



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
TRICKY FOOTWORK AND SPEED...Blue Devil quarterback Tom Bonard, No. 3, kept the Cardinals off-balance and tossed a 10-yard TD pass to Sean Ferro in the 102nd meeting of the two teams.

Blue Devil Soccer Girls Made Huge Leap, Finished 15-4-2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

ior striker Corrine Parkinson worked extremely well with McCarthy and had great vision to lead the team in assists with 15, while netting 10 goals. "Corrine was a presence all over the field. She was really key in distributing the ball. She played a lot of club soccer in the off-season, which showed on the field. Erin could turn it on from a dead stop. Whoever the other team put on her was their strongest defender," said Wertheimer.

Sophomore Tara Handza had a nose for the ball, especially at close range, and booted in 16 goals, while adding six assists.

"Those are great numbers for a sophomore. She came up with some big goals - one against Cranford in the county semifinals and two against the Raiders. Her biggest strength was knowing where to be at the right time," said Wertheimer.

Senior outside midfielder Julie Shelman fired in three goals but was second on the team in assists with eight.

"She was a great leader on the field. This was her best season," said Wertheimer.

Senior Erica Ammermuller, who

had the game-winning goal against East Brunswick, found the net five times and had three assists. Tina Cognetti had five assists and two goals, Hannah Wharan had three goals and two assists and Alli Macdonald netted four goals and two assists. Senior MaryKate Luker netted three goals and two assists. Francesca Welhan had three goals, Shannon Murray had two goals and Brittany Cortinhal had two goals and an assist. Jess Campo had two assists.

Junior keeper Claire Bennett, who sat out last season with a broken leg, recorded 10 shutouts and surely appreciated Kape's coverage, but when shots did get through, she was there to make the save.

"The fact that she was so aggressive and confident, gave the rest of the defense confidence. She saved a penalty kick in the county finals," said Wertheimer who is very optimistic about next year and whose captains will be Bennett and Stephanie Cortinhal.

"We are losing a lot of great players but we have a lot of great players waiting in the wings. I think you are going to see big things from them next year."



Fred Lecomte for The Westfield Leader and The Times
PUSHING FORWARD FOR YARDAGE...Raider Greg Brand, No. 22, rushed for 74 yards and one TD. Mike Alleman, No. 74, opens a hole.

Minutemen Footballers Stuff Raiders in 'Turkey' Classic

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

fun to be around. That's all you anyone can ask for," said Raider Head Coach Steve Ciccotelli. "Elizabeth is a very good football team. Our efforts were always there. As I told them, 'If losing a football game is the worst thing in life, then God bless you.' We need to keep that in perspective. I know sometimes people don't and, as coaches, you get frustrated since you play in front of parents and fans. No one got hurt, everyone played hard and it was all about the effort."

Elizabeth burned the Raiders with two scores in the first quarter. The first came on an eight play, 58-yard drive capped by Eargle's eight-yard keeper with 7:22 on the clock. Five minutes later, Graham scored on an 11-yard end-around to make the score 13-0.

Just 80 seconds into the second quarter, Graham finished off a drive with a one-yard TD run to extend the lead to 20-0 but the Raiders came back. After a nice kickoff return by Brand, Chervenyak and his offensive line engineered a 60-yard drive on seven plays, including Brand's 27-yard scramble up the gut. Keith Baker got a couple of nice blocks and raced to the 28 yard. Tom Pennella broke for 15 yards and Brand, on back-to-back carries, put the ball on the one before pounding in for his TD with 6:26 left. Rowbothan added the PAT to make it 20-7 at the half.

Elizabeth intercepted Chervenyak and tacked on its fourth TD in the

third quarter. With the ball on the 19, Graham got the handoff, reversed direction and raced to the three where Eargle rolled untouched into the end zone at 6:30.

In the fourth quarter, Minutemen Stephen Hunter added a seven-yard TD run to make the score, 34-7. Raider Jason Zelesnik followed with a nice kickoff return to the 40-yard line. Chervenyak hooked up with tight end Baker who bashed to the Minutemen's 20. Brand smashed for six yards and an Elizabeth offside penalty spotted the ball on the nine where Chervenyak aired his nine-yard TD pass to the sure-handed Rowbotham with 3:49 remaining. Rowbotham booted the extra point.

"We started good, going 4-1 this year, then we just lost it a little with our defense giving up more points than we should have. We had nothing to lose tonight and, even though the score was bad in this game, we all were having a great time on the field and it was the most fun I had this year," said Baker. "They're a good team and tough to beat."

When asked about the meaning of some of the emotional tears and genuine smiles after the game, Baker added, "All these players have lots of heart. They leave everything on the field and for us to go out with a loss just got to us a little."

"One thing that coach Ciccotelli always says is that we always come out and we always give it our best and I agree with that," said Brand. "This group of seniors has been together for a long time and we're like family. In each and every game, win or lose, we do it together. Some of us will play in college but for the most part, this was our last game."

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Blue Devils Devour Cardinals In 'Turkey' Grid Classic, 17-7

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

seven-yard sack and teamed with Ryan Scanlon for a six-yard sack. Defensive tackle Santo Nardi, who pressured Clark constantly, recorded two sacks, including a 16-yard crush that forced the Cardinals to punt from their own four.

"It's was possibly my last game. I wanted to go out there and have the best game of my life. I give thanks to our families and everybody who was with us for moral support. It was a great experience for us," expressed Nardi who also noted that his quick feet allowed him to outmaneuver the offensive guard.

The Blue Devils appeared to have loaded up on too much tryptophan - known as the dream amino acid, which is found in turkey - on Thanksgiving Day and fumbled three times in the first half. The Cardinals recovered two of them and one was at the Westfield 15-yard line that set up their TD that gave them a 7-3 halftime lead.

Cornell's 13-yard gain on a fake punt allowed the Blue Devils to complete a 14-play, 58-yard scoring drive that ended with Bonard's field goal with 11:08 left in the half. Westfield fumbled a punt return that was recov-

ered by Rashon Roach at the 15. Four plays later, with 5:00 left in the half, Clark hit Allen for the six-yard TD.

Nardi's big sack in the third quarter gave the Blue Devils great field position at the Plainfield 33. Ten plays later, with 3:30 on the clock, Bonard found Ferro for the TD.

Meagher's fumble recovery came as a result of a botched field goal attempt that was blocked by Harbaugh. Then after another Cardinal drive stalled on the Westfield 45, Cornell and Allen alternated a series of big runs until Cornell plunged over the goal line to make the score 17-7 with 0:47 remaining in the game. The Cardinals made a desperate attempt to score but Bonard intercepted Clark's pass as time ran out.

"I'm glad that it was seniors we counted on to win the game for us, on offense and on defense," said DeSarno.

"We were down at halftime. We said we didn't come this far to be five-and-five. We were going to be six-and-four. This was like winning the championship," said Cornell.

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David B. Corbin (October 2006 file) for The Westfield Leader and The Times
MASTER OF DEFENSE...Blue Devil senior Gillian Kape, No. 3, used her speed and ability to position herself well to be nominated for All-American consideration.

Kimberley Aslanian Haley

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