hits. Against Shabazz, she allowed just two hits and fanned five. Piniat has been nursing a back injury and it was noticeable in a previous, 7-4, loss to Linden.

"We deserved to lose against Linden because we got off to a rocky start and Alicia wasn't sharp. She was feeling better yesterday and was up to her form," said Raider Head Coach Frank Butz. "I asked her if she felt up to pitching against Shabazz,

and she definitely wanted to. So that's a good sign."

Senior Katie Church got things rolling in the second inning against the Panthers simply by being hit by a pitch. Next, she stole second then scored on Megan Reddington's RBI single. However, in the top of the fourth, Panther Allison Brunett doubled, then scored the tying run, when a grounder to third was picked up and overthrown at first.

In the fifth, McNelis ripped a single, stole second, then scored the eventual winning run on an RBI single by freshman left fielder Shanayia Willis.

"She came through big," said Butz of Willis. "She has been hitting well. In a previous game, she hit a home run."

Signs of a rout were immediate in the Shabazz game when the Raiders exploded for five runs in the first. Amy Ondeyka led off with a single and stole second. Church tapped a single and Katie Blom brought Ondeyka home with a ground out to second. McNelis stepped up and belted her three-run homer, then Piniat reached on an error, stole second and scored on Megan Miller's RBI single.

Shabazz reacted in the bottom of the inning with a two-run shot from Lashia Newton, who also had the Bulldogs' other hit.

"She smoked that thing," emphasized Butz of Newton's home run. "Shabazz has been improving as a team and has some good athletes."

Three more Raiders crossed the plate in the third. McNelis singled and stole second, Lindsay Pennella bashed an RBI single and Piniat thumped an RBI triple and later scored when Miller's fly to left was mishandled. Then she scored jumped to 10-2 in the fourth when Ondeyka singled, McNelis lashed an RBI single and Pennella followed with an RBI single.

In the top of the fifth, seven more Raiders stomped on the plate. Kellie LaForge walked, Reddington singled, Ondeyka was hit by a pitch and Church yanked an RBI single. Blom poked an RBI single and McNelis drilled her two-run double. Piniat and Miller finished off the scoring with RBI singles. Shabazz decided not to bat in the bottom of the fifth.

BridgeH2O	000	100	0	1
Sc. Pl.-Fanwood	010	010	x	2
Sc. Pl.-Fanwood	503	27		17
Shabazz	200	0x		2



BLUE DEVILS MIXING WITH RED DEVILS...Blue Devil Tri-Captain Katie Schott, center, attempts to scoop the ball as a Ridge Red Devil blocks her stick. The unbeaten Red Devils were too much for the Blue Devils on that day in Westfield and won, 18-7.

BRITTANY MILLER NETS 4, MORGAN LANG NAILS 3

Ridge Red Devil Laxers Daze Lady Blue Devils, 18-7

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

One of the many lessons which can be learned through athletic competition is how to win and lose gracefully. While winning is gratifying, a lot can be learned from a loss. The Westfield High School girls lacrosse team graciously got that learning opportunity when a strong Ridge squad stormed into Westfield on April 11 and graciously left with an 18-7 victory.

Ridge Red Devils Sarah Boudreau and center Katie McVeigh were outstanding as they both frayed the net

with six goals. Blue Devils Brittany Miller and Morgan Lang were quite effective offensively as they netted four and three goals, respectively.

Eyes were opened immediately, when Boudreau, on an assist from Sarah Bernstein, rippled the net within the first minute. Next, Susan Bove undulated the net, then a quick Katie Heath got inside for the third goal. After a fine save by Blue Devil sophomore goalie Julie Vanarelli, Boudreau picked up a dropped ball and stuffed it in the net to give the Red Devils a 4-0 lead with 20 min-

utes left in the half.

Vanarelli made three more nice saves during the onslaught then, with 12:54 remaining in the half, Miller zipped down the left side and fired a shot past Ridge goalie Kristin Latteri for the first Westfield goal. Thirty seconds later, Boudreau netted her third goal, then Heath followed 30 seconds later with a shovel shot to up the lead to 6-1. McVeigh got into the act and upped the score to 7-1, then with 9:09 left, Ashley Lohman added a goal.

The Blue Devils had their best

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BRAMNICK SHOOTS EVEN PAR 36, KARNISH GETS 37

Blue Devil Linksters Pounce St. Peter's Prep, 165-198

By DAVID B. CORBIN
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Senior Brent Bramnick turned in a smooth, even par 36 at Echo Lake Country Club to lead the 5-0 Westfield High School golf team to a 165-198 victory over St. Peter's Prep on April 10. Teammate Adam Karnish was right behind with a one-over par 37, Zander Rothschild had a 43 and Garritt III came in at 47. Liam Ahearn and Jack Hanlon both shot 47 for St.

Peter's Prep.

In a previous match against St. Benedict's Prep on April 9, Karnish took top honors with a 38, then four days prior, Bramnick shot a 36 to lead Westfield to a 175-184 win over Summit.

"I have been working on keeping the ball on the fairway off the tee because I have been erratic in the past," confessed Bramnick. "However, it seems to be coming around."

And come around it he did as he birdied the par 4, 405-yard first hole and the par 3, 140-yard seventh hole to offset his bogies on the third and eighth holes. On the first, Bramnick's drive was smooth and he followed with a great lob wedge shot to within two feet where he sank his putt.

"I was able to hit the ball close and got a birdie (early on). So, that gave us momentum," said Bramnick.

Although many golfers would be happy to get a bogie on the par 4, 380-yard third hole, Bramnick was displeased with his effort when he reached on two and three-putted.

"It was a disruption in my rhythm. I was in a rush and ready to get to the next hole," explained Bramnick.

On the par 4, 353-yard sixth, Bramnick ran into trouble early but

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St. Joseph's Golfers Win Blue Devil Invitational

The second-ranked St. Joseph of Metuchen golf team edged 10th-ranked Immaculata in the first hole of a sudden death playoff to claim the team title at the Westfield Blue Devil Invitational held at Echo Lake Country Club in Westfield on Monday, April 16. Cranford's Mike Occi won the individual crown by shooting a two-under par 34.

St. Joseph and Immaculata both finished with a team total of 252 and started the playoff on the 384-yard par four ninth hole. St. Joseph's No. 1 and No. 6 golfers shot four and five, respectively, and Immaculata's No. 1 and No. 6 golfers shot four and six, respectively.

Junior Mike Occi's freshman brother Jason turned in a one-over par 37 to tie the Blue Devil senior Brent Bramnick; however, he edged Bramnick in the first hole of a sudden-death playoff. Bill Foley of Immaculata finished fourth with a 39 and Jim Mikosky of St. Joseph came in fifth with a 40. Blue Devils Erin Cockren and Zander Rothschild each shot 41.

Westfield finished third in the team

total with a 261 ahead of the Cranford Cougars and No. 4 Delbarton Green Wave who totaled 264. Hunterdon Central finished sixth at 280.

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