



Fred K. Lecombe for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**A WEALTH OF STRENGTH...**Senior tri-captains, leftfielder Ashley Dunnan, left, first baseman Jenny LaSpata, center and lefty pitcher Lindsay Brown, right, show their muscle as they prepare to lead Westfield to become UC and sectional softball contenders.

## Strong Pitching May Help Lady Blue Devils Be Union County Softball Contenders

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nated hitter last year and accumulated a .500 batting average (BA) will break into the pitching rotation and bat 3-4-5 in the lineup.  
 "She hits the ball with power, shows a lot of promise on the mound and will share time at second base with junior Ariel Gale," said Pignoli.  
 Junior Erin Scialabba returns to play third base. Last season she finished with a .279 BA, including 12 hits and 12 RBI.  
 "She did a nice job and really kind of worked through the position last year. I think she is now confident and strong at that position."  
 Senior Tri-Captain Jenny LaSpata, who finished with a .230 BA, scored 11 runs including two homers, 12 RBI and led the team in walks with 11, returns to first base for her third consecutive year.  
 "I expect Jenny and Erin to make very consistent contact and get some

of the big hits for us," said Pignoli.  
 Moving from second base to shortstop, sophomore Kim Townsend will lead off in the batting order. Last year, Kim finished with a .924 fielding average (FA) and had a .231 BA.  
 "She definitely is getting stronger and growing. I think she will do a really nice job filling for her mentor Fietkiewicz," said Pignoli. "She's a smart batter and puts the ball in play."  
 In addition to strong pitching and smart infield defense the question still remains. Who will be behind the plate?  
 "A great catcher makes a good pitcher great and that's what we're looking for. A catcher who can handle the pitching but also one who can communicate with the infield," said Pignoli. "Christine Feldbauer or Katie Kiefer, both sophomores have some catching experience on the ninth grade level, so one of them will earn the

spot outright."  
 Pignoli looks for sophomore speedster Katie Abruzzo to play centerfield. "She's also a pitcher, has a great arm and carries a lot of ground," said Pignoli.  
 Junior Alex Pecora may occupy right field and senior Tri-Captain Ashley Dunnan will play leftfield. Both girls saw varsity action last season. Emily Tebbetts and Larissa Borkowsky are expected to fill in at the different outfield positions.  
 "We have some tough competition on our schedule, including South Plainfield. We're in the Rancocas Valley Tournament, but I think we can compete with anyone. In our conference, we should be one of the stronger teams," concluded Pignoli. "I'm setting a goal for this team to perform better in the UC tournament than we have and getting to the top certainly is a goal of mine."

## GSL of WF Sponsors Winter Training Clinic

Westfield High School varsity softball coach Tara Pignoli and assistant varsity coach Caitlin MacDonald have each offered specialized training clinics for elementary and middle school girls over this past winter. Coach Pignoli, a former All-Ivy League catcher for Princeton, provided instruction for girls who play the catcher position. Coach MacDonald, a former WHS star pitcher, worked with girls who are learning the windmill style of softball pitching.  
 The Girls Softball League of Westfield has been developing winter clinics as well as hitting and fielding programs. Each year, over 600 girls in Westfield play recreational and travel softball, and put these skills to use. Over the past year, the GSLW has also created and sponsored an elite summer tournament team, The Clash, for girls under 12. This season, a second team for 14-year-olds will also be playing. For further information on the GSLW, visit [www.WestfieldToday.com](http://www.WestfieldToday.com).



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**WHERE HE SHOULD BE...**Blue Devil Justin Olsen, who played right field last year, will be the starting catcher this season.

## Blue Devil Baseballers Have Pitching Abundance, Speed

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Melillo are putting time in at third. Senior Sean Ferro will cover centerfield, Antonelli and senior Rick Passananti will occupy leftfield and junior Joe Vall-Llobera will cover right. Juniors Justin Olsen and Matt Loughlin will be behind the plate.  
 Bonard, who was the quarterback on the football team and the point guard on the basketball team, is expected to make things happen on the diamond.  
 "Tommy is our leadoff hitter. We are going to score runs because he is going to set the table for us. His speed creates things. He's a kid I could call a one-man rally," said Brewster. "He is going to help us a lot, playing shortstop, which is where he belongs. He has been brought up his whole life as a shortstop and that is where he's going to be."  
 Another person who will be in the position that he is supposed to be is Olsen, the sole remaining member of "Murderers' Row," who will be the starting catcher. Last year, he had a banner year with a .420 batting average.

"Justin is an outstanding catcher. To go from the Mike Murray era to the Justin Olsen era is very nice for me. We have had 10 years of quality catchers," said Brewster.  
 Ferro is expected to add great defensive coverage in center.  
 "Sean Ferro doesn't know how to play the game less than 100 percent. I told the fielders around him, if he calls for the ball, get away from him. It's his because he will go through a wall after the ball," said Brewster.  
 Along with Bonard and Ferro, Vall-Llobera, Antonelli, Passananti and Hennessey are expected to give opposing pitchers headaches on the base paths.  
 "This year, we are going to force the issue a little bit. A little bit of everything! We have enough guys who create some things," said Brewster.  
 Despite graduating most of "Murderers' Row," Brewster's outlook is promising.  
 "The fact that we were county champions, you're marked no matter what. I love the challenge. Our kids know that they are the defending champions. They are going to play their butts off to keep that championship," said Brewster. "I think that we can play very well with every team in the county because we have some very nice players."  
 The Blue Devils will open their season at Plainfield on Monday, April 2, at 4 p.m.

## Devil Bowlers Roll To Section Title

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finished the season on a 13-match winning streak.  
 During the off-season, the Blue Devil bowlers will hone their skills primarily at Jersey and Linden Lanes in Linden or at Edison Lanes.  
 "One of my rules is that they have to bowl a certain number of games in the off-season, between 200 and 300 games," stated Tirone. "Nothing helps more than practice. Practice makes perfect!"

UNION COUNTY FIRST TEAM:		
NAME	SCHOOL	AVG.
1. Kent Henderson	Linden	206.4
2. Alex Wronski	Westfield	202.1
3. Brett Ettinger	Westfield	201.9
4. Lou Clementi	Ros. Cath	201.2
5. Dennis Ward	Elizabeth	200.6
SECOND TEAM:		
Harrison Mercado	Westfield	199.4
Ian Cummings	Oratory	198.7
Pat Stegmeier	Linden	198.3
Eric Curialle	Westfield	197.8
Jesse Embre	Westfield	196.1
THIRD TEAM:		
Keith Bulle	Linden	195.2
Xavier Ysabel	Elizabeth	194.9
Leo Geronimo	Elizabeth	188.3
Kevin Mack	Ros. Cath	188.3
Joe Tufaro	Sc. Pi-Fd	188.3



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**OPEN HOUSE: Sunday, March 25th • 1-4pm  
 24 Barchester Way, Westfield**

Buontempo Homes presents this well appointed luxury home w/11 RMS, 5 BR, 5 1/2 BTH in the Indian Forest area. This stately Colonial offers the finest in living space (approx 7400 sq.ft. inc finished lower level). Noteworthy features: MBR suite w/2 frplc & custom wlk-in closet, 2 story Great Rm w/ frplc, access to expansive mahogany deck & French drs to SUNRM. 20ft. deluxe KIT w/Brook Custom Cabinets, granite, butler's pantry & BRKFT nook. Living & Dining Rm w/accented ceilings, Library, guest suite, 3 CAR GRGE, exquisite landscape & interior molding package. **\$2,795,000** WSF0905



**OPEN HOUSE: Sunday, February 25th • 1-4pm  
 123 Wells, Westfield**

Henry West charming, spacious 3 bedroom colonial home situated on large tree-lined level property - 70x200. Vestibule opens to sunny Living Room w/ frplc, formal Dining Room, spacious Family Room addition w/custom BI's eat-in kitchen w/ adjacent laundry/mud room and powder room. Finished basement, Hardwood floors, CAC & patio. Close to elementary school, Mindowaskin Park and town. **\$699,000** WSF0149



**OPEN HOUSE: Sunday, March 25th • 1-4pm  
 443 Hillside Avenue, Mountaintide**

Private country setting, 1.77 acres on Hillside Ave with guest cottage. Unique Victorian w/ 4/5 BR, 3 1/2 BTH. Spacious rooms w/antique charm and ambiance. Elegant foyer opens to LR with floor to ceiling wndw & frplc, Family RM w/frplc, new sunroom, holiday size Dining RM and new gourmet kitchen & powder RM and new master suite w/ large MBTH. Noteworthy features inc: high ceilings, wood floors, deep accent moldings, tall windows, central air, newer master BTH, 2 tiered DK w/hot tub, gingerbread trim, porte cochere, circular drive. **\$1,799,000** WSF0041



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**BLUE DEVIL SENIOR KEGLERS...**Pictured, left to right; seniors Harrison Mercado, Alex Wronski and Bryan Elssner helped the Blue Devil bowlers have a very successful season.

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