

BLUE DEVIL GIRLS FINISH NINTH

Lady Raiders 5th, Boys 6th At Randolph Track Relays

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School girls track & field team took top honors in the shot put and discus to place fifth with a total of 31 at the Randolph Relays on April 28 in Randolph. The Raider boys claimed the top spot in the shot put and placed sixth with a team total of 30 and the Westfield girls claimed first in the 4x800 meters and the 400 intermediate hurdles to finish ninth with 19 points.

Raiders Carlaya Jones, Laury Adams and Jessica Feldman combined to win the shot put with a distance of 98 feet. Jones, Alana Pantale and Cassie Berwick put together a distance of 292'10" to win the team discus. The Raider girls placed third in the team triple jump with a distance of 92'0.5". The Raiders also

took fourth in the distance medley relay with a time of 12:52.42 and Blue Devils Ayn Wisler (3:59.25 - personal record [PR]), Christina Obiajulu (1:01.42), Catherine Cognetti (2:27.09) and Kim Legones (5:31.32 - PR) took sixth at 12:59.08.

Blue Devils Wisler (2:28.32), Cognetti (2:29.38), Rose Driscoll (2:27.79) and Obiajulu (2:25.93) crossed first in the 4x800 meters with a time of 9:51.8. The Blue Devil "B" squad of Legones (2:36.71 - PR), Megan Pulliam (2:36.76), Bridget Grogan (2:36.13) and Aileen Grogan (2:33.71) finished sixth in the event at 10:25.6 and the Raiders placed third with a time of 9:59.27.

Blue Devils Tessa Schaaf (1:11.07), Marlana Sheridan (1:11.71) and Neha Limaye (1:17.08) won the 400 intermediate hurdles with a time of 3:40.1. Blue Devils Emily Perry (4'8"), Obiajulu (4'8") and Christa Ricci (4'2") tied for fourth in the high jump with a height of 13.6 and the Raiders took sixth at 13'4". The Raider girls also placed fifth in the long jump with a distance of 42'4.5".

Raiders Mike Alleman, John Badala and Steve Wenson won the boys shot put with a distance of 150'3.25". The Raiders also placed second in the javelin with a distance of 435'5", second in the 4x800 with a time of 8:28.46 and fourth in the high jump with a height of 16'2".

Blue Devil Netmen Win Westfield Invitational

The No. 1 Westfield High School boys tennis team defeated Hun, 4-1, to win the Westfield Invitational on April 28. The 12-0 Blue Devils blanked Summit, 5-0, in the first round and Hun blanked Governor Livingston, 5-0. Summit topped GL, 4-1, in the consolation final.

CHAMPIONSHIP:
WESTFIELD 4, HUN 1
First singles: Lance Goulbourne (H) d Ravi netravali, 6-4, 6-0
Second singles: James Chu (W) d Ren Gates, 7-6 (2), 7-6 (1)
Third singles: Greg Luppescu (W) d Rob Solonick, 6-0, 6-0
First doubles: Akis Evangelidis and Dean Thompson (W) d Matt Everts and Jack Barrett, 6-0, 6-3
Second doubles: Jon Ramalho and Jack Trimble (W) d Jason Kann and Mike Salazar, 7-6 (3), 7-5

FIRST ROUND:
WESTFIELD 5, SUMMIT 0
First singles: Luppescu d Leo Sprinzen, 6-2, 6-2
Second singles: Evangelidis d John Anguioni, 6-0, 6-0
Third singles: Thompson d Alex Zerfoss, 6-2, 6-0
First doubles: Graeme Stahl and Justin Snyder d Eliot Coven and Andrew Vance, 6-1, 6-1
Second doubles: Ramalho and Trimble d Zach Goff and Alex Kramer, 6-1, 6-3

Blue Devils Stun Raider Track Boys

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Boff and Mike Chervenyak, respectively. Blue Devils Eric Brandman and Matt Shaffer placed 2-3 in the pole vault with heights of 11'6".

Raiders Mike Alleman and Jon Birnbaum placed 1-3 in the shot put and Blue Devil Erik Anderson placed second with a shove of 48'4.5". Raider John Badala, who had a toss of 50'6.25" at the Blue Devil Classic on April 21, was not competing. Alleman and Boff placed 1-3 in the discus and Anderson took second with a toss of 130'2".

Forstenhausler (53.3), Cognetti (51.8), Davis (54.3) and Gray (50.9) clinched the victory by crossing first in the 4x400 with a time of 3:30.4.

Raider Alleman Wins Shot at Penn Relays

Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School junior Mike Alleman captured first in the boys shot put at the 113th Penn Relays in Philadelphia on April 27, with a shove of 58'8.5" on his next to last throw to edge top seeded Wayne Crawford of Chestnut Hill Academy, Pa., whose best push was 58'5.75".

Alleman, who was seeded third, entered the finals in second place after a 57-5.75 heave during the trials. On the final round, Crawford's throw plunged into the ground a bit short.

The last time Scotch Plains-Fanwood won an event at the Penn Relays was in 1971 by the distance medley relay team. In 1974, Ron Klotzer of Union was the only other Union County boy to win the shot at the Penn Relays.



Devil's Den Newark Academy Invitational: WHS Still Looking for No. 1

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

Devil of the Week Patrick Gray Boys track

When the first state rankings came out two weeks ago, with WHS listed the No. 1 high school tennis team in the state, George Kapner gathered his team together and, before their wide-open eyes, tore up the newspaper page in front of them. Since most of the team is made up of honor students, the implication was clear: Being ranked No. 1 in early April means nothing more than the newspaper in the litterbox or on the bottom of the birdcage. Even worse, it puts a big fat bull's-eye on your back, bigger than the one WHS normally has given its status as a year-in, year-out power.

Look no farther than last week's Westfield Invitational, where a Hun School team with a 7-7 record pushed WHS to the limit before falling 4-1 in the title match. James Chu won a 7-6, 7-6 nailbiter at second singles, and senior captains Jack Trimble and Jon Ramalho pulled out a 7-6, 7-5 decision at second doubles.

Despite the abundance of talent on this team, there is always the potential in any high school sport for ups and downs. Every high school athlete's "team goals" should include trying to achieve the highest attainable goal, be that a .500 record, a top two or three finish at the conference or county championship or, the ultimate goal for any elite-level team, a state championship. And a WHS team that is fully focused on the Group 4 title or Tournament of Champions title will be a very tough team to beat.

As in swimming, WHS tennis has as a grand tradition as any school in state history. There have been 26 Union County, 20 sectional and 14 state championships, along with five state Public School titles and three All-Groups crowns (1978, 1986, 1987). WHS has won its own Invitational several times, and it has won the Delbarton/Bryan Bennett Memorial Invitational twice.

But there is one tennis tournament WHS has never won. In over 30 years of trying, WHS has never won the Newark Academy Invitational, which will be held this weekend at the school's Livingston campus. There have been 12 different team championships in the tourney's first 33 years, but none have been WHS.

The Blue Devils' 1978 All-Groups champs suffered just one loss, 3-2

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Westfield/Plainfield Baseball
Union County Boys Tennis
Westfield W. Morris Lax
SPF/East Side Baseball

against Delbarton in the NAI final (a loss that was avenged a week later). The 1987 team also lost just one time, 4-1 against Christian Brothers Academy in the NAI final.

All told, Westfield has nine NAI runnerup finishes — 1975 (to Newark Academy 3-2), 1978 (Delbarton 3-2), 1979 (Livingston 3-2), 1980 (Livingston 3-2), 1981 (Lawrenceville 3-2), 1983 (Christian Brothers Academy 3-2), 1984 (Montclair Kimberley Academy 4-1), 1987 (CBA 4-1) and 1988 (CBA 3-2).

Ironically, 1988 is not only the last time WHS reached the NAI final, it's also the last time WHS won the state Group 4 title, beating Teaneck, 5-0. And it was also the last time (prior to last week) that WHS had beaten Millburn, 4-1 in the state Public School final. WHS then lost to CBA, 3-2, in the All-Groups final.

The WHS-Millburn series has been going since 1932, and the Blue Devils lead the overall series by a 34-30 margin. In 1999, Millburn posted a rare triple, beating WHS three times: in the regular season, in a regular-season tournament and in the state tournament; WHS was in Group 3 for the 1998-99 school year.

The biggest matchup ever between the two schools had to have been the 1970 All-Groups (now Tournament of Champions) final. WHS beat Ridgewood, 4-1, in the Group 4 final and CBA, 3-2, in the All-Groups semifinals to reach the final.

Millburn won at second doubles over Larry Katz and Don Reiter, but WHS came back to tie on captain Steve Mease's win at second singles. Bruce Gillie and Glenn Smith lost 6-4 in the third set at first doubles, but that was balanced by John McManigal's three-set win at first singles. It all came down to first singles, where Millburn's Rich Murray outlasted Joe Krakora, 9-7, in the third and decisive set.

With the Millburn jinx seemingly out of the way, we'll find out this weekend if the WHS netsters can end another drought.

DEN TRIVIA
In 1990, WHS went 20-4 in Tony Berardo's final year as boys tennis coach, losing to East Brunswick in the regular season and Livingston in the sectional final. What Union County/Watchung Conference opponent defeated WHS twice that year?

STREAKING
Until a week ago Tuesday, the WHS boys track team had not beaten SP-F since 1987. That's a little deceiving, given that the teams did not meet from 1988 through 1996. But the Raiders had won the last 10 meetings

(1997-2006) between the schools before WHS pulled out a wild 71-69 victory. That increased WHS's lead in the overall series to 21-15.

Perhaps the wildest meeting ever between the two schools came on May 17, 1965. Coach Walt Clarkson's Blue Devils posted a 58 2/3-58 1/3 victory that ended a reported 50-meet win streak for SP-F. (The 2/3 of a point happened after a three-way tie for second place in the low hurdles.) WHS swept both the broad jump (Pete Mavraganis won at 20-8 1/2) and pole vault (Bruce Wallace won at 11-6) and got a big win in the discus from Mike Hoffman (personal best 174-8) to improve to 7-0.

RELATIVELY SPEAKING

Going through the pages of "High School Sports The Magazine" for Green Country in Oklahoma, the 2005-06 end-of-season special, I came across a picture of a basketball player from Jenks High School in Tulsa. The name jumped out at me — Nick Sidorakis. Could it be? So I went to the Alumni Directory 2003 and, sure enough, former WHS golfer Nick Sidorakis ('76) is the general manager of Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa and his oldest son is Nick. The older Nick's father Sam, was one of New Jersey's legendary basketball officials back in the 1960s and '70s, often teaming with the late Frank Ciccarell. And younger brother John Sidorakis ('79) was also a WHS golf standout.

Jenks, by the way, has a football rivalry with crosstown Union High School that annually draws 20,000-plus fans. Folks out there think it's the country's biggest and best high school rivalry, even bigger than Phillipsburg-Easton or Ohio's Massillon Washington-Canton McKinley.

IS IT JUST ME ...

Or would anybody else love to see WHS play Ridgewood in all sports? The two schools and towns couldn't be more similar, and they're just 32.65 miles apart. Back in 1940 and '41 Ridgewood was our Thanksgiving Day opponent. And, like WHS, the Maroons are good in just about every sport, both boys and girls, which means there would be highly competitive matchups. For those wondering, Hunterdon Central is 31.34 miles from WHS, North Hunterdon is 32.28 and Hillsborough is 24.56, and those are teams we play in quite a few sports.

COLLEGE UPDATE

Mike Murray, a two-time first-team all-state catcher for WHS, is getting a lot of playing time as a freshman at Wake Forest. He's started 24 games, mostly as the designated hitter, for the 26-22 Demon Deacons. Through

Saturday's games, Murray had a .208 average (21 for 101) with two home runs and 13 RBI in the pitching-rich Atlantic Coast Conference.

Tom O'Brien, a freshman from Westfield, had a season high 8.95 on the rings to help Minnesota finish sixth at the NCAA Men's Gymnastics Championships last month at Penn State. John Sawicki, a redshirt freshman from Westfield, was a member of the Michigan team that finished fourth.

AROUND THIS DATE

May 4, 1977: In arguably the greatest dual-meet race in state history, SP-F's Skeets Nehemiah (21.4) edges WHS's Butch Woolfolk (21.8) and Frank Kelly (21.9) in the 220-yard dash. WHS wins the meet 82-49.

May 6, 1930: Steve Banyasz strikes out 17 batters in a loss to Roselle Park.

May 6, 1938: The tennis team, led by captain Everson Pearsall, beats Hillside 5-0 to end a 15-match losing streak.

May 6, 1947: Ron Roth strikes out 19 batters in an eight-inning loss to Union.

May 7, 1937: The WHS baseball season is cancelled due to the "lack of a field." The team was 0-6 and coming off a 20-4 loss to Columbia.

TRIVIA ANSWER

Elizabeth! The Minutemen stunned WHS by scores of 4-1 and 3-2.

DEVIL OF THE WEEK

This week's free sub from All the Owner at Westfield Subs (261 South Avenue East) goes to Patrick Gray. The freshman came up huge in WHS's stunning, 71-69 track victory over archrival Scotch Plains-Fanwood last week. He won the 800 in a lifetime best 2:02.1, then came right back and ran a sizzling 50.9 anchor leg on the winning 4x400 relay. Patrick is the son of former Westfield police officer Pat Gray and former WHS soccer/basketballer Traci Love ('84), and the grandson of former hoop standout Roger Love ('57).

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

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