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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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HEATH, FISCHER SCORE; BALESTRIERE, HEATH ASSIST

Raider Soccer Girls Humble BridgeH2O Panthers, 2-1

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

What are the Raider soccer girls up to next? That must definitely be on the minds of most Union County teams as the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School girls penetrated the Bridgewater-Raritan goal twice to give the 5-4 Raider team a 2-1 victory in Scotch Plains on October 5. The good news is that the young Raiders won their fifth consecutive game, edging the formidable, 17th ranked Panthers who came in with a

7-1-1 record.

Senior Co-Captain and midfielder, Stefanie Heath, and junior midfielder Michelle Fischer each netted goals and senior Co-Captain, goalkeeper Lauren Bianco was aggressive and made eight outstanding saves.

Despite concentrating heavily on defense, it was the Raiders who struck gold first, when Heath, on an assist by forward Jenna Balestriere, blasted a heater just past the fingertips of the Panther keeper with 11:30 left in the half.

"Before the game we started out just a little disheartened because we knew that we were up against an excellent team like Bridgewater. Coach Ewing told us to put that behind us, and to go out there and play the best game that we can as a team. We listened and we did it. It feels fantastic," said Heath "We came out on the field just as we did against Union. We were ready to play with intensity and a lot of heart and never let up. We've been working so hard

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DEVILS BRIGADE PUTS IT TO THE BULLDOGS...Westfield came to play against Shabazz. The "Devils Brigade" defense stuffed star Amir Pinnix all evening. Adam Trzesniowski, No. 53, makes initial contact with Pinnix, No. 20.

BUTTS GRABS 20-YARD TD; DEFAZIO, GLASCO SHINE

Blue Devils Show Character, Stop Bulldog Gridmen, 10-6

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

One way to judge the character of a team can be how it will rebound from a heartbreaking loss. The entire Westfield High School football team responded with the right character when it pounced on the Malcolm X. Shabazz Bulldogs at the spectacular, brand new Shabazz Stadium in Newark on October 4 and returned with a booty consisting of a 10-6 victory.

Last week, in a 13-10 loss to Scotch Plains-Fanwood, frustration could easily be seen on the faces and in the gestures of the Blue Devils. However, stares of determination and gestures of confidence emanated from the start at Shabazz Stadium.

Using a variety of plays, Westfield's offense confused the Bulldogs and kept the ball out of the hands of star running back Amir Pinnix. Junior quarterback Jan Cocozziello completed seven passes for 102 yards, including a 20-yard touchdown strike to tight end Brian Butts, who also had a six-yard reception. Senior half-back Mike DeFazio, who had three receptions for 59 yards, one spectacular, diving 33-yard reception, and 28 yards rushing, was also devastating defensively and had a fumble recovery.

As to his fabulous reception, DeFazio said, "I was supposed to go straight out in the flat. The cornerback came right upon me and I ducked right around him. He put it right in my hands."

Sophomore back Bart Walsh rushed 12 times for 57 yards and had

a four-yard reception. Junior Tyshon Blackmon carried seven times for 34 yards, had a 14-yard reception and had a 32-yard kickoff return. Sophomore Marc Dowling carried twice for 10 yards.

"This is what I have been waiting for," expressed Head Coach Ed Tranchina. "We haven't played at this level yet. We really haven't. I felt the first two wins we had were not all we could play. Tonight, I was so proud. We were physical again. We rocked them. We got fumbles. We had some precision drives. We threw the ball great. We put an offensive

show together. Mike (DeFazio) made a great catch. We had a lot of ball control. We knew they had a lot of big linemen who were going to be in our face, so Jan sprinted out a lot."

The determination of Westfield's "Devils Brigade" defense was evident immediately after the opening kickoff. Butts, from his linebacker position, slammed Pinnix for a six-yard loss on the first play and the Bulldogs eventually went three and out.

The Blue Devils' touchdown march began at the 21-yard line and ended

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CELEBRATING A VICTORY...Raider Stephanie Heath, No. 17, leads a host of teammates in celebrating a 2-1, upset victory over the Bridgewater-Raritan Panthers. Heath blasted a heater into the Bridgewater net on an assist from Jenna Balestriere.

TOMASSO NAILS 2 GOALS, WESTFIELD RANKED 13TH

Soccer Blue Devils Tune Up On Blue Knight Boys, 7-0

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

Since a 3-0 loss to Scotch Plains-Fanwood on September 18, the Westfield High School boys soccer team has really turned it on. On September 25, the Blue Devils battled No. 2 Kearny to a 3-3 tie. Five days later, Westfield shut out No. 20, Union, 2-0, and on October 2, they expectedly out-jostled the Blue Knights of Irvington, 7-0, at Gary

the game out of reach against the Blue Knights, scoring two goals in the final three minutes of the first half to put the Blue Devils well in front, 4-0. From that point, every Blue Devil experienced plenty of playing time.

"We always come out hard in the first 15 minutes with the teams we know we should beat and try to put them away early so we can get in the rest of our team," explained Tomasso.

"The first thing is to play smart and not let any team score a goal," said Kapner. "You have to play within your system. Don't change because a team is supposed to be easy. You have to control the ball, play solid defense and score the first goal. Until that first goal, I'm always crazy."

Westfield scored 3:04 into the game when, senior Ben Masel crossed from the left side to junior Matt Sofka, who drilled the ball into the right corner. Next, Billy Schultz, on a cross from Mazel, found himself on a one-on-one situation with the goalie and just slipped the ball past him 26:17 into the half.

With 2:39 remaining in the half, Tomasso outmaneuvered a defender near the right end line and tapped the ball into the net. Two minutes later, on an assist from freshman Tom Taylor, Tomasso upped the score to 4-0 with a fine header.

Describing his goals, Tomasso explained, "The first one, I was coming up the flank. I had some guys in the middle but the defender was playing me to the end line. So I took the end line on him. I was able to get a good angle and I just flicked it by him. On the second one, the other strikers were doing all the work. I was just in the right place. Tom Tay-

lor really made a nice cross to me and I was able to head it in."

In the second half, Kapner rested many of his starters, except Tomasso who was delegated to shag balls on the sideline.

After the game, Tomasso chuckled and said, "Yea! I got to run the line a little bit."

On the very few attempts that the Blue Knights had to imperil the Blue Devils' territory, sweeper Brendan Egan simply herded them toward the sidelines.

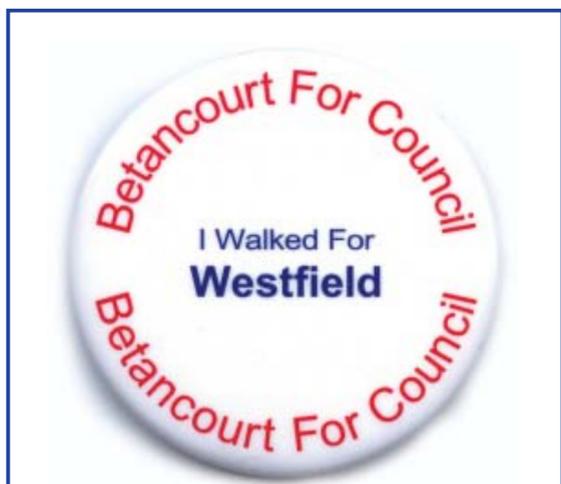
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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
Blue Devil midfielder Lawrence Kao, No. 12

Kehler Stadium in Westfield. "At halftime in the Kearny game, our kids realized that we really are good," Head Coach George Kapner pointed out. "The Scotch Plains game really put us back on our heels. You can't take anything away from them. They are well coached. They are excellent athletes. They play soccer year round. But the Kearny game, the guys are also year round. We played with them and that kind of got us to understand."

Junior striker Lee Tomasso put



On October 17, 2002 the League of Women Voters of the Westfield Area will sponsor the Candidates Forum in the Council Chambers at 425 East Broad. Please attend at 8 p.m.

Paid for by Betancourt for Council Committee, Jay MacDonald Treasurer, 219 Linden Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090



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W B A

BASKETBALL TRAVEL TRYOUT INFORMATION



Basketball tryouts are open to all Westfield students interested in playing travel basketball in 4th through 8th grades. Typical commitment should include at least 1 practice and 1 or 2 games a week. This is over and above playing in the in-town Saturday program. Gym availability dictates the amount of time each team will be assigned. In the event that you make a travel team, there is an additional charge.

It is mandatory that you attend both tryout sessions. Extenuating circumstances would need to be addressed on an initial basis. All participants need to register at the tryouts at least 15 minutes prior to start time. All players should come dressed to play basketball. All players should bring water bottles (no screw off tops please) as we will ask that everyone stays in the gym during the tryouts.

There will be a maximum of 2 teams selected by gender and grade level depending on participation. In grades where there may not be enough players to support a competitive team, grades may be combined in the same manner as the tryouts.

OCTOBER 2002

| Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|--|---|---|
| 15 6 th Boys: Roosevelt 7:00 - 9:00 | 16 7 th Boys: Edison 7:00 - 9:00 | 17 5 th Boys: Edison 7:00 - 9:00 8 th Boys: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 9:00 5 th / 6 th Girls: Roosevelt 7:00 - 9:00 | 18 4 th Boys: Back Gym WHS 7:00 - 8:30 4 th Girls: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 9:00 |
| 22 7 th Boys: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 8:30 5 th / 6 th Girls: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 8:30 4 th Girls: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 8:30 | 23 5 th Boys: Back Gym WHS 7:00 - 9:00 6 th Boys: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 8:30 | 24 4 th Boys: Back Gym WHS 7:00 - 8:30 7 th / 8 th Girls: Roosevelt 7:00 - 9:00 | 25 8 th Boys: Edison WHS 7:00 - 9:00 |
| 29 7 th / 8 th Girls: Varsity WHS 7:00 - 9:00 | 30 | 31 | |


 The WBA is also looking for women and men interested in being Coaches and Assistant Coaches for travel squads.
 For questions feel free to call the WBA at (908) 654 - 6361, or you can contact Tom Pickert at wba@westfieldnj.com