

No. 1 Westfield Tops No. 2 IHA Swim Story Next Week's Paper

THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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YUCETEPE SINKS 17, GETS 7 RBS; HESS NETS 10 PTS

Blue Devil Basketball Butts Roselle Rams in Hoops, 47-45

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

Several nice assists kept the Westfield High School boys basketball team one step ahead of the Roselle Rams, who strutted into Westfield on January 24 boasting a 10-3 record. The recipient of most of those assists, senior forward Ozan Yucetepe, pumped in a game-high 17 points, including a 3-pointer, to lead the Blue Devils to a 47-45 victory.

"It's Union County, but they don't play the same schedule as we," senior guard Nate Mitchell said. "They don't play the Lindens, the Plainfields and the St. Pats, so we knew we could play with them from the beginning, and we took care of it."

Yucetepe also finished with seven rebounds, a blocked shot and a tipped ball. Mitchell finished with five points, four rebounds, a steal and three assists.

The 5-9 Blue Devils won the first quarter, 9-8. Yucetepe began the scoring with a lay-up then sophomore forward Mike Androconis (2 points)

pushed a ball out to Mitchell, who banged a 3-pointer. Later, junior guard Henry Smith swiped a ball from a Ram and fed Yucetepe for another lay-up. Next came one of the sweetest setups of the game when Mitchell fired the ball crosscourt to Smith, who quickly bounded the ball into sophomore Dylan Elliott (7 points, 3 rebounds, assist), who gently rolled in the lay-up.

"That was a nice play. We always focus on it in practice, making the

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DRIVING TO THE BASKET...Blue Devil freshman Lillian Scott, No. 20, drives past Raiders Alyssa Riporti, No. 13, and Thabitha Dwnfour, right, as Blue Devil Carly Friedman, No. 13, looks on. The Blue Devils beat the Raiders, 49-45.

MAGUIRE SINKS 12 FREE THROWS, SCOTT SCORES 19

Blue Devils Come from Behind To Beat Raider Cagers, 49-45

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

Last year, on January 29 in Westfield, senior guard Danielle Miller banged a big 3-pointer with four seconds remaining to give the Westfield High School girls basketball team a stunning 41-39, victory over rival Scotch Plains-Fanwood.

This past January 28 in Westfield, there were a pair of big shots sank at the buzzer to end the second and third quarters, but it came down to the deadly free throw shooting of senior center Catherine Maguire and the fast-paced game of a trio of freshmen that earned the Blue Devils a come-from-behind 49-45 victory over the Raiders.

Maguire sank 12 of 14 free throws, and as a team, the Blue Devils went to the line a hefty 38 times and sank 24 of them for a 63 percent average. The Raiders, on the other hand, sank only five of 16 for 31 percent.

"Yesterday at practice, we shot, at least, 200 free throws. Personally, I shot 200. Obviously, that gave me a lot of confidence coming into the game. When I stepped to the line, it was like being in practice," Maguire explained.

"As long as we could get to the foul line, we improved a lot on the foul line, and we made our shots. Yesterday in practice, we shot 200 foul shots each," Blue Devil Head Coach Joe Marino said.

The complexion of the game was totally different in the first half. Raider freshman center Thabitha Dwnfour and junior Taylor Sebolao, who finished with eight points, each pulled down seven rebounds, and junior Tara

Sweeney (5 points) pulled four of her six rebounds in the half to out-rebound the Blue Devils, 21-14. Dwnfour added three more rebounds in the second half and Sebolao added four more.

"We had to take care of the big girls inside. That was the problem in the first half. They were hitting the boards better than us," Coach Marino said.

The Blue Devils were also having difficulty hitting their shots in the first half, although freshman guard Lillian Scott managed to hit a pair of 3-pointers in the second quarter. Sophomore Alyssa Riporti (4 rebounds, assist) held the hot hand for the Raiders and sank all 10 of her points, including a 2-pointer at the buzzer to give her team a 29-16 lead at the half. Dwnfour scored eight of

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CONCENTRATING ON DEFENSE...Blue Devils Keegan Hess, No. 12, and Dylan Elliott, No. 34, concentrate on preventing Ram Evan Jones, No. 4, from getting to the basket. The Blue Devils defeated the Rams, 47-45.

BALDWIN SETS 2 RECORDS; DUNN, BALIKO 1 EACH

Blue Devil Boys, Girls Seize UCT Swim Championships

Thirteen meet records were broken at the Union County Tournament (UCT) boys and girls swim meets at the Sonny Werblin Center at Rutgers University on January 29. The No. 1 ranked Westfield High School girls easily won their 20th straight championship, while the sixth-ranked Blue Devil boys battled down to the final event to overcome the third-ranked Scotch Plains-Fanwood Raiders, who had won the title last year.

Luke McGrory, John Lindros, Brennan Haley and anchor Matt Daniel came from behind to touch first in the 400-freestyle relay with a meet record time of 3:16.96 to put the Blue Devils in the championship seat with a total of 435. The Raiders, who finished third in the event with a time of 3:18.69, placed second in the team totals at 424. The Summit Hilltoppers, who placed second in the event at 3:17.83, placed third with 400 points.

Raiders Dan Pesin, Ryan Gajdzisz, Greg Baliko and Joe Dunn touched first in the opening event, the 200-yard medley relay in a meet record

time of 1:37.59, breaking Westfield's 2010 record time of 1:38.66. The Blue Devils also topped last year's time when they placed second at 1:38.15. Cranford placed fourth at 1:49.31.

Gajdzisz took top honors in the 200-freestyle at 1:43.6. Cougar Brian Woo took third at 1:47.23. Blue Devils Lindros at 1:48.28, McGrory at 1:49.17 and Alex Bond at 1:49.49 finished 4-5-6. Dunn touched first in the 50-freestyle with a meet record time of 21.65 to break Aaron Weber's (Westfield) 1988 time of 21.69. Blue Devils Daniel at 22.33 and Stephen Husch at 22.4 touched 3-4, while Raider Ryan Henkels touched sixth at 22.98.

Summit's Loring Bowen broke Blue Devil Chris DeLaFuente's 2009 meet-record time of 52.43 in the 100-butterfly by touching first at 52.07. Blue Devils Tyler Lessner at 54.61, Matt Trinkle at 54.88 and Max Shin at 55.36 touched 2-3-4, followed by Raider Keith Monteiro at 56.73. Bowen also broke the former meet record of 52.72 (Westfield's Matt Meserole - 2009) in the 100-back-

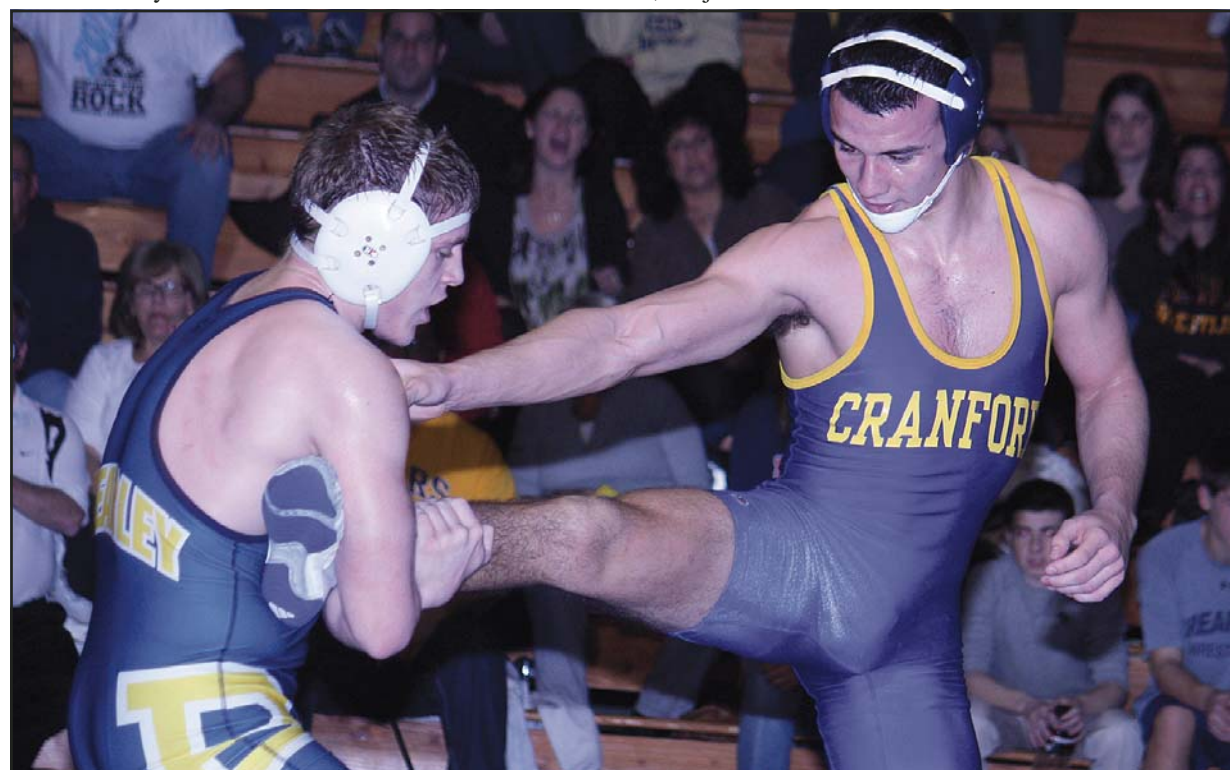
stroke by touching first at 52.51. Haley touched third at 53.39, and Pesin touched fifth at 55.24.

Dunn also touched first in the 100-freestyle at 47.72, followed by Daniel at 48.31. McGrory at 50.17 and Lindros at 50.22 finished 5-6. Gajdzisz won the 500-freestyle at 4:41.54, and Haley touched second at 4:47.55. Raider Alex Skoog touched fourth at 4:56.96, and Bond touched sixth at 5:02.66.

Baliko, Henkels, Skoog and Dunn broke Westfield's 2011 meet record of 1:28.25 in the 200-free relay by touching in 1:28.11. The Blue Devils finished second at 1:29.12, and Cranford touched fourth at 1:37.24. Baliko broke Blue Devil Dave Schwartz's 1993 meet record of 58.78 in the 100-breaststroke by touching first at 58.61. Cranford's Woo touched third at 1:00.99, followed by Blue Devils Aram Barmakian at 1:01.37 and Husch at 1:01.65.

Summit's Ryan Sebastian won the 200-individual medley at 1:52.99, fol-

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GETTING A LEG UP...Brearley Bear Joey Balboni, left, attempts to get a single-leg takedown on Cougar JP Christiano. Balboni, ranked sixth in the state at 170-lbs, defeated Christiano, an NJSIAA quarterfinalist in 2011, 5-2.

MURRAY, HENRY, 'MARK', HELMSTETTER GET WINS

Brearley Bears Grab, 51-22, Win over Cougar Wrestlers

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

Fresh off capturing their seventh straight Union County Tournament (UCT) championship, the Brearley Bears won nine of 13 contested bouts to defeat the Cranford High School wrestling team in Cranford on January 27. Corey Markovitch (152-lbs), Gavin Murray (120-lbs), Mike Helmstetter (126-lbs) and Ian Henry (132-lbs) earned victories for the 6-5 Cougars.

The 5-3 Bears jumped to a 6-0, team lead in the first bout of the evening when Nick Lospinoso rocked Matt Dimartino to sleep in 51 seconds with a cradle at 145-lbs. Markovitch faced Andrew Scarillo

and became a victim of a pair of first-period takedowns but wasted little time when he settled Scarillo in 2:29 with a pull-back cradle to tie the team score. From that point, however, the Bears would roll off eight straight victories.

At 160-lbs, John Balboni, ranked fifth in the state, took Cougar Glen Cook straight to his back and pinned him with a half nelson in 23 seconds.

The key match-up of the evening was next at 170-lbs. Cougar JP Christiano, an NJSIAA quarterfinalist last year at 160-lbs, squared off with Joey Balboni, presently ranked sixth in the state. On January 22, Balboni had defeated Christiano, 5-2, for the UCT 170-lb title.

Lightning struck again! After a scoreless first period, Balboni escaped and added a takedown in the second period. Christiano escaped in the third, but Balboni added another takedown. Christiano escaped, making the score, 5-2. No more offense was added and Balboni had denied Christiano of his 100th varsity career victory.

At 182-lbs, Anthony Scorese caught Cougar Nick Diaz off-balance with a double-leg tackle takedown which resulted in a 2:41 fall. Bear Jeff Velez showed Rob Kessler the lights in 4:28 with an arm bar at 195-lbs.

At 220-lb, Bear Anthony Tancs

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RECORD-BREAKING DAY...Blue Devil sophomore Caroline Baldwin broke the UCT meet and WHS records in the 50-freestyle and the 100-backstroke, and teamed with Loren Ball, Sarah Cronin and Ellie Reinhardt to break the UCT meet and WHS records in the 200-free and 400-free relays. See photo on page 14.

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