



Fred K. Lecomte for The Westfield Leader and The Times

THAT'S USING YOUR HEAD... Sophomore Taylor Molinaro showed his aggressive style of play and was rewarded with his first goal of the season when he headed the ball into the net off a cross by Brian Hessemer during the first half of play.

Raiders Dump Voorhees, 3-0; Win 13th Group 3 Section Title

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sectional and go back to Trenton. My hat is off to them and I give them all the credit in the world."

With the wind at their backs, the Raiders showed their firepower right from the opening kickoff when they pushed up field and got a quick corner kick from Brian Hessemer who sailed the ball into the near post where Fleissner, using his head, buried the ball with just 33 seconds off the clock.

"We're all pretty hyped to get it done three times in a row," said Hessemer. "Voorhees plays a flat back four, so our main goal was to get up there and keep constant pressure on them and we knew they would cough it up."

The Raiders notched their second goal when Hessemer launched his second corner kick, taken from the right side, to striker Molinaro, who headed the ball into the net with 18 minutes remaining in the half.

"It feels great to get my first goal of the season on the varsity Raiders," said Molinaro. "It was a perfect cross right in the middle of the field. I just saw the gap, stuck my head in there and got the goal."

The Vikings settled down and made their share of runs, but never managed a serious scoring threat because they could not penetrate the Raider defenders and the aggressive play of Meredith in front of the net.

"Coming back in net felt good. I guess that's my natural spot for my whole life pretty much, so it's nothing new for me to do my job," said Meredith. "We just wanted it so much more, flat out. Our team was just all over it. All the seniors of Scotch Plains usually step up this time of the year,

doing their jobs. Getting that three-piece, that's kind of crazy. Now I'm looking forward to the semi's."

The Raiders added to its lead with 4:44 showing on the clock in the second half when Devizio drilled a shot into the net off a feed from Jarek Cohen.

"Cohen slipped the ball through the defense. I just ran on to it, took a touch and placed it past the keeper," said Devizio. "It feels great to win another sectional final. I was part of it last year too and we're going all the way this year."

"Meredith really stepped it up today. He had a lot of key saves coming out while all the backs just held it together and were able to clear balls out, stay with their marks and basically shut down every opportunity they had. It really feels good," concluded Hessemer.

The Raiders went on to defeat Morris Hills, 2-1, to advance to the state Group 3 championship game to be played against Ocean City at The College of New Jersey in Ewing at 8 p.m. tomorrow.

Soccer Vikings Fall To Don Bosco, 1-0

The Union Catholic High School boys soccer team completed its stellar season with an 18-2 record after being stopped, 1-0, by 15-2-2 Don Bosco Prep in the semifinals of the North Jersey, Non-Public A tournament in Scotch Plains on November 8.

Jack MacDonald took a throw-in from Kevin Wright and scored the lone goal midway through the first half.

The Rutgers Scarlet Knights, Seeing Red With a Camera

By BROOKS CRANDALL
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

PISCATAWAY - A few Saturdays ago, before one of the biggest football games in recent years for the Rutgers football team, I had a unique opportunity to work with The Rutgers University Bookstore to capture a day in the life of a Rutgers football game. The Navy had arrived at the banks of the 'Old Raritan.'

They wanted pictures of the fans, the merchandise concession stands (run by the bookstore), the band and, of course, game action. To accomplish this task, they gave me the coveted Rutgers all-access press pass. A sports fan's dream, this pass gives access to all levels of the stadium including the locker-room. I walked by the ladies room, looked at the pass and laughed to myself that maybe there was at least one limit to all access.

When you enter through the inviting main entrance, the field falls below ground level (in a natural ravine) much like entering "the big house" at the University of Michigan. Your eye moves down the field to a huge angled letter "R" in the end zone on a small hill in front of a mammoth scoreboard with an impressive television screen.

Adding to the character of the stadium experience on top of another hill, to right of the scoreboard, is a contingent of men dressed in colonial era garb with a cannon. With every Rutgers score, the cannon belts out a loud, smoky blast. Fans are reminded in bold letters on a wall above the main entrance end zone that Rutgers is the birthplace of college football.

It was a Rutgers game against Princeton in 1869 that started the tradition of college football.

I would encourage any football fan in the area to make the 30-minute drive and watch a Rutgers football game. The stadium was completely remodeled about a decade ago and now has 42,000 seats. The running track was removed from around the field and the aisles are now steeper to get the fans closer to the action. There is really not a bad seat in the house.

Before the game, the fans were storming concession stands buying hats, shirts, footballs, glasses and dozens of other items as long as it was red or had an "R" on it. The bookstore employees told me that halftime would even be bigger, especially if Rutgers was in the lead.

After a day shrouded in clouds, the sun broke through at game time and the players cast long shadows across the field. When one of the biggest crowds in Rutgers history arrived, the stands were a sea of scarlet red. The face and body painted fans were in a

pre-game frenzy, as a Rutgers win would insure the first winning season in several years.

It brought a chill to listen to the fans on one side of the stadium chanting "R" and the other side of the stadium chanting "U".

Added to the excitement of this particular game was the fact that Rutgers' opponent was The US Naval Academy. There was a boisterous section of uniformed midshipmen students in a section close to the field that cheered loudly regardless of the score.

Brian Leonard, a gifted and tough running back, scored the first touchdown of the day right in front of the delirious student section. One of the fascinating things I noticed was that the artificial surface has loose pieces of black rubber in the turf that sprayed up with every player cut.

Navy hung in there with a goal-line stand as bodies were flying and the Brian Leonard was stopped just short of the line. Navy tightened the lead to 3 points at 24 to 21 in the 4th quarter. After the season opening collapse at Illinois where Rutgers surrendered a big lead in the second half and lost, the partisan crowd was concerned.

As twilight descended on the game and my exciting day running around the stadium was coming to an end, freshman running back Raymell Rice bowled into end zone to secure the victory for Rutgers.

My camera got a 200 shot workout that day. My encore will be a basketball game this season. Given Rutgers success at "The RAC" it should be a blast as well.

Editor's Note: If you see someone walking down Cooper Road on Saturday morning with a camera in hand - it's probably Brooks Crandall. Although he loves Rutgers football, he is a "Fighting Blue Hen" of the University of Delaware. Brooks lives in Scotch Plains with his wife Jill, daughter Paige and son Grant. During the week, Brooks works in sales with *Parade Magazine* in New York City. His keen skill with his avocation has led to his photographs appearing in many publications.

Lax Assn. to Hold Classes for Cadets

The New Jersey Interscholastic Lacrosse Officials Association will be holding cadet classes throughout the state for individuals interested in officiating high school boys lacrosse. Classes will begin in January. Prior playing experience is not required. For more information, please call Mike Tatch at (973) 366-1744 or e-mail mdmts@optonline.net.



Brooks Crandall for The Westfield Leader and The Times

THE COLOR OF RUTGERS FOOTBALL... The big scarlet "R" is positioned beneath the scoreboard at Rutgers Stadium. Many fans also like the scarlet color.

Blue Devil Perrella Takes 1st In Group 4 XC Championship

Westfield High School senior Jeff Perrella crossed first in the NJSIAA Group 4 championships on the 3.1-mile course at Holmdel Park on November 12. The Westfield boys team placed ninth in its group with a 245 total. Phillipsburg continued its stellar season by placing first with a 125 total.

Unlike the Watchung Conference, Union County and group sectional meets, Perrella got a huge challenge from Matt Ciambriello of Old Bridge. Perrella, who has decided to attend William and Mary, literally got a leg up on Ciambriello and maintained it to win with a time of 15:58 to Ciambriello's 15:59. The third-placed runner, Kris Carle of Jackson, was 17 seconds off Perrella's pace at 16:15.

Brian Guteri of Union Catholic, who finished second to Perrella in the county race, crossed second in the Non-Public A race with a time of 16:18 behind Christian Brothers' Chris Horel who won with a time of 16:08. The Viking boys took 15th in the team standings with a total of 402. Christian Brothers took first at 24.

The Blue Devil girls placed 14th in their group with a total of 341. Roxbury took top honors with a 40 total. The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School boys finished 19th in the Group 3 race with a total of 408. Morris Hill took first with 56 points. Union Catholic Viking Samantha Peters finished ninth in the Non-Public A race with a time of 20:14.

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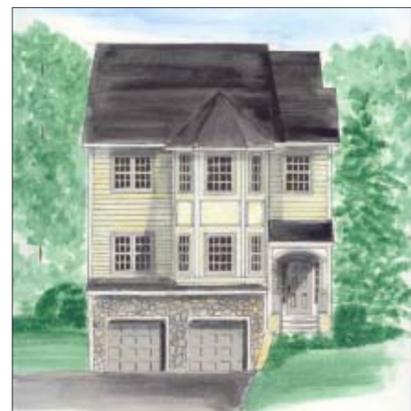
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