

SEAMON SINKS FOUR; RODRIGUES, RASOILLO ASSIST

UC Viking Soccer Boys Maul Montclair Kimberly, 4-0

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

Senior forward Mike Seamon may have been the star of the show but he had a great supporting cast as the Union Catholic High School boys soccer team mauled previously unbeaten Montclair Kimberly Academy

ways puts pressure on the defense and that frees me up a lot to get some open shots. A lot of the goals I get are credited to him also.”

Seamon's first goal came within the first minute when he took a pass from Rasoilo, on the right sideline,

the way through the first half, Danny Rodrigues spotted MKA goalie Nick Andlinger out of position and alertly drilled his kick into Seamon who headed the ball in for the second goal.

“It's fast thinking. They don't have to wait for the coach to tell them,” DeOliveira said of Rodrigues' alertness. Danny Rodrigues and Michael Bento really put on a beautiful show. The target is Michael Seamon, of course. My other forward, Kratky, I want him to hustle, hustle to interrupt their defense. He did an excellent job.”

Midway through the second half, Seamon, from 20 yards out, drilled a free kick into the upper left corner of the net. The final tally came when Seamon fed Rodrigues then Rodrigues shot the ball back to Seamon who slapped the ball into the lower left corner.

“I have been playing with Danny Rodrigues, Danny Rasoilo and Mike Bento for a few years with my club team and every goal is pretty much owed to them because they are the ones who give me the great passes,” said Seamon.

“He's definitely ready for college ball,” DeOliveira said of Seamon. “His attitude is excellent. He's a good leader.”

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*Westfield's 14-12 triumph the following year, despite 234 yards rushing by SPF's Jeff Huston.

*WHS's controversial 14-12 victory in 1973 when a last-second Bob Hering-to-Bob Calhoun touchdown was called back for a “motion” penalty. This was the game coach Gary Kehler used his son, Glen, on defense to cope with SPF's wishbone attack of Kenny Washington, Walt Roberson and Calhoun!

*Westfield's 17-6 win in 1974, when late fourth-quarter scores by Glen Kehler and tackle Don Ciliotta (30-yard interception return) prevented the upset.

*A 15-0 WHS win in 1975, when Joe Della Badia started at quarterback in a torrential downpour.

*Scotch Plains' stunning 11-7 win in 1978, its first ever of WHS; the Raiders (or Plainsmen back then) came into the game 0-3-1. The loss would cost WHS a shot at a third straight sectional title.

*The 2001 game when SPF took the lead on a late 95-yard touchdown run, only to have WHS pull it out 21-19 on a last-minute Louis Mercer-to-Brian Butts pass.

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David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

TOP VIKING TO WATCH...Viking senior Mike Seamon, No. 9, scored four goals in a 4-0 win over Montclair Kimberly Academy. Seamon had a great supporting cast.

(MKA), 4-0, in Scotch Plains on September 16. Seamon, who has verbally committed to Villanova, netted all four goals to up his career total to 53.

The 3-0 Vikings presented a consistently aggressive offensive while sweeper Brian Oshbar made sure that the ball was always heading toward Montclair Kimberly turf. Bob McGuire and Danny Rasoilo provided pesky resistance that thwarted MKA (3-1) attacks before they could even penetrate Viking territory.

“Brian reads the plays and intercepts a lot of balls. He is one of the smartest players on the field. He is the leader of the defense,” said Viking Head Coach Joe DeOliveira.

“Brian and Bobby have been standouts for the past two years. Nothing gets by them. Chris Esperon and Tony LaRocca also have been getting the job done,” said Seamon.

Viking goalie Chris Chaban made four of his six saves in the second half while the Viking offense launched 16 shots – nine in the first half – at the MKA goal. Half of those shots were fired by go-to man Seamon. The Vikings also had nine corner kicks in the first half.

“My other starting forward Brian Kratky is a real workhorse. He always runs. He doesn't stop. He al-

and ripped a left-to-right shot into the corner of the net. Two-thirds of

Mont. Kimberly	0	0	0
Union Catholic	2	2	4



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

CONCENTRATING ON THE CATCH...Raider Rashawn Strong makes a leaping grab in the memorable overtime game against the Blue Devils on September 17.

Devil's Den Another Classic Confrontation In the WHS-SPF Arch-rivalry



By BRUCE JOHNSON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

I never thought I'd ever see a worse official's ruling than that early June day in 1966, when home plate umpire Frank Greco called Jeff Tapkas safe in the bottom of the ninth inning, giving Parsippany a 2-1 win over Westfield in a Greater Newark Baseball Tournament semifinal in Verona.

My memory of that play is of Chuck Hood throwing the ball home to Ed Down, who was up the third base line blocking the plate. After a huge collision, Greco delayed his decision. After Animal Ed held up the ball to show he hadn't dropped it, Greco made the safe call. And WHS coach Norm Koury went ballistic.

At the time – and for the nearly 40 years in between – that play figured to be the worst call I would ever witness. I mean, how could a worse possible call ever be made by a referee/umpire/official? Right? That had to be as bad as it would ever get. I thought ...

Until this past Saturday afternoon, when Westfield's football team visited Scotch Plains Fanwood's Tyson Field in the 46th meeting of the arch-rivals – as opposed to just rivals, like Cranford, Union, Plainfield, Linden and Elizabeth (but not Kearny, East Side, Shabazz or Irvington, ever).

And what a shame, too! Because this might have been the most exciting game in the history of the series, which means even wilder than:

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*WHS's controversial 14-12 victory in 1973 when a last-second Bob Hering-to-Bob Calhoun touchdown was called back for a “motion” penalty. This was the game coach Gary Kehler used his son, Glen, on defense to cope with SPF's wishbone attack of Kenny Washington, Walt Roberson and Calhoun!

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This past Saturday's game easily enters into the lore of what should be an annual Thanksgiving Day game – let Plainfield play Elizabeth – with Westfield dominating for 2½ periods, Scotch Plains hanging tough and not quitting and both teams slugging it out

in the humid heat, with the temperature near 90. Even the Raiders' band and pep squads kept everybody into things, despite trailing by as many as 20 points (26-6) late in the third period.

Westfield let Scotch Plains back into the game by coughing up two fumbles deep in their territory. But it was still 26-19 when Scotch Plains mounted what would be a last-ditch attempt to tie the game and force overtime. Quarterback Colin Weber completed a couple of clutch passes to move the ball into Westfield territory with under a minute to play. But a sack and two incompletions set up a fourth down that will be remembered for as long as anybody who was there can still remember things.

Weber dropped back to pass ... he looked for a delay over the middle ... Will Harbaugh, who had 15 tackles on the day, was defending ... the pass is thrown ... for an instant, time stands still ... incomplete! Westfield can take a knee and the game is over ... the Westfield sideline is jubilant ... the Scotch Plains sideline quietly starts to pack up ... but wait! What is that? A yellow handkerchief thrown by the back judge, 30 yards downfield, is fluttering to the ground around the 25-yard line. After much discussion, the officials mark off 15 yards against Westfield, but give the Devils the ball ... then they discuss it again ... and now it's Scotch Plains' ball.

Pass interference! There were two officials within 5-10 yards of the play, watching it, and they gave no signal. But the back judge, who hadn't made a call all afternoon, woke up just in time to call a pass interference penalty that only he saw. Nobody on the Scotch Plains sidelines was yelling or screaming for a flag ... but a flag they got. And the fourth-and-18 became first-and-10.

To Scotch Plains' credit, a touchdown was still needed. Weber got a big break when his second-down pass, instead of being his fourth interception of the day (and a possible 100-yard return), was dropped by a defender. Two plays later Weber found his receiver for the tying touchdown and Scotch Plains later won in overtime.

A wild game. A wild finish. And one horrible, horrible call by a) the back judge, who made the embarrassing call, b) the umpire and side judge, who didn't overrule him and c) the referee, for the same reason. (And the difference between the 1973 flag and the 2005 flag is the '73 flag was dropped before the pass was out of Hering's hand, as opposed to a good five seconds after this past Saturday's pass fell incomplete.)

It never does any good to cry over spilled milk. It just comes out sounding like whining. But when the call is that bad, and this one was ever worse than that, well, let's just say it was good to see a couple of Westfield fans giving the officials a mouthful as they raced to their cars to get out of town quickly. As

the umpire, barely fitting into his car, started to pull away, he smiled and sarcastically waved goodbye to the two Westfielders. On his way to McDonald's no doubt, for four Big Macs and a couple of quarter-pounders with cheese.

The shame of it is that it does no good to scream and yell at the officials, because it doesn't change the outcome. It's going to be Scotch Plains 32, Westfield 29, forever. And it's going to be the worst call I'll ever see, forever. Hey, at least Frank Greco doesn't have that dishonor anymore ... though he's still a close second.

DEN TRIVIA
A member of the original New York Football Giants, this man had three sons who starred under WHS football coach Spittin' Joe Freeman in the 1940s.

COMPLETE TURNAROUND
Lost in the bitter defeat Saturday was the amazing turnaround by the Blue Devils. After looking totally lost the previous Friday at Old Bridge, WHS put on its best performance – on both sides of the ball – in years. Jayshawn King was running well, the line was opening gaping holes, the defense was outstanding, led by the all-junior linebacking group of Jack Meagher, Tyrell Simmons, Harbaugh and Ryan Yarusi.

I know my glasses are always blue-tinted, but after watching that effort, I can't see why WHS should fear Shabazz (Oct. 1 after this week's bye), Linden, Cranford or Union. Yes, Irvington and Elizabeth are big, strong teams but Westfield looked to me last week like it can play with all its future opponents.

Call me crazy but I see the playoffs as a definite possibility (whatever that is). After Old Bridge, I'd have been happy with a rematch against Edison in an NJSIAA Consolation game. Now? Now, I want playoff games!

WHO WAS THAT 22?
Nearly two decades ago, Westfield's backfield included the speedy and powerful Owen Brand, No. 22, a standout on the legendary 1977 team that is arguably the best public school football team in New Jersey history, and maybe the best ever.

Last Saturday, Brand's nephew, Greg, was on the field wearing No. 22 – for Scotch Plains-Fanwood. Ironically, there is also a No. 22 on Westfield this fall, sophomore Ryan Brand, Owen's son.

Greg Brand had an excellent game, running for over 40 yards and being involved in a dozen tackles from his inside linebacker post.

TRIVIA ANSWER
Ed McGinley, was a two-way tackle on the 1925 New York Giants. His sons Ed, Gerry and Rick all were standouts at WHS and, like their dad, all graduated from the University of Pennsylvania.

The Devil's Den appears Thursday in The Westfield Leader during the scholastic sports season. We welcome your comments and suggestions at Go Devils!

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