

Edison Stops Blue Devils, 10-4, In NJ Section 2 Baseball Finals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

fifth inning. A combination of defensive confusion, two singles, two walks, a sacrifice fly and a fielder's choice on a bunt that resulted in all runners being safe earned the Eagles three runs in the bottom of the second inning. "It was a tough sky. Balls were hit. We didn't get back. We had some tough plays that we just didn't make today," said Brewster. Three of the Blue Devils' runs came in the top of the fourth inning and new hope temporarily sprouted. Shapiro (2-for-3, run scored) singled and Joe Vall-Llobera (2-for-4, run scored) whacked a home run over the leftfield fence. Cappiello (2-for-4, RBI, run scored) followed with a double, Mike Venezia (1-for-2) singled, Antonelli was hit-by-pitch and Bonard hopped an RBI single. The growth of hope quickly withered, however, in the bottom of the inning. Steve Nappe (2-for-2, 2 RBI) lofted a high solo homer over the leftfield fence. Dylan Laguna and

Cal Castanzo poked back-to-back singles and Kevin Ryan ripped an RBI single. Shukis (3-for-3, 2 runs scored) smacked a two-run double to give the Eagles a 7-3 lead. In the fifth, Olsen and Shapiro both singled and Cappiello chopped an RBI single but the rally was cut short by a double play. The Blue Devils' glimmer of hope dimmed even more when Eagle Alberto Ruiz blasted a three-run homer in the sixth inning. "You have to give them (Edison) credit. They hit the heck out of the ball. They played very well. They turned double plays. They are a good solid team," said Brewster who added, "I will take our team into battle all the time. They are the nicest group of kids and they all worked their tails all season."

Westfield	000	310	0	4
Edison	030	403	x	10

Reading is Good For You



goleader.com/subscribe

See photos of Sports: on www.goleader.com
Westfield/Edison Baseball SPF/Elizabeth Baseball Group 3 Track & Field SPF/Westfield Prom Pictures



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times
THE WAY THE BALL BOUNCES...The ball bounces in the dirt beside Blue Devil shortstop Tom Bonard as Eagle Jared Shukis steals second base.



Devil's Den Tennis Team Puts Itself Among WHS's Best Ever

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

(Note: The Devil of the Year story will appear in next week's Devil's Den, the season finale for 2006-07.)

In old-time newspaper terminology, "30" meant, the end, no more, finished, done.

In high school sports, 30 is a number that is not easily achieved if you're talking about victories. In over 100 years of high-level varsity sports at WHS, only two teams have reached that lofty number: the 1985 softball team went 30-3 and the 2007 boys tennis team last week put the finishing touches on a 30-0 season. Unfortunately, the softball team lost 1-0 in eight innings to Washington Township in the state final, while the tennis squad captured the Group 4 title, then put a cherry on top of the whipped cream with a Tournament of Champions victory.

A couple of numbers to consider:
1) It was WHS's first state tennis championship since (amazingly) 1987.
2) It was the school's first unbeaten tennis team since (gasp!) 1957.
3) There were no seniors (!!) among the top 10 players (four singles, six doubles), although one senior-to-be (Akis Evangelidis) is reportedly moving back to Greece.

You knew this team had a decent shot at running the table after it beat second-ranked Cherry Hill East, 3-2, in the final of the Bryan Bennett Invitational back in late April, and did it without top singles players Kevin Shallcross (USTA event) and Ravi Netravali (injury).

From May 24-31 at Mercer County Park, it became pretty obvious that WHS opponents would be starting with a 2-0 deficit, losing at both doubles. Freshmen Graeme Stahl and Justin Snyder dominated at second doubles, while Evangelidis and Dean Thompson handed one unbeaten first doubles team after another their first defeats of the year.

That meant that every opponent had to sweep singles, where Shallcross, Netravali and James Chu (along with Greg Lupescu) are each very tough to beat. There might come a day when all three are "off" their game, but it didn't happen in 2007. In fact, in the Tournament of Champions final, after Chu and Netravali polished off their Newark Academy opponents in straight sets for a 4-0 lead, Shallcross engaged in one of the best matches you'll ever see against Bobby MacTaggart before falling, 8-6, in a third-set tiebreaker. It was as intense as sports gets. The 1987 team went 27-1

under coach Tony Berardo, losing to Christian Brothers Academy, 3-2, in the final of the Newark Academy Tournament. But led by Joe Deer (30-4), Glenn Kiesel (31-1) and Jeff Kopelman at singles, and the doubles teams of Mike Drury-Mark Pizzi, and Adam Sherman-Brennan Smith, they blitzed everybody, including Delbarton 5-0 in the All-Groups final.

"Slick" Sam Bunting's 1957 group was led by unbeaten Tom Richardson, whose older brother Ham, was the top-ranked amateur in the U.S. in 1956 and whose younger brother Dave was a standout in the early '60s. Terry Bentley and Perry Fisher also were at singles, with Jon Hinebauch-Steve Falk at first doubles and Bob Kolodny-Tom Gilson and sometimes Jim Seelye at second doubles.

The only other unbeaten teams for WHS were in 1931, when Alston Adams' club featuring Remington (Rem) Merry, Jim Johnston, Henry Howell, George Brownell and John Donaldson, went 11-0 and won 52 of its 55 individual matches; and in 1942, when Bunting's group went 10-0 behind Hal Richardson (no relation to Ham, Tom or Dave), George Mead, Bud Luessonhop, Dick Thomas, Dave Reier, John Dietz and Steve Stockslager. Thomas and Stockslager won 6-3, 1-6, 6-4 in the decisive second doubles match in the 3-2 victory over Rutherford that earned WHS the state Group 3 championship.

With the seven of the above eight underclassmen returning next year, along with Matt Gralla and Evan Eisenberg, both former county doubles champions, the lone graduation losses for coach George Kapner are senior captains Jack Trimble and Jon Ramalho. Trimble was a two-time county doubles champion and played with Thompson in the state Doubles Tournament last spring. The talent level on this year's team forced the captains to play an even tougher, but equally important, role as the team's leaders, getting the players mentally ready and focused.

And 30-0 shows the kind of job they did. It was one of the greatest seasons any WHS team has ever put together, in any sport.

BASEBALL WRAP
The last time WHS played Edison in the state tournament was 1968, when Dick Zimmer was the first-year WHS coach and team's catcher and captain was Bob Brewster. That day produced a 6-2 victory for the Blue Devils.

Last Friday wasn't as successful for coach Brewster, whose team closed out a 16-10 season with a 10-4 loss to the Eagles. So was 16-10 a successful or disappointing season? Consider that Justin Olsen was the lone starter back from the powerhouse 2006 team that went 20-7. Tom Bonard played quite a

bit, but only had 21 at-bats (and four hits) in '06. Otherwise, the entire team was basically all new to the varsity. And after expected ace Joe Schurig was lost before the season to a shoulder injury, only Evan Shapiro had any real varsity pitching experience, having gone 2-0 as a sophomore.

The team got off to an 8-1 start before a stunning 12-8 loss when Elizabeth scored 11 in the bottom of the seventh. Things started unraveling and never really got totally back on track, though there were some nice moments in the state tournament, with three straight wins capped by the sectional semifinal win at Phillipsburg.

With the top three pitchers (Shapiro, Chris Jenkins and Mike Cappiello) returning, along with the Nos. 3-6 hitters (Olsen, Shapiro, Joe Vall-Llobera and Cappiello) you have to be looking forward to the '08 season. But it's never easy saying good-bye to seniors like Bonard, Mike Venezia, Sean Ferro, Kevin Hennessy, Dan Melillo and Pete Antonelli.

POOR MANNERS
The crowd at last Friday's sectional baseball final at Edison was the biggest we've seen in years, and it included quite a large contingent of WHS students, which was really good to see.

On the not-so-good side, a large group of WHS fans took up a spot down the first-base line that was technically on the field of play. The umpire asked them to move out of play, but two minutes later they had returned to their original spot. Several Edison parents standing 20 feet away politely asked them several times to move, but they were completely ignored. Then, after the WHS students had left, there were Gatorade, water bottles and candy wrappers strewn all over the area they had left. A couple of Edison mothers shook their heads and whispered something to each other as the group headed for their cars.

One of those ladies went to the refreshment stand and returned with a big garbage bag, which the two (along with a couple of WHS fans) proceeded to fill. I can just imagine her telling somebody at the stand: "Do you have a big garbage bag I can borrow? We need it to clean up the mess left by a bunch of those snotty Westfield kids." It was very humbling.

RECORD EFFORT
Ryan Yarusi's 10-goal performance against Cherry Hill West in the state tournament opener was a WHS record for goals in a lacrosse game. The old mark of eight was shared by Brendan Flaherty (1986 vs. Livingston) and Matt Connell (1991 vs. Columbia). Also in that game, Joe Simone tied his month-old record for assists in a game with eight.

BE TRUE TO YOUR SCHOOL
In addition to the normal collection of parents, relatives and assorted WHS nuts,

there were a couple of old-time WHS baseball guys among the huge crowd at last week's sectional semifinal in Phillipsburg. Steve (Steamboat) Merrill (Class of '71) and his young son Wes came down from Washington, Warren County, and former WHS catcher and state wrestling champion Kurt Stiefken ('72) also came by, after serving as an umpire in the P'burg-Warren Hills softball game. Kurt, who at one time was the player-manager of the Westfield Merchants, now lives in Alexandria and says he's still playing ball, "catching nine innings," in an Over-40 League. His sons Conor and Trevor are varsity wrestlers at Delaware Valley Regional. And regular rooster Ryan Mann ('95), co-captain of the 27-3 team in 1995, was among the huge crowd at the sectional final.

Among the fans at last week's Tournament of Champions at Mercer County Park, West Windsor, were Westfield Athletic Hall of Fame president Lee Hale and former WHS tennis players Greg Moore ('76) and Rami Rizk ('82), whose senior team lost to CBA, 3-2, in the All-Groups final.

SUMMER READING
Every high school athlete and the parent of every high school athlete should read "Senior Year" by Boston Globe columnist Dan Shaughnessy, also the author of "The Curse of the Bambino." The book puts high school athletics, which Shaughnessy truly loves, in its proper place, and even better it puts parents of athletes in their proper place.

Another great book is "On the Shoulders of Giants" by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. It's about the amazingly talented writers, musicians, artists and athletes of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and '30s, who helped shape the former Lew Alcindor into the well-rounded man he is today.

DEVIL OF THE WEEK
The final free Devil of the Week sub for the school year from Al the Owner at Westfield Subs (261 South Avenue East) goes to Mike Cappiello. The junior first baseman made his first varsity pitching start last week when Westfield traveled to play Phillipsburg in the sectional semifinals. Coach Bob Brewster just wanted two or three, maybe four, innings from Cappie, but instead he got a complete game 9-4, victory with nine strikeouts. And for good measure, the lefty-swinging Cappiello drove in the first two runs with a line-drive single to left-center off P'burg lefty Mike Rossetti, who had won 15 straight games.

The Devil's Den appears Thursday in The Westfield Leader during the school year. Contact us with comments, complaints or story ideas at bj1019@aol.com. GO DEVILS!

Weichert®

Put Our Neighborhood Knowledge To Work For You.



BUY FOR \$3,330/MO.

SCOTCH PLAINS CENTER ENTRY COLONIAL \$739,900
This distinctive Center Entry Colonial, exquisitely rebuilt in 2000, reflects unsurpassed attention to detail with quality amenities & interesting architectural features throughout. The tasteful color palette enhances a sunlit 2-story entry, grand formal dining room, gracious living room w/fireplace, gourmet kitchen adjacent to the family room, 4 spacious bedrooms & so much more. Set in the tranquil "country" section of Lake Ave., yet moments away from shops, schools, recreation & transportation. School bus for Coles Elementary School stops in front of house. (052111194)



BUY FOR \$3,533/MO.

SCOTCH PLAINS BERWYCK CHASE COLONIAL \$785,000
Located in the premier community of Berwyck Chase, this custom Colonial style home boasts a most sensible floor plan combined with quality upgrades & amenities. Set on a beautifully landscaped lot and moments from shops, schools, and transportation. (052111297)



BUY FOR \$2,337/MO.

WESTFIELD TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY VICTORIAN \$995,900
Just steps from Westfield's charming downtown, this lovely Victorian is the perfect place to call home. The welcoming wrap-around porch leads you to a foyer with original woodwork, beamed ceiling & stained glass window. Conveniences of this century, such as an updated kitchen, 3 1/2 newer bedrooms live harmoniously with original moldings, pocket doors, hardwood floors & 4 bedrooms. (052111059)



BUY FOR \$2,156/MO.

FANWOOD CUL-DE-SAC LOCATION \$479,000
Spacious & updated 4 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath split set on a beautiful cul-de-sac with park-like property. Newly remodeled kitchen with updated appliances, newer full bath & interior exterior recently painted. Large family room on lower level. Laundry/mud room on ground level. HWF under carpet. 1-car attached garage. Make this wonderful, well-maintained home yours today! (052111341)



BUY FOR \$2,831/MO.

WESTFIELD OPEN HOUSE: SUN. 6/10 1-5PM \$629,000
Updated 1964 Colonial with 4 BR, 1 full & 2 half baths. Located on a beautiful street & just a short distance to train, town & park. This home offers a remodeled EIK with updated appliances & granite counters, remodeled baths, living room, dining room, step down family room w/walkout to backyard & finished basement. There are hardwood floors under carpet & CAC. 1-car attached garage. Make this wonderful, well-maintained home yours today! DIR: Rahway Ave to Dorian Rd. #819 (052111220)



WESTFIELD THE PINNACLE IN NEW CONSTRUCTION \$2,975,000
A rare opportunity to own a distinctive custom Colonial. A beautifully landscaped 1/2 acre property will host this 6,000 SF gem. Exquisite unparalleled design, luxurious amenities & an enchanting setting combine to deliver an unsurpassed level of excellence. This prestigious 19-room Classic includes a Grande master suite with fireplace, sitting room, his & her walk-in closets, spa like bath & steam shower with seat & body sprays. 5 additional large bedrooms, 6 full & 2 half baths and 2 solid oak staircases add convenience to luxury. Formal living room with wet bar, dining room, library with fireplace. Family room with fireplace will all be appointed with custom inlays in the hardwood floors & complemented with custom designed ceilings. An oversized designer kitchen with French doors to a magnificent terrace will also include granite tops, pantry and a butler's pantry adjoining an elegant dining room. A finished basement will complete this classic with over 2,750 SF, a full bath, enormous wet bar, rec room, sauna, exercise room and more. Work with the builder now to make this house your home! Call Ralph for more details 908-591-6283 (052001359)

weichert.com

WESTFIELD OFFICE 185 ELM STREET / WESTFIELD, NJ 07090 / 908-654-7777



Worst A Low Monthly Payment! Meet with a local Gold Service Manager or call 800-788-7338. The monthly mortgage payments quoted in this ad are to qualified buyers buying a single family owner-occupied residence, based upon a 20% downpayment. The payments are calculated using a 3-1 interest only adjustable rate mortgage loan (ARM) with an initial interest rate of 6.750%, and an initial A.P.R. of 6.970%. Payments are interest only for the first 10 years, and from year 11 through maturity, amortization is based on 20 years. The interest rate is based on an index plus a margin, with a loan amount of \$500,000. The payment is fixed for the first 3 years, and because the interest rate is set at 2.5% above the index (margin) and it may not decrease or increase more than 2 percent. See sales agent, and over the life of the loan, it may not increase or decrease more than 6 percentage points (lifetime cap). Figures used herein are approximate and do not include property taxes, condo/association fees, or heated swimming pool. Interest rates quoted are as of 5/20/07 and subject to change. As an example, on a \$500,000, 30-year loan with an initial interest rate of 6.750%, the maximum amount that the interest rate can rise under this loan program is 6 percentage points to 12.750%, and the estimated monthly payment for the first 3 years is \$2812.50 with a maximum interest payment of \$3474.83 after year 10. We are not responsible for typographical errors. You should ask about interest rate, margin, and other terms and conditions before you apply. Mortgage Access Corp. 400 Westfield Turnpike, Westfield, NJ 07090. Licensed by the NJ Dept. of Banking and Insurance. Licensed Mortgage Banker with the State Dept. of Banking in NJ, CT and PA. Licensed Lender in DE, MD, VA, D.C. Weichert Financial Services arranges loans with third-party providers. Equal Housing Lender. Weichert Financial Services. For your benefit, consider a cover in real estate. Call 1-800-300-3000 today!