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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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HOLLANDER NAILS TYING GOAL, BURIES WINNER

Lady Soccer Blue Devils Win 'Shootout' With Mounties

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

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! The name of the game is to put the ball in the goal. The top-seeded Westfield High School girls soccer team did it one more time than 13-8 Montclair but not until its final shot of a shootout in the semifinals of the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 4 tournament at Kehler Stadium in Westfield on November 14. After a 1-1 deadlock in regulation and a scoreless overtime, the Blue Devils out-shot the Mounties, 4-3, on the final firing line.

Freshman forward Andrea Hollander, who scored the only Blue

Devil goal in regulation, also nailed the game winner in the shootout. Senior goalkeeper Megan Connors, who had nine saves, reacted quickly and correctly with two diving saves to her right during the shootout.

The Blue Devil front line appeared hesitant and off on their leads and passes for most of the first half which resulted in the Mounties taking a 6-2 edge in shots-on-goal. Westfield's defense, including Connors, rose to the challenge and got a strong game from sweeper Ashley Kent. Although most of the Mounties' shots posed little threat due to defensive doggedness, the one that did come in the 34th minute off the foot of Kaitlin

Giannetti on a little roller that slithered past a pair of defenders, possibly obscuring Connors' vision.

"She went around about three or four of our players. I barely saw the shot. I was close but I thought I could have saved that," said Connors.

The Blue Devils took the game to Mountie territory early in the second half and were rewarded three-and-a-half minutes in when Aly Ludmer ricocheted her shot off sliding Mountie goalie Heather Zacccone and Hollander moved in from the right and ripped a left-footed shot into the net from six-yards out.

"Susan Williams passed it to Aly. I normally play outside right but I ran in knowing that Susan was out there. So, I was in the right place at the right time," Hollander pointed out.

Unfortunately, the Blue Devils did not seem to gain the killer instinct and the Mounties put Connors to the test until shootout time. Fortunately, Connors performed well and managed to practice for the shootout by making three more agility-demanding saves.

The showdown came and Mounties Zacccone, Giannetti, Caitlin Green, Shannon Pilsbury and Molly Zimmerman were pitted against Blue Devils Williams, Staci Spass, Kent, Gio Palatucci and Hollander.

Zacccone shot first and lodged the ball into the upper right of the netting. Williams popped her shot into the lower left.

"I usually go to the lower right corner but when I went to shoot, I saw her shift toward the right so I put it in the lower left corner," explained

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
KEY WINNING INGREDIENT...Keeper Megan Connors makes another great save against the Mounties. Connors made two saves in the shootout to give the Blue Devils the semifinal victory.

DOLANSKY BREAKS VIKING H. S. RECORD IN KILLS

No. 3 Viking V'Ballers Pluck Thunderbirds, 15-7, 15-2

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

If "America's Most Wanted" list focused on volleyball kills, Union Catholic senior Linda Dolansky and junior Jen Monroy would rank. No. 1 and No. 2, respectively on the area high school list. Dolansky who notched five kills in No. 3 Union Catholic's, 15-7, 15-2, victory over Mahwah in the Group 2 quarterfinals

at Scotch Plains on November 15, broke her school's all-time record of 546 on her first kill.

Dolansky who broke Deena Zack's record - 1997 to 2000 - boosted her total to 550 and her season total to 256 while Monroy who recorded 10 kills elevated her all-time total to 542. Dolansky also had nine service points with five aces and four digs.

"It was great that Linda was able to

break that record," said Viking Head Coach Nancy Saggio. "She more than deserved it, she's such a hard worker."

"It's awesome! It was a big goal for me," said Dolansky. "It's a great thing to accomplish. She (Deena) was such a big hitter when I was just a rookie sophomore. At least, we have one more game and, hopefully, I can get a couple more."

As to her "Most Wanted" kill accomplishments, Monroy said, "It feels good. Who wouldn't want to be up there? When we were practicing and warming up, I felt up today."

Monroy also finished with one block and five digs. Teammate Megan Conheeny contributed three service points.

After the Thunderbirds took a 1-0 lead, Viking Maria DePaolo had four-straight service points with the help of Monroy who seemed to set the pace by battering three-straight kills.

"She seemed to be very relaxed today," said Saggio. "She was more into her own rhythm and did a great job with 10 kills."

"Jen's always very helpful," pointed out Dolansky. "She had an awesome game. I'm glad she came out swinging. I know I can always count on her."

Mahwah closed the score to 4-3 and Monroy's service point umped the score to 5-3. Dolansky, who notched four kills in game 1, then recorded her first kill of the evening

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
SETTING UP THE PLAY...Viking Maria DePaolo, No. 10, sets up Megan Conheeny, No. 19, as Kristine Mintel, No. 2, observes. The Vikings defeated the Thunderbirds of Mahwah, 15-7, 15-2.

NIKKI, JACKIE, VENEZIA COMBINE FOR 14 KILLS

Blue Devil V'ballers Paralyze Randolph Rams, 15-7, 15-8

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

The sixth-ranked Westfield High School Blue Devils (21-2) made it look easy by dominating the Randolph Rams (17-9) in Westfield on November 15 to advance to the quarterfinals of the NJSIAA/PSEG Group 4 Tournament. Devastating power, ferocious attacks combined with tremendous defensive blocking plays catapulted the Blue Devils to an easy, 15-7 and 15-8 victory.

"We were really ready to play. We did not play for 10 days, so this was our first match in that amount of time" explained Westfield Head Coach Beverly Torok. "We scouted them. We studied them and we pretty much knew what they could do, so we were prepared in what needed to be done. We really came out pretty sharp and played an all around game. We served well, we passed well and covered areas very, very well."

Senior Tri-Captain and outside hitter Nikki LeBlanc had six digs

and five kills. Junior outside hitter Jackie LeBlanc powered with six kills. Senior captain and middle hitter Lisa Venezia scored on three kills and had one block. Senior Tri-Captain and opposite hitter Jill Woodbury had nine service points, including three aces. Junior striker Sophie Hall added 11 assists.

"We had five days of practice in a row," explained Woodbury. "So, not only were we prepared, but we were very excited to play. We came out here with fire and a lot of confidence, determined that Randolph wasn't going to run on us."

In game 1, the Blue Devils anchored by power hitter Nikki LeBlanc scored four unanswered points. The Rams butted back with three points, then stalled on the excellent blocking by Jackie LeBlanc, Cari Rock and Woodbury. Jackie and Nikki LeBlanc along with Hall then took command and powered Westfield to 9-5 lead.

The Blue Devil fires continued to get hotter as they fired up five suc-

cessive points on proficient serving. The winning point came off a Venezia kill for a 15-7 victory.

"We came into this game together; it wasn't going to be one person, it was going to be all of us, all 11 of us, playing our A game," said Nikki LeBlanc. "We knew that Randolph was going to block us and they really did a great job, which kind of got me angry, so I started hitting the ball harder than usual. Everyone did well."

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Westfield Girls Win NJ Section 2, Group 4 Soccer Title



Fred Lecomte for The Westfield Leader and The Times
NORTH JERSEY, SECTION 2, GROUP 4 CHAMPS...Emily MacNeil, No. 20, hugs Stephanie Bridgeman after the Blue Devils defeated Randolph in a shootout to claim the NJ, Section 2, Group 4 title. Susan Williams, left, Gio Palatucci, No. 8, and Ashley Kent, No. 9, join in. See story on page 13.

COCOZZIELLO SACKED 6 TIMES, DEVILS TOTAL 4 YDS

Roxbury Gaels Grid Men Halt Blue Devils, 28-0, in Sectionals

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

Drenching rains, gale-force winds and a team named the Gaels put an end to the Westfield High School football team's hopes of advancing in the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 4 tournament in Roxbury on November 16. The 7-2 Roxbury Gaels, who handed ninth-ranked Morristown its only loss several weeks ago in similar climatic conditions, came up with a fumble recovery in the end zone, two rushing touchdowns (TD) and one TD reception to stop, 6-3, Westfield, 28-0.

The Roxbury boys used a dogged, stay-at-home defense to limit the Blue Devils to four total yards - minus two yards in the first half - and a strong

offensive line to open the holes for two powerful, running backs, George Tompkins - one TD and 89 yards rushing - and Steve Giordano - one TD. Blue Devil quarterback Jan Coccozzello was given no time to roll out and set up his passing game and was sacked six times.

With negative yardage in the first half, the only Blue Devil who did show some success in the second half was junior running back Bart Walsh who did push forward 25 yards on four plays. Brian Butts had a five-yard reception and a two-yard rushing gain but Coccozzello was sacked twice for minus-18 yards. Sophomore Marc Dowling had a two-yard rush but the Blue Devils were penalized for 10 yards.

Both defenses held tight in the first quarter but the Blue Devils got its best field position of the game when a poor Gaels' punt rolled out of bounds at the Roxbury 29. Butts bashed forward three yards but Coccozzello was sacked for a three-yard loss. Senior halfback Mike DeFazio was also thrown for a three-yard loss and Andrew Lessner punted to the Roxbury 12.

The Gaels found success running to their left and rushed six-straight times until they reached the Westfield 34. They changed their tactics, ran to the right, had no success and had to punt after linebacker Butts recorded a seven-yard sack.

The punt gave Westfield possession for 10 yards.

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
TRYING TO GET SOME OFFENSE GOING...Blue Devil quarterback Jan Coccozzello, No. 12, hands off to Brian Butts, No. 14, in hopes of getting a big gain. The Roxbury Gaels proved to be quite effective and defeated the Blue Devils, 28-0.

ADAMS RUSHES FOR TD; BAKER RUSHES 124 YARDS

Falcon Football Men Stagger Raiders, 14-6, in Sectionals

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

Completed passes to open receivers and big gainers without numerous penalties were what fourth-seeded Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School needed to capture the game. Instead, hopes of advancement ended abruptly as the run-and-shoot, fifth-seeded, 8-2 Jefferson Falcons outlasted the 5-4 Raiders, 14-6 in the first round of the NJSIAA North Jersey Section 2, Group 3 playoffs, in a muddle in Scotch Plains on November 16.

Fullback Kyle Adams accounted for the lone Raider touchdown (TD) on a two-yard bash at 6:36 in the first quarter.

"We had our opportunities. We let them back in and they did a great job," said Head Coach Steve Ciccotelli. "As the field got sloppier, we had trouble holding on to the ball and they seemed to handle it. We lost a lot of snaps, a lot of plays with that. We had our opportunities to put up a lot more points on the board and we didn't take advantage of it. Due to the conditions on the field, we just couldn't take a chance on throwing the ball. As a coach, it's one of those nightmare games. We gained some

pretty good yardage, did some good things, but we didn't score. I can't be upset with the defense, we held the run and shoot to 14 points, so I think we did alright."

Sophomore Marc Fabiano and senior Rowland Adeyemo led the "Wild Dogs" with four tackles, each. Adeyemo also had a fumble recovery. Charlie Bachi, Josh Wexler and Travis Boff accounted for three tack-

les each. Fabiano and Bachi had one sack each. Junior Ted Sensor also sparked the defense with a fumble recovery.

The Raiders accounted for 164 yards of offense. Junior quarterback, Mike Walker carried five times for 11 yards and completed one pass for nine yards. Adams carried the ball nine times for 20 yards. Raider fullback Kyle Baker

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