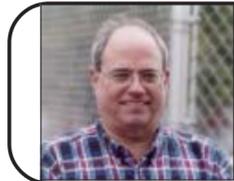


Devil's Den

Moran, Gilbert 1-2 in Quiz; Kapner latest in "Club 300"

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



What's the old saying about if a tree falls in the woods and nobody hears it? Is there a similar saying about if a contest is held in the paper and nobody enters it? We won't get into the numbers for the embarrassing low turnout of entries into The Den's WHS Sports Trivia Quiz, because we come to praise those who did enter, those who took the time to have fun with our 33 often-difficult questions.

The two top performances were by WHS graduates Bruce (Space) Moran ('76) and Jeff Gilbert ('61). Moran had 32 correct answers, and Gilbert was close behind with 25. Also scoring well were Steve Merrill ('71) with 17 and Billy Kane ('77) with 16.

Ironically, Moran's only miss was on the question about a Monier being an original owner of the Jolly Trolley. The question said ex-WHS football Joe Monier, when it was Dave Monier who was the ex-WHS footballer; Joe was a swimmer at Pingry. Otherwise Moran was perfect.

By far the most interesting answer came from Gilbert. For 11-37-170, who said 64 was the number of consecutive balls thrown by Pete Love in a 1960 game against Clark, when Love walked 10 in 3 2/3 innings.

Anyhow, here are the answers to last week's quiz:

By the numbers

- 1-7-11 The score when Scotch Plains notched its first football win over WHS in 1978.
- 2-16-21 The score when Cranford beat Westfield in 1931, handing Bob Duncan his first loss after going 17-0-4 in his first 21 games as football coach.
- 3-24-0 Westfield's winning score in its first game vs. Montclair in 1969.
- 4-27-13 The score of the first night game at WHS, a win over Scotch Plains.
- 5-11-37-170 The number of state, regional and district wrestling champions for WHS.
- 6-0 Points scored by the 1937 football team.
- 7-11 Number of county championships won by the baseball team, consecutive county championships won by girls cross-country teams (1991-2001).
- 8-14 Football numbers of Hall of Famers Gerry McGinley and Joe Monninger.
- 9-15 Unbeaten WHS football teams (counting the 1901 team's 7-0-1 mark).
- 10-29 Combined state championships for the boys and girls swimming teams.
- 11-30 Number of wins by the 1985 softball team.
- 12-36 Points scored by Glen Kehler against Middletown in 1973; longest football win streak in WHS history.
- 13-40 Length of Jay Cook's career-ending hitting streak in baseball; Frank Tokash's string of consecutive scoreless innings in 1967.
- 14-42 Consecutive years WHS boys swim team won the county championship (1957-98).
- 15-46 Career touchdowns by Rick McGinley.
- 16-52 Yards of longest WHS field goal, by Lee Waring in 1931 against Plainfield; total number of county swim titles for WHS boys.
- 17-64 The number of goals scored in 1998 by ice hockey star Ron Kashlak.
- 18-97 The longest scoring plays in WHS football history: Brian Ciemiecki's kickoff

return vs. Kearny in 1994 and Ad Ulbrich's fumble return against Rahway in 1928.

- 19-300 Score of WHS bowler Scott Bridgeman during the 1997 sectional championships.
- 20-1944 The year WHS vs. Plainfield first became a Thanksgiving Day game.
- 21-1949 The first state sectional baseball title for WHS; the last sectional football title for coach Joe Freeman.

True or false?

22. The first varsity wrestling team was in 1958-59 under coach Gary Kehler? False; there was a team under coach Harper Adams in 1941.
23. The original owner of the Jolly Trolley was an ex-WHS footballer named Joe Monier? False; it was Dave Monier. Joe was a Pingry swimmer.
24. Legendary singer/athlete/activist Paul Robeson played varsity baseball at WHS before moving out to Somerville? True.
25. The boys lacrosse team's first "home" was Sycamore Field, behind the new firehouse on Central Ave.? True.
26. The baseball team once played home games at Tamaques Park, Unami Park in Garwood and Nomahegan Park in Cranford? True.
27. Kathy Federici won individual titles at second and third singles for the WHS boys tennis team in 1980 and 1981, respectively? True.
28. Westfield defeated Bridgewater East (1986) and Mountain Lakes (1987) for its two boys lacrosse championships. False; it was Bridgewater East both years.
29. The boys soccer team's first varsity win was over Scotch Plains-Fanwood in 1963? True.
30. Sally Stokes was a co- or tri-captain of the first three girls soccer teams? True.
31. Bob King, Tim Goski, Boo Bowers and Dan Deserio are the only boys to score over 500 points in one basketball season? False; Goski never reached 500 (494 as a senior).
32. The boys cross country team won either a county, conference, sectional or group title every year that Walt Clarkson was the coach (1960-82)? True.
33. Jacki Booth made first-team All-State three straight years (1976-78) in three different positions (outfield, catcher, pitcher)? True.

CLUB 300 EXPANDS

Congratulations to George Kapner, who posted coaching victory No. 300 in boys tennis last week. Kapner came into the season with a 298-84 record in 15 years. Only Tony Berardo (312-52 in 15 years), who Kapner replaced in 1991, has more boys tennis victories. Kapner joins Bob Brewster (baseball), Kathy Luckey (girls tennis), Gary Kehler (golf), Carol Donner (softball), Berardo and Mike Tirone (bowling), who reached the milestone this winter.

DE SARNO IS OFFICIAL

Jim DeSarno, a former assistant at Shabazz and Linden and most recently the head coach at Kinnelon, has been named the 12th head football coach in the modern era of WHS football. His hiring continues an amazing trend where no former Blue Devil player has ever been the school's head football coach.

The 36-year-old had an 18-32 record in five years at Kinnelon, but that record

might be deceiving since Kinnelon has never been known as a football factory. He led the Colts to a rare playoff appearance in 2002, a loss to Butler. (Long-time WHS fans may remember Butler, which posted a 14-12 win over Les Zorge's 1960 WHS team.)

The last time WHS went out on a limb and hired an "unknown" head coach was in 1961, after Zorge stepped down, when then-assistant Gary Kehler was given the post.

Despite having gone 1-9 each of the last two seasons, WHS is not without talent. In fact, there's a mother lode of good players returning.

"When I came to Kinnelon, we had to build the program up," DeSarno told www.sidelinechatter.com. "We know we have some really good kids at Westfield, and they can certainly be a good football team again. There is such great football history at Westfield. I'd like to be a part of that fine tradition."

I don't know about you, but right now it's almost tough to keep my mind on WHS baseball, lacrosse, softball, tennis, golf, and track. It feels like football season has started. And that is how it was "back in the day," when WHS was a state power and football consumed everybody, year-round.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

The Westfield traveling A basketball team recently put the finishing touches on an outstanding season. The A's went 27-3, won three tournaments and had a 24-game win streak at one point. There were some familiar local names on the team, including Dylan Elliott, whose dad Rick was co-captain of the 1979 WHS football team; Pat Decker, whose dad Tom was a big gun at Holy Trinity in 1974; Bryon Lessner, whose other brother Mike saw varsity playing time at WHS this winter as a freshman; and Dave (Big Country) Kane, son of 1977 WHS point guard Bill. Also on the team were Evan Garfinkel, Eric Shor, Jack (The Beast) Douglas, Zack Birkenhath, Jake Boyle, Mark Luino, Matt (Duke) Storcks and Sanjay Sujjan.

A WINNING RETURN

Shannon Wagner pitched WHS to the 1998 Union County Tournament championship (winning 9-0 in the final over Roselle Park, where her father, John, was the athletic director) and had a 36-13 career record in three years under coach Maggie McFadden. Wagner was also a co-captain, with Colleen Ryan, on the 1998 team that went 16-6, hitting a career-best .486 that season.

So it was a little strange to see Wagner (now Shannon Norton) on the third-base sideline last week, as the first-year softball coach at Cranford. The Cougars delivered for her that day, rallying for a 5-3 victory on Elena Morge's three-run home run in the top of the seventh. WHS had connected for back-to-back homers by Jenny LaSpata and Jillian Olsen in the second inning. Back-to-back dingers is rare enough, but both went to almost the exact same spot in right-center field!

The Devil's Den appears Thursday in The Westfield Leader during the scholastic sports season. Contact us with comments, suggestions or trivia questions at bj1019@aol.com. Go Devils!

WHITTEMORE 3-FOR-4, 3 RBI; D'ANGELO 2 HITS, 2 RBI

Roselle Park Panthers Rock Viking Baseball Boys, 11-10

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

The visiting Roselle Park High School baseball team accumulated 11 runs in the first three innings and held on to defeat the Union Catholic squad, 11-10, in Scotch Plains on April 6. Viking pitcher Steve D'Angelo experienced control prob-

lems, pitched one-and-two-thirds innings and allowed eight hits, eight walks and seven runs.

The 1-1 Panthers also seemed to find the right spots to collect four runs off reliever Anthony Marsal in the third inning, but Marsal pitched hitless ball the rest of the way before running into a jam in the seventh.

Shortstop Chris Whittemore relieved and defused a bases-loaded situation, striking out two and retiring the last on a ground out.

Of the 2-1 Vikings' 12 hits, Whittemore went 3-for-4 with three RBI. D'Angelo whacked two hits and had two RBI and designated hitter Mike Honeyman knocked in two runs.



GIVING IT HIS ALL... Viking shortstop Chris Whittemore had a big day with three RBI and tamed three Panthers in relief in the seventh. Roselle Park held on for an 11-10 win.

Fred K. Lecomte for The Westfield Leader and The Times

the top of the first inning. The Vikings answered to tie the score in the bottom of the inning. Matt Oliveto and Kristian Cortezo singled and scored on Whittemore's double. Chris Esperon and Honeyman both walked to load the pads. D'Angelo stepped to the plate and sliced a two-run double down the right field line.

In the second inning, the Panthers snarled with three runs highlighted by four free passes, an RBI sacrifice fly and an RBI single by Steve Tansey. Leading, 7-4, Roselle Park added its final four runs in the third capped by Mark Garcia's RBI double, Brian Alaburta's two-run single and a bases-loaded balk. Coach Reagan had seen enough and turned to Marsal. Esperon closed out the inning with a major league diving scoop in center to prevent further scoring.

The Vikings scored a run in the fourth. Marsal walked, stole second and scored when Oliveto rifled a single up the middle. The Vikings then added a five-run attack in the sixth, making the score 11-10. Cortezo drew a walk, swiped second and scored on Whittemore's single. Esperon ripped an RBI double. Tony LaRocca legged out a bunt single and swiped second. Honeyman stepped up and slapped a two-run single and Jimmy Thornton yanked a two-out RBI single.

In the seventh, Marsal felt the fright when he put a Panther on every pad. Whittemore took the mound and quickly tamed the occupants with two strikeouts and an infield grounder.

"Marsal pitched a little bit last year so we felt confident going to him in relief today. Whittemore did a great job in the big win over Scotch Plains and was able to throw strikes and get us out of a jam - bases loaded, no outs and they didn't score. He's mentally tough and he just wills himself to get outs. I thought we would have had the momentum on our side," said Reagan.

"I get in there and my main objective is not letting that guy score from third. I basically reared back and tried to hit my spots with the fastball, get ahead of him so I can throw the curve ball," explained Whittemore after the game.

In the bottom of the seventh, Esperon banded a two-out double. LaRocca reached first on a throwing error and swiped second. Honeyman walked to load the bases but a slow grounder to second marked the putout to preserve the victory for the Panthers.

"Today we put a lot of guys on base and gave them too many base runners and a lot of run scoring opportunities. They took advantage and jumped on us early," said Viking Head Coach Jim Ragan Jr. "However, the kids didn't quit. They battled and battled and I think we are going to have a nice season. We have a lot of plusses going on."

The Panthers took advantage of four walks, a two-run throwing error, a sacrifice fly and an RBI single by Mike Tumblety to take a 4-0 lead in

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Roselle Park	434	000	0	11
Union Catholic	400	105	0	10

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