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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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FERRARA, 'KOS' LEAD GIRLS; WILLIAMS LEADS BOYS

Raider Boys, Girls Predicted To Be Powerful in Track

By FRED LECOMTE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Notoriously powerful on the track and in the field, this year's Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School boys' and girls' track and field teams will come in with a strong desire to challenge for the Union County Relays and the Watchung Conference title. Last year, strong performances across the board awarded the Raider boys their fifth-straight Union County Track and Field championship - seventh in eight years - and they can be expected to be near if not on the top rung once again.

Raider girls' Head Coach Jeff Koegel, who works with all Raider distance runners, did, however, indicate graduates Mike Dixon who ran the half-mile last year and Darrien Aberdeen who specialized in the hurdles, high jump and long jump,

will be difficult spots to fill. "Both boys scored high in the conference, county and sections for us. Both of them competed in the 'Meet of Champions' last spring and indeed will be huge losses for us," said Koegel. On the girls' side the Raiders will compete without the excellent performances of speedsters Erin Kelly and Ruth Rohrer.

Heading up the Raider boys this season will be senior Ray Williams, the All-America and defending champion at the 'Meet of Champions' in the 400 meters. Williams set a state indoor record in the 400 with a 47.45. He ran 47.15 last spring and will be chasing the state record of 46.02 set in 1984 by U.S. Olympian Dennis Mitchell. When asked about what his goals for the season were, Williams said, "End the season healthy and leave a positive message on the

track. Our underclassmen need to understand, that anything is possible, and if you work at it, you'll get it. The key to success is hard work, so it's not just talking about it, I'll be leading by example."

Describing the strength of the team's trackmen boys Head Coach Rich McGriff pointed out, "Hopefully, we expect the same performances out of Williams as last year. He only had one loss, and that was at the Nationals, where he came in second place. Hopefully, he will be one step better than last year. Obviously, along with the 400, we are looking for him to score in three other events."

Along with Williams, major point accumulations will come from a strong group of senior runners led by Union County cross country champion Bob Wallden, J.P. Reves and Matt Richards. Junior Walter Biner and sophomore Zack McGuire should perform competently on the distance team. Returning in the hurdles will be talent rich, Giacomo Palumbo. The Raiders additionally will get plenty of field points from junior Chris Feighner, whose specialty is the shot put.

On the girls' side, coach Koegel anticipates he has a great nucleus of young talent that should be very competitive in the next several years. "We have a couple of upperclassmen in Jill Kosciielecki - a major runner in the 100m, 200m, 400m and 4x400 relays - and Jayme Ferrara - 4x400, hurdles and long jump - who need to become our leaders. I believe we should have a pretty good year on both sides, but it's all about developing some of that young talent, making sure we continue to help them towards successful careers."

"My best events are the 400H and the 4x400," said Co-Captain Ferrara. "This year I hope to drop down my time a lot."

Very high on the potential of the 4x400 relay team, Ferrara commented, "Our team is looking forward to compete in 'The Meet of Champions' and the Nationals, we really believe we can accomplish that. Freshmen Lauren Perrotta and Jenna Ballestiere, who ran for us in the winter and made First Team All County in the mile relay, already have had that exposure. They ran in the Meet of Champs, so I think they are going to do pretty well for us."

In addition, count on senior Erin Gillooly, junior Lauren Bianco and junior Stephanie Heath to be very solid in their events.

The Raider girls anticipate strong competition from Westfield, Cranford and Governor Livingston and the boys expect stiff competition from Elizabeth and Plainfield.



COLORFUL BATTLE FOR THE BALL...The Blue Devils and the Hunterdon Central Red Devils (May, 2001) battle for possession as sophomore Billy Schultz, No. 14, watches the ball head his way.

DEBROSSY, SCHULTZ TO ADD OFFENSIVE PUNCH

Blue Devil Boy Laxers to Rely On Speed of Offensive Team

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

Last season, the Westfield High School boys' lacrosse team expected to be one of the major state contenders, but with an array of injuries hopes were cut short in the second round of the state tournament. The Blue Devils did, however, finish respectively, with an 11-8 record.

Attackman Chris Dodge (Second Team All-State), Evan Molloy (Honorable Mention All-State) and Brad Gillin (First Team All-State), and defenseman Jim Mitchel (Second Team All-State) along with goalkeeper Dan Morrissey have graduated but the Blue Devils should still be one of

the area's toughest teams with plenty of offensive team speed returning. However, a lot of new faces are expected to support the defense.

"Presently, we have no real set line. We have a lot of people competing for positions, which is good," said Blue Devil Head Coach Gerry Benaquista. "We lost a lot of people. We lost our starting goalie (Kevin Riley) who transferred to Lawrenceville. So it's really a rebuilding year and there is going to be a lot of youth involved."

Senior attackers/midfielders Anthony Tomasso, Quad-Captains Dave Santoriello, Greg Elliott and Mike Debrossy, and junior attackers/

midfielders Dan Kane and Billy Schultz had plenty of varsity time last year and will be on the prowl again. Debrossy netted 38 goals last year and Schultz flicked in 20 goals and abetted with 20 assists. Santoriello spent most of last year on the disabled list.

"There are also a couple of other seniors and some underclassmen who will be fighting for the spots," Benaquista pointed out.

Up from the impressive junior varsity (JV) squad that finished undefeated at 16-0 are Gil Arbitsman, Mark Schott, Tim Mansfield, Anthony Yudd and Ben Masel who will

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
READY TO REPEAT AS UC CHAMPS...The Raider boys seek to win their sixth-straight Union County crown. Pictured, left to right, are: Assistant Coach Lionel Hush, senior Ray Williams, Boys Head Coach Rich McGriff and Girls Head Coach Jeff Koegel.



Fred Lecomte for The Westfield Leader and The Times
LOOKING FOR A STRONG SEASON...The Raider girls look to have a strong season. Pictured, left to right, are: Assistant Coach Lionel Hush, senior Jayme Ferrara, Boys Head Coach Rich McGriff and Girls Head Coach Jeff Koegel.

MALONEY, SIMONE NAMED BLUE DEVIL CO-CAPTAINS

Blue Devil Netmen Are Equal To or Better Than Opponents

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

Once again, the Westfield High School boys' tennis team will have a schedule loaded with stiff competition. With a similar schedule, the young Blue Devils finished with a respectable 17-7 record last year and tied with Scotch Plains-Fanwood for the Watchung Conference title with a 13-1 record.

This year, the Blue Devil netmen's season looks even more promising with only one starter, Ryan Jones (second singles), having graduated. Last year, Jones, finished 13-8 and placed third in the Union County tournament (UCT).

Senior Co-Captain Griffin Maloney will take to the court again

at first singles. Last year, he faced many of the best first singles players in the state and earned an impressive 19-7 record. Additionally, he gave UCT champ Ryan Hefter of Summit a run in the semifinals and eventually wound up third.

Junior Dave Eisenberg, who amassed a 20-4 record and grabbed the UCT crown at third singles, will fill the same slot this season. Jumping into the second singles slot is sophomore Rich Moran who has been very impressive.

"We knew he was good," said Blue Devil Head Coach George Kapner of Moran. "But the big thing this year is everybody trained off season. Everybody played through the summer and everybody played through the

winter except Devin Power who is on the swim team."

Again, Summit appears to be the Blue Devils' stiffest competition for the UC crown. "They graduated Hefter but, pretty much, the rest of the team is back. They are loaded again," said Kapner. "We feel that we are a year older, a year more experienced and without a doubt have the ability to win the counties."

More than just the county competition, the Blue Devils' schedule lists a host of additional top-notch teams such as Livingston, Bridgewater, Millburn and Columbia. Prior to the opening day match with Livingston on April 1, Kapner stated, "Livingston is loaded but they gradu-

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DISTANCE, MIDDLE DISTANCE WILL STILL DOMINATE

Blue Devil Track Ladies Feel Quantity Will Yield Quality

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

Numbers has not been an issue when considering personnel for the Westfield High School girls' track and field team. Last year, the Blue Devils had a wealth of 74 girls on the squad but this year, there is a whopping, 109 girls - 33 freshmen.

Historically, Westfield has dominated in the distance events and not much should change there this season. Although superstar Alexis Anzelone, who dominated the county in the 1,600 and 3,200 meters, has graduated along with Rachel Ackerman and Kyle Legones, the Blue Devils will still have plenty of kick. Seniors Sara Mahran, Erin McClellan and Jackie Cusimano, juniors Kathleen Salmon, Michele Madorma and Melissa Richey and sophomores Carolyn Harbaugh and Deeney Quinn are among a multitude of distance runners.

Two freshmen, Emily MacNeil and Anne Onishi have been outstanding in the 800 meters and will really contribute plenty of valuable points. MacNeil dropped jaws in the Meet of Champions at Princeton University on February 3 when she finished fifth with a time of 2:19.19 - an all-time Westfield High School record.

"They are really going to contribute to the program," emphasized Blue Devil Head Coach Nancy Carpenter.

"We look really good and have some added depth with Onishi and MacNeil. They have already shown what they can do," added distance

coach Jennifer Buccino. "But we also are returning a lot plus we had some girls from cross country who stepped up and should do very well also."

Buccino feels the strongest runner in the mile, "at the moment would be Mahran. Salmon was down in the

5:30s last year. I think McClellan and Cusimano should step up a little bit this year too."

As to the two miles, she said, "McClellan, Cusimano and Mahran. Mahran did very well at the end of

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
TRACK 'PAC' TEAM CAPTAINS...To handle the 109 girls on the Westfield girls' track and field team, five captains were chosen. Pictured, left to right, are: kneeling; Lauren Solon and Lynn Huang; standing, Kiera Evans, Christine Pecoraro and Sarah Burke.

RAIDER WRESTLING CAMP 2002

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The goal of the Raider Wrestling Camp is to provide young wrestlers with a fun and exciting wrestling experience.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Gymnasium.
June 24-28 (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

Camp Director: Dave Bello, Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Head Wrestling Coach

PROGRAM: Each day will consist of proper warm-up, instruction, drilling, games and live wrestling. Wrestlers will be paired by weight and ability level.

FEE: \$95.00 per person (includes instruction, camp T-shirt, wrestling syllabus, pizza party on Friday, camp champ awards, insurance).

To register, and for information, contact Dave Bello 908-889-8600
Enroll early, space is limited. e mail: dbello2@aol.com

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