

**COUGAR GRIDDERS RECEIVE NORTH JERSEY SECTION 2, GROUP 3 CHAMPIONSHIP RINGS****Cougar Students Win Annual Student/Faculty B'Ball Game**By **FRED LECOMTE***Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

It's over thought the faculty – Not yet! It's over now... No, it's not. Who's going to win? Who are those men who celebrated victory at halftime? This was the scenario when the Cranford High School class of 2012 raced to a 66-60 victory in an exciting fourth-quarter rally over the faculty on March 22.

However, the real spirited event of the evening came when a large contingent of Cougar football players and coaches took center stage before a jubilant crowd and received their North Jersey, Section 2 Group 3 championship rings at halftime.

"When they tell you winning the state championship is going to feel great, and they're right, but it feels even better than they could even describe. And the same thing with, 'Wait until you get your ring, it's going to be great,' that's even better. It's indescribable, feels better than I ever imagined, a great accomplishment that I ever thought would be and I'm just so happy for the kids and the staff," said Head Football Coach Erik Rosenmeier, who added, "When you look at it, for some schools it happens fairly often. For us, it's the first time since 1957. I'm having problems putting it into words on how it feels, but the kids, seeing them so happy time and time again even though it's

March. It hasn't lost any of its luster, and I'm sure for the rest of their lives, whenever they get together with their rings, that feeling will come back. I know it's going to come back for me. I'm proud and happy of what they

have done."

When asked to describe the road to success, Rosenmeier said, "It's been paved through the failures of teams in the past. I don't want it to sound harsh, they tried as hard as they could, but we

including the consolation game. [Sean] Trotter played his last game hurt. 'Why are you doing that, you have to play basketball?' Because he knew, it's building a bridge, a bridge towards success and being successful. We

well. They showed us that we had to take it to the next level. We played championship defense after that and the offense continued to play well. Dominating performances in the last three games. It was needed in order to win the championship."

The basketball game could be easily paralleled to the ongoing GOP race. One side got the jump, maintained its clear front-runner advantage, the other side surging back with an offensive rally in the second half.

A spirited faculty, confident that they have the skills that will overthrow those young Cougar kittens, showed promise as they gloated to a 18-16 first quarter advantage. Conversely, more than 35 students with a not-to-be-counted out determination looked to overtake the front-runners, but no concessions were made as the faculty's resolve hammered out a, 24-14 pounding in the second quarter.

What initially seemed to be a lock for a confident faculty – projected winners at the end of the first half mark with a 42-30 lead, "The Dean of Admission," faculty team captain Gary

Fred Lecomte for *The Westfield Leader and The Times*

**STATE CHAMPIONSHIP RINGS...**The Cranford Cougar football team received their North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 championship rings during halftime of the student/faculty basketball game on March 22. See more photos at [www.goleader.com](http://www.goleader.com) Ballyhoo Sports.

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knew. I talked to last year's team about being bridge builders. Even though we were out of the playoffs, they continued to play hard,

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had to overcome some demons. We felt we had to beat Rahway. We didn't get Summit, but the Summit game was a lesson in championship football. We were 7-0, thought we were playing

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