

ALLIE ZAZZALI FINISHES CAREER WITH 967 POINTS Lady Raider Cagers Complete Very Impressive, 17-9 Season

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

Tenaciousness and defensive maturity paid off for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School girls' basketball team that won the Union County Tournament (UCT) and finished the season with an impressive, 17-9, record.

The season was indeed highlighted when the Raiders, seeded third, pulled off a stunning, 44-36, overtime victory over top-seeded Westfield to capture the UCT championship, their third county title in the last four years.

"We played a pretty brutal schedule, with Shabazz twice, The Hun School, St. Peter's of Staten Island and South Plainfield, so we were battle tested," said Raider Head Coach Bruce

Section 2, Group 3 tournament with a heartbreaking, 58-54, loss to Morristown.

"We definitely gave that one away. We had one bad sequence just before the half and let them back into the game," said Davis. "We lost our composure and could not make the big play in the second half. They played hard right to the end but we let it slip away."

The influence of senior Co-Captains, point guard Allie Zazzali and guard Lauren Mains on their teammates was phenomenal. Zazzali, a Union County Coaches Association (UCCA) Top-15 selection, *Courier News* All-Area for a second consecutive year and a two-time *Star-Ledger* First Team All-County selection, was

usually picked up. She always wanted the ball at crunch time; came up with lots of steals and loose balls. She shot threes from deep and was able to find her way to the basket off a dribbler."

Mains, a very athletic and physical player, consistently found her way to the basket off the dribble. She totaled 156 points, was third in rebounds and steals with 82 and 38, respectively, and added 40 assists.

"Lauren incurred several injuries during the season from those bumps and hits that she takes but never backed off," said Davis. "During one game, she could hardly walk but insisted to get back in. She just doesn't know how to give up and hates to lose. She knocked down some big, late-game threes for us. I'll miss them both, on a lot of levels. They are great young ladies with bright futures."

Sophomore Jackie Law, a strong rebounder, also became an offensive terror. The forward was selected to the UCCA Top-15 and named *Courier News* All-Area Honorable Mention. She was second in scoring with 226 points, led in rebounds with 249, averaged 11 blocks, was second in thievery and assists with 51 and 49, respectively.

"She may be the second best offensive rebounder around behind Iasiah Hemingway," said Davis. "She rebounds, puts the ball on the floor and we're off. We don't need to look for an outlet pass. The guards can just release. She has a shot at getting 1,000 points and 1,000 rebounds."

Juniors, guard Molly Meehan and forward Emily Meehan were among the leaders in assists and steals and contributed in every game they played. Molly dropped in 93 points, finished second in assists with 49, grabbed 45 rebounds and swiped 33 basketballs. Emily netted 110 points, was second with 15 blocks and 102 rebounds and stole 24 basketballs.

"Emily scored inside and became a good defender while Molly became a solid rebounder. She can score inside and has become a better defender," said Davis.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17



REALLY BOWLING OVER THE COMPETITION...The Westfield High School bowling team won the Watchung Conference, Union County and Sectional titles this season, while finishing with a 26-1 record.

ETTINGER, WRONSKI NAMED FIRST TEAM ALL-UCT Blue Devil Bowlers Rumbled To WC, UCT, Section Titles

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

According to Blue Devil Head Coach Mike Tirone, "This indeed was the best year ever for Westfield High School bowling."

To start, the Blue Devils were National Division and Watchung Conference (WC) Champions with a record of 17-1. The record included a WC record of 110 points. The team won 14 of the 17 matches by a 7-0 score, the most shutouts in team history. By season's end, the Blue Devils' record swelled to 26-1.

After blanking Roselle Park, 7-0, in the first round, the Blue Devils rolled to the Union County Tournament championship by defeating New Providence, 7-0, in the final. The Blue Devils then defeated West Orange, 7-0, and had a 3,089-2,919, pin count advantage over Linden to win the North Jersey 2, Group 4 sectional championship. It was the Blue Devils' fifth sectional championship in the past six years and eighth overall since the 1989-90 season. It was also the 14th time since the 1989-90 season that the Blue Devils advanced to the state final.

With reference to the sectionals, in the past, only three teams would advance to the state finals from each

section regardless of group or public, parochial, or private. This was the first year the sections were broken up into groups. The parochial and private schools were put into one of the groups based on enrollment. The group champion and the runner up went to the finals. The Blue Devils became the overall sectional champion based on the highest score of the day from all the teams.

Blue Devil senior Alex Wronski, junior Brett Ettinger and senior Harrison Mercado were named to the All-Watchung Conference First Team. Juniors Eric Curialle and Jesse Embree were named to the Second Team and senior Bryan Elsasser was a member of the Third Team.

Since five players start for each team, "It was the first time ever one team had six players named to an All-Conference bowling team," said Tirone.

Wronski and Ettinger were also named First Team All-County. Mercado, Curialle and Embree were Second Team. Ettinger was First Team All-Section and Curialle and Mercado were named to the Third Team. The conference and county teams were named by a panel of coaches. The sectional teams were selected by Mike

Moretti of *The Star-Ledger*. Moretti also had Westfield rated No. 3 in the state before the finals.

Wronski had the highest team average at 202.07 and rolled 42 games over 200 out of 75, while recording 14, 600+ series. Ettinger, who had a 201 average, set a WHS record with 44, 200+ games and added another WHS record with 15, 600+ series, including two, 700+ series. Mercado finished with a 199.4 average followed by Curialle at 197.8 and Embree at 196.1.

"Only six points separated the top five bowlers," noted Tirone.

At the state finals, the Blue Devils were matched against South Brunswick, the Central Jersey, Group 4 champion, and won the head to head competition, 3,072-2,779. But the score was second to Cherry Hill East (CHE), winners over Clifton, 3,095-2,719. By virtue of the higher pin total, CHE was declared the champion and Westfield came in second.

The Junior Varsity completed a 21-1 season to complement its 17-0 record from last year. They were also the Watchung Conference champions. Before losing their one game this year they had won 30 in a row and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



Fred Lecomte for The Westfield Leader and The Times
FRIENDS AND TEAMMATES...Co-Captains Allie Zazzali, left, and Lauren Mains, who helped the Raiders win the UCT title, have been good friends, as well as teammates.

Davis. "We kind of found our groove down the stretch and played as a team. I was smiling for four days after that game (Westfield). Even now, if you mention that game, a smile comes over me. I was so proud of the girls for working so hard to get something they wanted so badly. It was their moment."

The Raiders were abruptly stopped the first round of in the North Jersey,

also named a pre-season McDonald's All-American nominee. Allie sank 967 career points (169 in 2005, 362 in 2006). This season, she led in scoring with 436, was second with 98 assists, pulled down 41 rebounds and was the main thief with 52.

"She was hobbled with a bad ankle sprain for most of the second half of the season, but never took a day off," said Davis. "Her scoring average ac-

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