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THE WEEK IN SPORTS

Sports Section
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SEBOLAO LED IN SCORING, DWUNFOUR REBOUNDS

Lady Raider Cagers Battled Inconsistency, Finished 9-17

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

Strong first half surges followed by collapsed second halves or visa-versa led to a disappointing, 9-17 record for this year's Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School girls basketball team.

One of the first real disappointments came in a 55-51 loss to Plainfield on January 26. Just two days later, the Lady Raiders had a 29-16 lead over rival Westfield at half-time, but the Blue Devils went on a scoring frenzy, while the Raiders froze to experience a 49-45 setback. Another disappointing setback came at the hands of the New Providence Pioneers, who rolled with a 30-20

second half to unsettle the Raiders, 52-47.

Earlier in the season, the Lady Raiders had defeated Plainfield and Westfield, so their losses later in the season left a bitter taste.

"Our second games with Westfield and Plainfield were disappointing losses because they were so close. We had opportunities that we did not take advantage of. I hope with our maturity next year, those losses will be wins," Raider Head Coach Jen Ryan said.

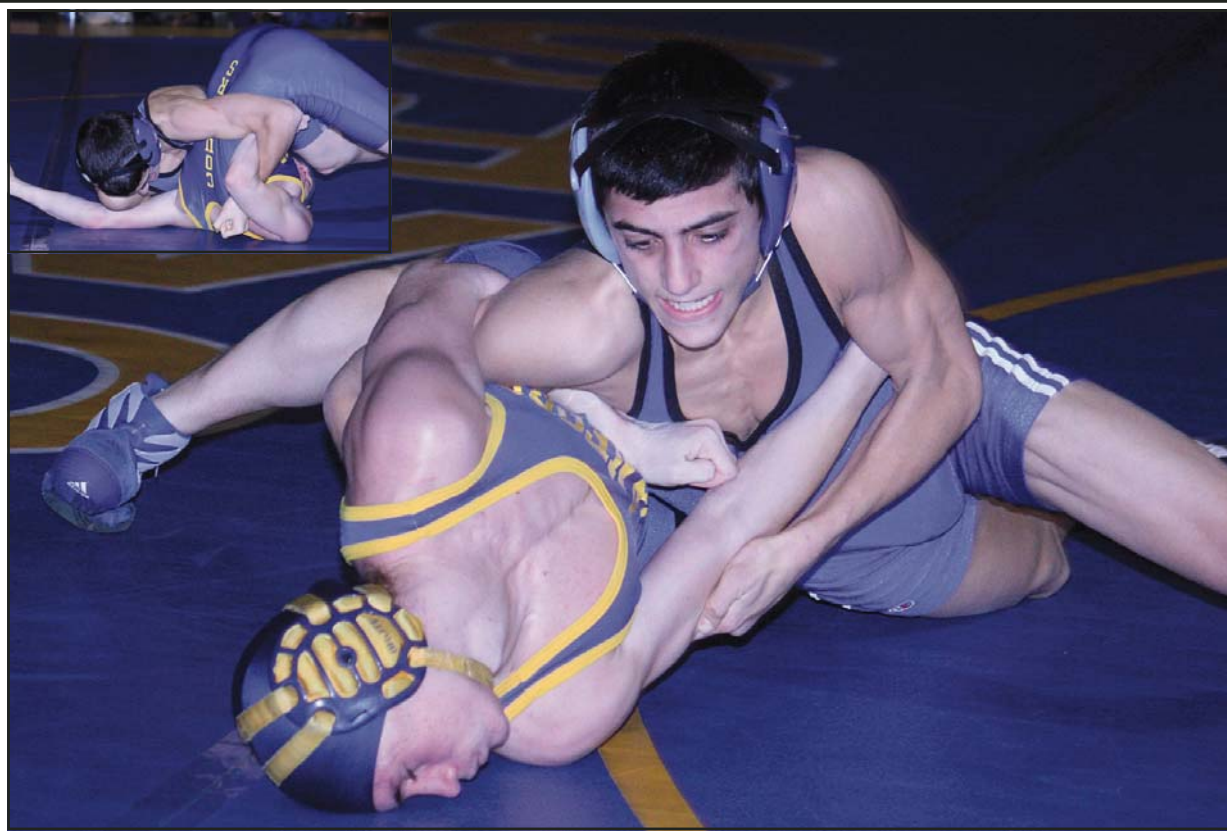
The Lady Raiders did beat Union twice this season. In the first meeting on January 17, the Raiders outscored the Lady Farmers, 33-19, in the second half to grab a 47-34 win. The score was tied, 34-34, at the end of

the third quarter in their second meeting on February 4, but the Raiders stepped up and pulled out a 50-47 victory when junior Taylor Sebolao banged a 3-pointer to seal the deal.

"I thought our game against Union was a huge win for us. Taylor hit the winning shot with seconds left to put us ahead for the win," said Coach Ryan, who added, "Beating Morris Knolls was the game that I felt could have been the start of a great win streak, but it wasn't meant to be."

Sebolao, the Raiders' co-captain and three-year starter, was definitely the go-to girl. She led the team with 375 points, which included 53 3-pointers and 84 free throws. Sebolao,

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David B. Corbin (January 2012 files) for The Westfield Leader and The Times
A MEMBER OF THE 100+ VICTORY CLUB...Blue Devil Mike Kalimtzis, top, finished this season with a 34-5 record to bring his career wins total to 110.

KALIMTZIS, BARBER, OPOKU PASS 30 WINS APIECE

Blue Devil Wrestlers Shatter WHS Record with 20 Wins

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

Three varsity wrestlers, Luke Gibbons, Troy Skibitsky and Keith Peterson, never got the opportunity to step on the mat due to injuries, but this year's Westfield High School

(WHS) wrestling team still had the team depth and talent to set the all-time WHS mark with 20 wins against six losses.

The Blue Devils defeated Union County powerhouses Brearley and Roselle Park and won a tight battle

with a very strong Scotch Plains-Fanwood squad in the battle of the unbeaten at the time. The Blue Devils' only county loss was to Governor Livingston, 26-24.

Seven Blue Devils recorded 20

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David B. Corbin (February files) for The Westfield Leader and The Times
STRUGGLING FOR POSSESSION...Raider Alyssa Riporti, right, struggles with a Bridgewater-Raritan Panther for possession of the ball in Scotch Plains on February 23. The Panthers battled back to win, 52-46.

YUCETEPE LED SCORING, HESS 3-PTS; TURNER RBS

Blue Devil Boys Had Season Of Near Misses in Basketball

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

No varsity starters from the year before and a new head coach made a road to success very rocky for this year's Westfield High School boys basketball team that finished 8-17. Head Coach Daryl Palmieri had to start from scratch to find a combination that would work.

"That had a lot to do with some of our struggles this year. We were dealing with a lot of inexperienced kids. I tried to mix a lot of young kids with some seniors. We knew it was going to be a growing period. When you are trying to instill a brand new system into a program, you are going to have

some ups and downs. You are going to have some growing pains," Coach Palmieri said.

Throughout this season, the Blue Devils have found themselves on the short end of many down-to-the-wire games. On December 30, Rahway stung the Blue Devils in double overtime. Six days later Elizabeth held off several Blue Devil threats. Ice cold shooting resulted in a disappointing 60-55 loss to Dunellen in the Butch Kowal Scholarship Tournament on February 4. Then Hillside burned the Blue Devils, 49-46, in the Union County Tournament on February 12.

Senior forward Ozan Yucetepe led the Blue Devils with 301 points,

which included 183-pointers, 93 field goals and 61 free throws. He also led the team with 23 steals, while adding 66 rebounds, 43 assists and six blocks.

"Ozan carried us offensively most of the time. I wish I had him for another year, because I thought he had the potential to be an all-county player if I had him a little longer," Coach Palmieri said.

Senior guard Nate Mitchell banged in 28 3-pointers, hit 17 2-pointers and sank 16 free throws to finish with 153 points. He dished out 57 assists, grabbed 69 rebounds and had 19 steals.

"The leadership of Nate is going to

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David B. Corbin (December 2011 files) for The Westfield Leader and The Times
DRIBBLING PAST A HORNET...Blue Devil Keegan Hess, right, avoids getting stung as he dribbles past a Hornet defender during the Butch Kowal Tournament in Rahway on December 28.




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