



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**HAVING THE RIGHT MOVES...** Blue Devil junior Luke Prybylski, No. 10, scored two wraparound goals and added a third in the Group 4 Championship game against Southern Regional in Somerville on May 28.

## Blue Devils Scorch Southern for Group Lax Crown

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"It's the team really. We got our motion down the last couple of weeks, clearing through and I am just getting open shots at that position and finishing with them," Prybylski said.

One huge advantage the Blue Devils enjoyed was the efforts of senior face-off specialist Jack Kessler, who won 13 of 19 face-offs, which put his team in the offensive mode most of the time.

"Today was sort of an off day. It was a little weird with the guy I was going up against. He was a little unorthodox, but as the game went on, I got better. We really came out strong in the third quarter, which, I think, made the biggest difference for us. I think I had the first two in that quarter and it really started things off right," Kessler said.

"He's a beast. He really controls face-offs. When you win the possession, you don't have to worry about a team going on a two-goal run. That's huge! It's everybody doing their job. Kessler's job is to win those face-offs. The goalie's job is to make saves. The attack's job is to run the offense

and score goals. Everybody does their job, that's the most important thing. We are not about individuals. You want to shut a guy down, the next guy is going to step up. 'Team' is the most important thing. It's 'We' not 'Me'. That's what Westfield lacrosse will continue to be," Blue Devil Head Coach Pat Tuohy said.

Another factor that kept the Blue Devils in control was the defense's ability to knock down the 20-3 Southern Rams' charges and scoop ground balls. Senior midfielder Dane Huber made several scoops at key times in the game.

"Dane played hockey all four years.

He brings that to the lacrosse field. He's one of our best players," Prybylski said.

Senior Alex D'Amato played in goal in the first half and made two saves then sophomore Toby Burgdorf played the second half and made five saves, two crucial ones when the Blue Devils were playing with a man down.

Pat Aslanian scored the first goal less than three minutes into the game then Prybylski followed four minutes later with a wraparound goal. Chris Aslanian, with the help of Prybylski, slammed in the third goal 24 seconds later. Midfielder Chris Smith, on

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Courtesy of Bill Howard for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**END OF THE DREAM...** Westfield's Dane Huber unleashes a shot in Saturday's state Tournament of Champions match-up of Group 4 champ Westfield and Group 1 titlist Mountain Lakes. Westfield (12-10) got the first goal but Mountain Lakes (22-3) got the next nine en route to a 13-6 victory at Bridgewater-Raritan High School.

## Mt. Lakes Laxers Sink Westfield in TOC, 13-6

Nine unanswered goals in the second and third quarters convinced the 22-3, No. 4 Mountain Lakes High School boys lacrosse team that it held the upper hand on its journey to a 13-6 victory over the Westfield Blue Devils in the first round of the Tournament of Champions in Bridgewater on May 31.

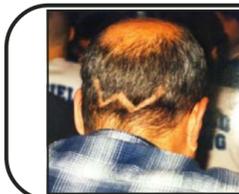
Luke Prybylski and Chris Aslanian each netted a pair of goals for the 12-10 Blue Devils, while Dane Huber and Pat Decker each put in one goal and Pat Aslanian added an assist. Alex D'Amato was credited with four saves and Toby Burgdorf made two.

Westfield	1	0	2	3	6
Mountain Lakes	1	5	5	2	13

## Devil's Den

# Fifty Years Later, Result Is the Same

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



The 1964 WHS baseball team held its third reunion on Saturday, May 24, at the home of Charley Widmer in Harrison, N.Y. Rob Schram, Eddie Thorne, Dwight Davies and Roger Doyle were there, along with Joe Hagy, co-captain of the 1963 football team, with Davies.

There were plenty of memories – talk of former baseball coach Norm Koury, the no-hit loss to Frank Spaziani of Clark, old teammates, old opponents and old games – high school, American Legion and Westfield Merchants, since most of them played on all three teams, sometimes simultaneously.

And of course, this being the 50th anniversary, there was talk about the '64 Legion state finals, about that final Sunday in Bridgeton against Brooklawn, when unbeaten Post 3 just had to beat Brooklawn once, but lost both ends of the doubleheader ... and the tight strike zone that day against Dennis Burke (as viewed by Thorne in center field) ... and Ken Brix's scoop of Doyle's low throw for the apparent game-ending third out ... and the umpire's safe call ... and the state title that got away.

Now, fifty years later, it's finally water under the bridge, time to move on, right?

"We always talk about Brooklawn," Schram said. "It's a game which will always live in infamy for us. I'm the only one who thinks the game was fixed for the home boys."

"Despite our denials, they are still the winner," Thorne said. "And Doyle still went berserk after the final call."

Is there a statute of limitations on things like this? Hopefully, not.

Here is the 1964 WHS baseball team's pretty regular all-senior lineup and batting order:

Davies ss, Billy Myers 3b, Charley Mason 1b, Widmer c, Schram rf, Joe Wiendl 2b, Thorne cf, Doyle or Jerry Hendershott lf, Burke and Bill Richold p.

(Note: It is believed – but not confirmed – that this was the only time WHS baseball fielded nine senior starters on a semi-regular basis. And that doesn't include Nick Piscopo, who started as a sophomore at shortstop and as a junior in right field but didn't play as a senior.)

Brix, a junior, split playing time at first base with Mason, while juniors Greg Chlan and Steve Wright were in the starting rotation.

The Devils were 14-5 and lost in the second round of the UCT to Cranford, 1-0, and in the first round of the Greater Newark Tournament to Madison. They did win the Watchung Conference championship.

Post 3 was 17-5-3 – and that includes two wins by Chlan over Union's Al Santorini, by scores of 1-0 and 9-4. In addition to reaching the state final, Post 3 won the first half of the U.C. American Legion title and met Union, the second-half winner, in a best-of-three playoff to decide the winner. After Union won the opener, 5-1, Westfield took the second game, 7-5. When the decisive third game ended in 7-7 and 5-5 ties, the playoffs were canceled due to lateness in the summer and co-champions were declared.

The Post 3 lineup for the state title game vs. Brooklawn on Aug. 9, 1964: Thorne cf, Myers ss, Brix 1b, Widmer c, Schram rf, Jeff Cain lf, Doyle 3b, Fran Scalessa 2b, Jim Smith and Burke p.

The Merchants were 15-7 overall, and 13-5 as champions of the Union County League. They won their first two games in the state tournament, before losing to two perennial powers, the East Orange Soverels and the Emerson-Westwood Merchants. The pitching staff included future pros Joe DiFabio and Chlan, along with Bill Dunkel and Marty Howarth, along with

*Probitas Verus Honos*



**FIFTY YEARS AFTER:** Members of the 1964 WHS baseball team get together for a selfie in Harrison, N.Y. From left: Rob Schram, Charlie Widmer, Dwight Davies, Roger Doyle, Ed Thorne.

Jim Smith and Burke. (And there were another 20 to 25 games in the less-publicized Plainfield Twilight League.)

Most of those players – Widmer, Schram, Thorne, Wiendl, Chlan and Burke – played in, or where at, most of the roughly 90 games that spring/summer. For the entire baseball season – WHS, Post 3, Merchants – they had a winning percentage of 75 percent! Not too shabby.

\*

On a similar note, former WHS cross-country and track coach Jack Martin sent our Way Back Machine note from the May 1 Den, concerning Westfield's 12-inning win over Union in the 1965 Greater Newark Tournament semifinals, to some Union players he knows. You'd have thought I had printed misinformation the way they got up in arms.

Martin sent it to first baseman Lou Koehler, who forwarded it to several teammates and ex-coach Gordon LeMatty. They had plenty of reasons why Union's 1965 squad might have been the greatest team in state history. And they might be right. But the bottom line is – and this can't be stressed enough – that Greg Chlan went all 12 innings, gave up 12 hits, walked seven, struck out 13, threw a gazillion pitches and worked out of one jam after another to earn a 2-1 victory, on a hot, steamy Saturday at Union.

And just like Brooklawn is always going to have the bottom line to that 1964 discussion, Chlan and WHS are always going to have the final word in that '65 GNT argument.

But it sure was a lot of fun "discussing" them ... even (or especially) 50 years later.

### BOOSTER DINNER

Every year I'm constantly in awe of the award winners at the Westfield Booster Club's scholarship dinner. Every year the Boosters give tens of thousands of dollars of awards, many in the memory of former Boosters or former coaches. They go to seniors who generally are deeply involved in

much more than just their sports and getting good grades. And then the next year along comes another amazing group of seniors to earn the awards. Just sayin', it really is amazing.

### BLUE DEVILS JEOPARDY

Last week we said the final Devil's Den of 2013-14 would be June 19. The season finale will actually be June 26, and it will include "Blue Devils Jeopardy." Next week's Den will recap the spring sports season.

### WAY BACK MACHINE

With the recent passing of Jack Wilson, at the too young age of 62, it's a good time to take a look back at the WHS swim teams that he swam on from 1968-70. Those teams, the first three after Hall of Fame coach Chuck Gantner took over for Uncle Joe Della Badia, won three Union County, two Eastern Interscholastics, and three state A Division championships.

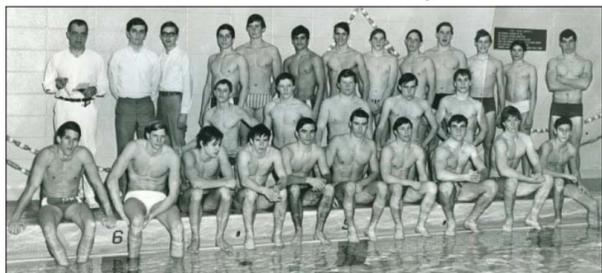
At those three county meets, they won 23 of 33 events, including 10 of 11 in 1969. Wilson, an all-American, swam on the winning 400-free relay in 1970.

They narrowly (8 points) lost the 1968 Eastern title to St. Joseph's Prep of Philadelphia, than more than doubled the runner-ups' score the next two years. Wilson swam on a winning 400 relay there, too.

And they won 23 out of 33 events in winning states all three years, including eight of 11 winners in 1969 and 1970, when Wilson anchored the winning medley relay.

Those teams get lost in the afterglow of the 1964-66 teams. The 1968-70 teams featured Hall of Famers Steve Schmitt, Gordon Clark and Don Mutz, and included Steve Clark, John Ackerson, Rich Maxwell, Pete Klaiber, Jon Perkowski, Rich Haney, Pete Meyers, Greg Gerber, Drew Ruotolo and Ham Riddle. They were all either individual or relay state champions, in most cases multiple times.

In the Way Back Machine photo below of the 1970 team, Jack Wilson is in the front row, second from right – the one flexing his muscles.



**WAY BACK MACHINE:** The 1970 WHS boys swim team won the 12th state title in school history, and 10th in a row. Front row (from left): Gordon Clark, Jon Perkowski, Steve Schmitt, Peter Meyers, Bob Korn, Rich Haney, Greg Gerber, Drew Ruotolo, Jack Wilson, Morgan Harrison; middle row: Mike Kenny, Bill Harris, Chip Lyng, Bill Lindlaw, Bob Lieberberg; back row: coach Chuck Gantner, manager Richard Wade, manager John Curtis, Ray Ferri, Fred Conroy, Bob Shahmazarian, Pete Demarest, Joe Wilson, Scott Eichhorn, Jon Mandel, George Richardson, Bruce Cant, Mike Condriello. Missing from photo: Bruce Dean, Gus Gordon, Joe Krakora, Ham Riddle, Bruce Van Derven, Eric Van Leuven, Jim Wescoat.

## Open House Sunday, June 8th, 1-4 PM



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