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McCAFFREY 4-FOR-4, 3B, 2B; KNIGHT 3-FOR-4, 2B, RBI Cougars Topple Knights, 14-4, For Sectional Baseball Crown

By LANCE TUPPER
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Competing for championships is the rule, rather than the exception, for the Cranford High School baseball program, and understanding what it takes to win big games is ingrained in the minds of the players.

Shrugging off some early adversity, the top-seeded Cougars captured their third consecutive North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 title with a 14-4 six-inning victory over the fourth-seeded West Essex Knights at Memorial Field in Cranford on May 30.

The 17-6 Cougars mounted a surgical, 17-hit attack and southpaw pitcher Patrick Knight, who took the hill in the third inning, delivered three and two-third innings of clutch relief

Aware that he was a homerun short of hitting for the cycle, McCaffery said he was focused on looking for good pitches to hit. "I was looking fastball and it worked out for me. I wasn't worried about the cycle at all. I was just trying to get a hit, and down two strikes my fourth at-bat, and I was just...trying to see a ball over the plate and hit it hard. I wasn't really too worried about anything like that (the cycle). I was just thankful that I saw some good pitches," McCaffery said.

He also joked that he may not be the most patient Cougar hitter. "I don't have too many walks or hit-by-pitches, and by far I have the most (official) at-bats on the team. Pretty much if the first pitch is a strike, I'm

twice and scored twice; John Oblachinski singled, doubled, had two RBI and scored twice; Liam Duffy walked twice and scored twice.

The Cougars drew first blood in the bottom of the first inning. With one out, McCaffery doubled off pitcher James Panzarino and came around to score later on Knight's two-out single. Knight, who had advanced to second, was gunned down trying to steal third by catcher Mike Cesare to end the inning.

West Essex knotted the score in the second. Anthony Tornatore (2-for-3) drilled a leadoff double to left-center and later scored on Joey Gonnella's RBI groundout.

In the third, West Essex, with one out, strung together three straight hits,



More photos at Ballyhoo Sports

David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WHOOPS! CAUGHT IN A RUNDOWN...Blue Devil Chris Arena gets caught in a rundown and heads back to first base in the first inning against Bridgewater-Raritan in the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 4 semifinal in Westfield on May 27.

DeMARTINO TOSSES 3-HITTER; IONTA 3 HITS, 3 RBI

Blue Devils Pounce Panthers In Baseball Section Semi, 5-0

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

"I know we have good pitching to keep us in games. All I ask is five runs please! Just five runs!" Blue Devil Head Coach Bob Brewster said after his team defeated Cranford, 4-1, in the Union County Tournament semifinals on May 3.

Well! One run was all the Westfield High School baseball team needed when senior Brad DeMartino pitched a three-hitter, while walking two and striking out six, in a 5-0 shutout of the Bridgewater-Raritan Panthers in the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 4 semifinals at Bob Brewster, Sr. Field in Westfield on May 27.

The 20-3 Blue Devils, who have won 14 straight home games, would next host the Millburn Millers, who upset Ridge, 5-0, for the sectional title.

The Blue Devils tapped the Panthers for 10 hits and catcher Mike Ionta had a hot "metal stick", going 3-for-3 with a pair of RBI.

"I tried to hop on the first pitch fastball and it worked today. I got three hits, drove in two runs and helped us win," Ionta said.

Leadoff hitter Anthony Perconte went 3-for-4, with an RBI and a run scored, and stole two bases. Cal Robershaw rapped a two-run triple and scored once. Chris Hogge and Dan DoCampo both singled and scored once. Chris Arena singled and walked once, and Matt Storcks scored once. Pinch runner Matt Catanzaro stole a base.

Panther Josh Robbins lined a one-out single in the top of the first, but the Blue Devils escaped the inning when shortstop Storcks initiated a second-to-first double play. After Ionta slapped an RBI single to bring home Storcks in the bottom of the inning, Panther Kevin McDermott lashed a two-out single in the second, but DeMartino adjusted his strategy somewhat and struck out the next batter.

The Blue Devil second inning produced three runs and a 4-0 cushion. DoCampo and Hogge both singled then Robershaw whacked a long shot between the right fielder and the center fielder and it dropped in for a two-run triple. Perconte followed with an RBI single.

"He threw me a fastball right down

the middle and I jumped on it. I thought he was going to catch it at first, but it got over his head. It gave us a spark. We gave Brad a couple of runs, and that was all he needed," Robershaw said.

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Warriors Ice Westfield In Sectional Softball

The 20-6 Watchung Hills Lady Warriors High School softball team plated five runs in the bottom of the fourth inning and added two more in the sixth to defeat the 21-4 Westfield Blue Devils, 7-4, in the semifinal round of the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 4 tournament in Warren on May 27.

Alyssa Murray capped that five-run inning with a three-run home run to give the Warriors a 5-2 lead. Cali Chambliss doubled and scored twice, Chrissy Ferraro scored once and had an RBI single, Bobbi Snyder scored once and had an RBI, and Julia Criscuolo and Shannon Schaefer each added an RBI for the Blue Devils.

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Lance Tupper for The Westfield Leader and The Times

SCORING THE FIRST RUN OF THE GAME...Cougar Jack McCaffrey slides safely home in the first inning for the first run in the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 championship game against West Essex. The Cougars won, 14-4.

to earn the win.

Combining patient at-bats with daring base running, Cranford kept the pressure on three different West Essex pitchers and the defense for the entire game. Jack McCaffery went 4-for-4, including booming a triple and a double. Knight went 3-for-4 with a double and RBI.

swinging. And that's pretty much the mentality I've gone with the whole season," McCaffery said.

Matt Ravetier rapped two singles and added three RBI; Tommy Trotter singled in a run, walked, scored and swiped a base; Albert Gargiulo had two hits and two RBI; Sam Scher was 2-for-3; Mike Smith singled, walked

including an RBI double by Kevin Fox. Ravetier walked Panzarino to load the bases. Tornatore then scorched a liner off the left shin of Ravetier, who scrambled for the ball and flipped it underhanded to catcher Scher, but the runner was ruled safe, and the Knights led 3-1.

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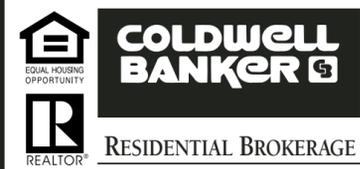
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7 Pine Court, Westfield

Quintessential home nestled on an idyllic cul-de-sac with fabulous curb appeal. Set amongst lush landscaping filled with perennial plantings, this sprawling residence offers 10 exceptionally proportioned rooms /5 bedrooms/3.1 Baths. Welcoming entry foyer opens to a gracious living room boasting an oversized sun lit window, hardwood flooring and crown moldings. Tastefully appointed formal dining room features pocket doors which lead to the inviting family room, accented by a vaulted ceiling, bank of windows and stone wood-burning fireplace. Spacious eat in kitchen with pantry storage overlooks the tranquil backyard. Four bedrooms and two full baths occupy the second floor and a private, master en suite tops the third. Grade level second family room, powder room and laundry complete the home. Noteworthy amenities include 2-zone HVAC, two car garage and abundant closet space. Convenient to all of Westfield's excellent schools! Offered at \$859,000.



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Exquisite expanded ranch tucked away on a private cul de sac on the Westfield/Mountainside border and previously showcased on the Symphony Home Tour. Ideal taxes of \$13,055 and just minutes to the NYC Express Bus! Two-story foyer opens to a tastefully appointed living room with gas fireplace. Formal dining room. Eat-in kitchen equipped with granite counters, stainless steel appliances and butler's bar area. Wonderful sun room with floor to ceiling windows reveals a dramatic private garden. The home's family room boasts a second gas fireplace and a wall of custom bookshelves. Luxurious master bedroom with spa-like bath and walk-in dressing room. An office/library and powder room complete the first floor. The second level hosts two spacious bedrooms with a Jack & Jill bath. Amenities include all Pella/Andersen windows, sprinkler system, landscape lighting, stereo system and hardwood flooring. Set on a quiet knoll overlooking views of the valley below. Offered at \$995,000.

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