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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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KLIMOWICZ NETS 22; BURKE GETS 12, GILLOOLY 11

Raiders Top Vikings, 59-36, For UC Ladies Hoop Crown

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

Veterans, point guard Jenny Burke, center Hillary Klimowicz and forward Maura Gillooly, came up with an offensive 1-2-3 punch while their defense gave the third-seeded Vikings headaches to earn the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School girls basket-

ball team its second straight Union County Tournament championship with a 59-36 victory at Roselle Catholic High School on February 25.

Through the guidance of Head Coach Kathy Matthews, who has amassed 568 career victories, the Vikings, who have appeared in five straight UCT finals, upset the

top-seeded Raiders, 36-30, on February 25, 2003. The Vikings controlled the tempo with a slowed-down pace but, this time, the Raiders were ready for them.

"It was really important to win, especially since the year before we won (2004) we lost to Union Catholic. It was a big upset," said Burke. "We ran a trapping match up. They were unprepared for that because we have never run it before like that. They usually dribble around the half court line and that was impossible because we were there to trap them."

"(ALJ) Johnson actually played a very similar game. They also tried to hold the ball on us. We saw that in the beginning of the game and saw how that could take us out of our game. We practiced on that all week and started setting up way past the 3-point line, pulling the ball back and pressuring from there. We were working on the first trap zone and force turnovers. I think we did that tonight," Klimowicz explained.

The 20-5 Raiders just had too many offensive weapons for the 17-6 Vikings to handle. Klimowicz, who finished with 18 rebounds and five blocks, put in 22 points, nine in the first quarter when the Raiders took a 14-7 lead. The Vikings, however, were having some success containing her

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
GOING IN FOR A LAYUP...Raider Elizabeth DeCataldo, No. 22, goes in for a layup with heavy pressure from Viking Leslie Hendricks, No. 25.



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
ESTABLISHING A NEW RAIDER WINNING RECORD...Steve Mineo, top, picks up career win No. 113 after pinning Cougar Chris Ridente in 29 seconds during the 135-lb finals. The previous record of 112 was set last year by Derek Francavilla at the state semifinals.

STEVE MINEO BREAKS SP-F RECORD WITH 113 WINS

Raiders Advance 9, Devils 5, To Region 3 Mat Tournament

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

A fine performance across the board gave the Rahway High School wrestlers the team title at the District 11 Tournament in Westfield on February 26. The Indians, who advanced 11 to the Region 3 Tournament, totaled 252 to top the three-time defending champion Scotch Plains-Fanwood (SP-F) Raiders, who advanced nine to finish

second with 177.5 points. Although entering only six wrestlers, the Westfield Blue Devils, who finished sixth with 84 points, advanced five to the regions.

The Raiders and the Indians each claimed four champions - Raiders Sal Gano (119-lbs), Steve Mineo (135-lbs), Pat Mineo (140-lbs) and Anthony Ferrante (145-lbs) and Indians Juan Herrera (103-lbs), Ryan Wilson (112-lbs), defending 119-lb state champion Darrion Caldwell (130-lbs) and heavyweight Andre Neblett. Andrew Shaffer took top honors at 152-lbs for the Blue Devils.

Steve Mineo claimed his fourth District 11 title and set a SP-FHS record with 113 career wins by pinning Chris Ridente of Cranford in the finals. The previous record of 112 was set by Derek Francavilla last year at the state tournament.

"I wanted to be slick but courteous to my opponent but I wanted to get off the mat quickly so I went to the bear hug and shot the half," explained Mineo. "I am eager to have my brother by my side down at Atlantic City."

Sophomore Pat Mineo joined his brother and claimed his second district title by registering a 15-0, technical fall in 3:56 over Rahway's Joel Acevedo in the finals.

"I'm excited for the regions. I have three other tough guys in my weight. I want all three of us to make it to Atlantic City but I'm looking to be on top and win the region," said Mineo.

Seeded first at 119-lbs, Gano, a sophomore, lived up to his expectations by clamping Rahway's Joe Andes in 4:42 with a cradle. Prior to the fall, Gano recorded a takedown, two reversals and two nearfalls.

"He posted off with his leg. I saw it and all I had to do was sit him back," said Gano. "I feel great winning as a sophomore. I'm hoping to be a three-time district champ."

Exceeding expectations, Ferrante, seeded fourth, pulled off a 3-2 upset over top-seeded Blue Devil Tom DeDuca in the semis then recorded four takedowns, a nearfall and an escape to stop Rahway's Carlos Nicasio, 11-6, in the finals.

"I came with a mission to do the best that I could. My tournament was amazing. I have been working takedowns with Pat (Mineo)," explained Ferrante.

DeDuca rebounded to beat Linden's Marco Renderos, 5-3 in overtime to become one of a very few number of Blue Devils to qualify all four years for the region tournament.

"He didn't want to tie up with me. His game plan was working and I needed to find a way to trip him up. I finally caught his leg in overtime," said DeDuca who added, "It's kind of a sour taste because of my performance not getting first but it is a great feeling that all four years I at least accomplished that."

Blue Devil Shaffer was on a mission

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BLUE DEVIL COACH JOHNSON'S LINEUP JUGGLING NEARLY PAYS OFF

Blue Devil Swim Boys' Gamble Resulted In Wild Public 'A' Final With BrH2O

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

Never count the Westfield High School boys swimming team out! Even if the lineup may not have had the depth that it had enjoyed in previous years. After being defeated 100-70 by No. 7 Bridgewater-Raritan on December 21, few would have guessed that the Blue Devils would stand a chance to repeat as North Jersey, Section 2, Public A champions.

But the Blue Devil boys have a reputation of being "Mr. February"

and put together 40 personal-best swims to finish the championship meet with Bridgewater-Raritan in an 85-85 tie, which forced the outcome to be decided by power points, at Lincoln Community School in Bayonne on February 21. The Panthers got the nod by virtue of a 3,796-3,597 advantage.

"We knew we couldn't go with the same lineup as the first time," said Blue Devil Head Coach Bruce Johnson. "We made several switches and also took a couple of huge gambles. The regular season is all

about mixing and matching things, getting times and splits to put together the best lineup at the end of the year. I do that for us, and I do it for teams I think we might see in states, like Bridgewater, Hillsborough, the Cherry Hills, Vernon, etc."

The first switch came in the opening 200-medley relay when senior captain Dan Chabanov completed the butterfly leg with a quick, personal best (PB) 25.01 split followed by Luke Baran 26.4 PB backstroke, Pat Daurio 27.0 PB breaststroke and Brandon Cuba 22.1 PB freestyle. The fin-

ishing time of 1:40.7 was 10th fastest in Westfield High School (WHS) history.

"That was a huge opening event, got our crowd pumped and gave Bridgewater-Raritan the message that we were here to swim 'em tough," noted Johnson.

The next gamble was in the 200-free relay. The Panthers kept their top four guys together for the first and last relays, which weakened their 200-free relay. The Blue Devils went for the gusto, hoping to grab an extra

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