

ANTON, BARON WIN 1 INDIVIDUAL, 1 RELAY EACH

Blue Devil Swim Boys Whip Mo'town, 114-56, in Semis

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

Shaving and tapering translated to improved individual performances as the Westfield High School boys swimming team prepared for its big North Jersey, Public A finals showdown with Bridgewater-Raritan on February 20 with a 114-56 whipping of Morristown in Westfield on February 16. The Blue Devils won eight of the

11 events but, most importantly, several of the boys who placed in the top three recorded personal best performances.

"We are swimming exactly how we want to be swimming now. Fast! Everybody is getting better, better and better. Everybody is shaved and our second shaves are usually faster swimmers than our first shaves," said Blue Devil coach Bruce Johnson.

Led by Phil Anton with a personal-best time of 2:10.98, the Blue Devils swept the 200-IM with Dan McGrory and Max Blum touching 2-3, respectively.

"Almost every time we had was a best time. The IM, all three guys, Phil did a best time, Dan dropped nine seconds and Max dropped five seconds," said Coach Johnson. "That's the kind of stuff we are looking for. So guys who were in the 2:20, 2:25 range, now are in the 2:13 range. Guys, who were in the 2:13 range, need to get down to the 2:07 range. Then we can be competitive with Bridgewater."



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
Blue Devil Matt Gelmetti in the 100-breaststroke

Luke Baron touched first in the 100-backstroke with a time of 57.13 and Kyle Murray took third. Baron, Anton, Matt Bluffield and Colin Sullivan combined to place first in the 200-medley relay with a time of 1:46.58. Murray, Tom Fringer, Evan Vanarelli and Brandon Cuba finished third.

Cuba took top honors in a Blue Devil sweep of the 50-freestyle with a time of 23.46. Baron and Murray finished 2-3 with respective times of 23.61 and 24.25. Pat Daurio won the 200-freestyle with a personal-best 1:52.91 and placed second in the 500-freestyle with a personal-best 5:06.37. Matt Morgan touched second in the 200-free at 1:53.31 and Blum touched third in the 500-free at 5:49.15.

Morgan, however, finished first in the 100-breaststroke with a time of 1:10.22 and Matt Gelmetti was third at 1:12.3. Rob Whitehead, Gelmetti, McGrory and Justin Lo won the 200-free relay with a time of 1:42.74. Chris Joyce, James Kazazis, Bluffield and Mike Rediker finished third in the event. Matt Green won the 100-freestyle with a time of 51.21 and Matt Haddad finished third.

Bluffield at 59.39 - first time this year under a minute - and Sullivan at 1:01.46 placed 2-3 in the 100-butterfly. Rediker, Haddad, Mike Kane and Ben Holt touched second in the 400-free relay with a time of 3:56.67.

In some of the events, a few Blue Devils, who were ahead in the swimming portion, lost valuable ground in the turns, which cost them a higher placement.

"Our guys, for some reason, have a tendency to get too close to the wall. In a lot of cases, it's a high school only kid who swims only three months a year and the kid who is making the good turns swims 12 months a year," explained Johnson.

Looking ahead to the showdown with Bridgewater-Raritan, Johnson said, "This may be the best team that

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Devil's Den

Forget the Super Bowl, Who'd Win Brie Bowl?

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

When I was growing up, college football had a limited number of bowl games (and none of them had stupid advertising names in front of them): There was the Rose, Cotton, Sugar, and Orange. Then along came the Gator and Peach and now instead of eight teams playing on one day, there's about 40 playing from early December until a week into January.

Then one day, some yokel working for the National Football League came up with the idiotic idea of naming the NFL Championship Game the "Super" Bowl. Pro football was just about catching up to college football in popularity at the time. Anyhow, I'm not sure if that guy was fired the next day but, amazingly, the dumb idea ended up becoming one of the great ideas of all-time. The word Super Bowl and Roman numerals have gone hand in hand for XL years now.

One night at work, during my days at the *Asbury Park Press*, a game was called in between Rumson-Fair Haven and Holmdel high schools. I jokingly called it "The Brie Bowl" in honor of all the upper crust, silver spoon-fed, bon vivant types who live in those towns (and yes, I admit, my family did live in Fair Haven before moving to Westfield!).

That recently got me to thinking, what would be the big Brie Bowl matchups of the best athletic/affluent schools in each of the counties of New Jersey? Here's the Den's View of the opening round matchups:

Note: Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Salem and Warren (what the hell is brie?) counties have no known eligible towns.

Bergen: Ridgewood over Paramus.
Burlington: Moorestown over Shawnee.

Camden: Haddonfield over Cherry Hill East.

Essex: Glen Ridge over Millburn.
Hunterdon: Delaware Valley over South Hunterdon.

Middlesex: South River vs. Dunellen. Just kidding. East Brunswick over Metuchen.

Monmouth: Rumson-Fair Haven over Holmdel.

Morris: Mendham over Chatham.

Ocean: Southern over Lacey.

Mercer: Princeton over Hopewell Valley.

Passaic: West Milford over Wayne Hills/Valley.

Somerset: Ridge over Bernards.

Sussex: Vernon over High Point.

Union: Westfield over Summit.

We'll give Bergen and Union byes in the next round, and the matchups continue alphabetically from here:

Moorestown over Haddonfield, meets Ridgewood in next round.

Glen Ridge over Delaware Valley.
Rumson-Fair Haven over East

Brunswick.
Mendham over Southern.
Princeton over West Milford.
Ridge over Vernon, meets Westfield in next round.

As you can see, we are now getting into some SERIOUS brie as we open the Elite Eight.

Moorestown wins a wild battle over Ridgewood, with the Quakers' superiority in girls' sports the difference.

Rumson-Fair Haven crushes Glen Ridge, with Bruce Springsteen outcheering Tom Cruise in the stands. Princeton over Mendham in the battle of Route 206.

Westfield over Ridge, no contest as blue-colored Blue Devils eliminate green-and-white Red Devils.

You wanna talk about ascot-wearing, cake-eating, brie-consuming, elitist public schoolers, how's this final four: Moorestown, Rumson-Fair Haven, Princeton and Westfield?

In the semifinals, Moorestown easily takes out Rumson-Fair Haven, while Westfield struggles past the Little Tigers of Princeton. Results of Brie Bowl I will be printed in next week's Devil's Den.

DEN FACTOID

Jackie Reddy, a 2002 graduate of Notre Dame High School in Lawrence Township, scored 1,113 career points for the Fighting Irish. She's one of 14 1,000-point scorers at the Mercer County school.

That she played basketball shouldn't come as a surprise. Her father, Steve, was a two-year starter, including WHS's 1972 state Group 4 championship team. And her uncles, Tom and Mark, both also were two-year starters for WHS teams in the mid- to late-1960s.

But where'd Jackie's 1,113 points come from? Her two uncles and father combined to score 949 points! Mark led with 403, followed by Steve (301) and Tom (245). Mostly the Reddy brothers were point guards, whose job was to get the ball to guys like Bob Felter, Tom Scott and Tim Goski.

AN 0-FOR-9 DROUGHT

The WHS girls swim team has been one of the strongest in the state, since Marilyn Diamond and boys coach Chuck Gantner started the program back in 1977. There have been 296 wins (through last Friday) and just 58 losses, along with 24 Union County titles, 14 sectional championships and nine state crowns.

The last state title for the girls swim team was in 1999, when WHS defeated Rumson-Fair Haven 88-82 in the Public B Division final. (A small Group 4 school since the early 1960s, WHS was down in Group 3 for that one school year.)

Amazingly, the WHS girls have been in nine Public A finals in the last 16 years, and have won none of them. Here's the year-by-year Public A final

breakdown:
1990 (coach Peggy Wright): lost to Camden Catholic 81-75, ending WHS's 74-meet win streak, still the second longest in state history for girls teams, behind Immaculate Heart Academy.

1995 (Bev Torok): lost to West Windsor-Plainsboro 109-61.
1996 (Bev Torok): lost to Vineland 113-57.

1998 (Bev Torok): lost to Cherry Hill East 87½-82½.

2000 (Bev Torok): lost to Cherry Hill East 86-84.

2001 (Martha Heinzelman): lost to Vineland 113-57.

2002 (Martha Heinzelman): lost to Vineland 120-50.

2003 (Martha Bailey): lost to Vineland 106½-63½.

2005 (Jaime Ruszala): lost to Vineland 105-65.

Vineland, which had won the last five state Public A titles, was looking to make a winner of John Casadia in his final year as the only coach the program has ever known. But the Fighting Clan was upset last week by Cherry Hill West 87-83 in the semifinals of the South Jersey Public A tournament. West is obviously loaded, but its times aren't out of reach of most of the WHS girls. After WHS beat Bridgewater last Monday and Cherry Hill West knocked off cross-township rival Cherry Hill East, they would be the favorites to win in tonight's semifinals and meet in Sunday's state Public A final. First the Devil girls have to get past a solid Lawrence team that topped West Windsor-Plainsboro South in the Central Jersey A final.

IT'S A GOOD START

The WHS wrestling team concluded its dual-meet season with a 12-5 record, losing its final three matches to Rahway, Somerville and Edison. The last two losses were decided in the final bout, and the one to Edison was in the opening round of the North Section 2 Group 4 tournament at Phillipsburg's fabled Pit.

The only bad part of the season, from the Den's View, was the loss to Scotch Plains-Fanwood. But coming off a winless 2004-05 season, when there were more forfeits than bouts wrestled, it'd be silly to quibble after the huge turnaround.

Now if coach Glen Kurz could only get tough kids like Will Harbaugh, Ryan Yarusi, Sean Ferro, Matt Ince and John Dugan to wrestle. And there's probably many other guys out there who could help return WHS to state prominence.

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!

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