



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times  
**READY FOR GAME 1...**The Blue Devil starters get ready for Game 1 against the Ridge Red Devils in Westfield on September 26.

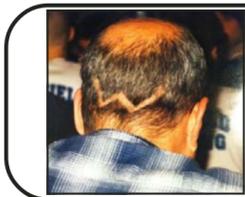
## Blue Devils Nip Ridge in V-ball

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and a dig.  
 "Olivia Manning is one of the captains and she was outside, so I think she is really experienced. She's been on varsity a long time, and she knows where to place the ball at all times. Our other outside, Stephanie Borr, she's a freshman. She's been very impressive for us, so we are just hoping to keep this up," Mondon said.  
 The 7-1 Blue Devils also received needed support in the back from sophomore libero Leigh Scarano, who had 19 digs, an assist and nine service points with two aces.  
 "She's the sister of our libero from last year. She's happy to be filling her [Elena] shoes. She's doing an amazing job for us, and I think she wants to follow up on what her sister did, and she is doing a great job of that," Mondon said.  
 Senior co-captain Kaelyn Heard contributed a block, a dig and a service point. Sophomores Dana Boretz had a pair of digs and four service points with two aces, Lizzie Sottung had two digs and three service points with a pair of aces, and Olivia Meyer notched a kill and four digs, while junior Rachel Holt added a kill.  
 The Blue Devils added four straight points early in Game 1 to take a 7-4 lead then stretched their lead to 12-5 toward the midway point. Later, Scarano banged four straight service points to give her team their biggest

lead at 19-10. The 4-4 Red Devils did come back to answer with five straight points to narrow the gap to 20-16 then tightened it even more to get to 23-20, but a pair of kills from Manning closed out Game 1.  
 Game 2 began with an alternating of points until the Red Devils inched away to grasp a 16-11 lead and later held a 20-15 lead, before the Blue Devils began to do some inching of their own with the help of a key block, a quick slanting hit and a clever tip from Mondon to go with a slam from Manning. After another kill from Borr and a pair of service points from Sottung, the Blue Devils closed the gap to 22-20. Scarano added two service points and Manning notched another kill to knot the score at 23. Then the seesaw struggle began with neither team able to batch a pair of points together until Borr slicked a tip kill. Manning slammed a kill from mid-court and a successful service point concluded Game 2.  
 "I think we are good about coming back from losses. Under pressure, I think we played not safe but smart with where to put the ball and who to set," Mondon said. "It was definitely a most high energy game. We were excited the entire time whether we were down or winning. It was big for us."

**Probitas Verus Honos**



## Devil's Den Rudolph R. Brown Jr., Nov. 20, 1947 - Oct. 5, 1984

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

Rudy Brown died 30 years ago this Sunday. He was living in Liberal, Kansas. His obituary was four paragraphs in the local newspaper. Back in Westfield, *The Leader* gave him five graphs. That just doesn't seem enough.  
 There was no mention of him being Westfield's best running back in the 1960s, the best since Rick McGinley 15 years earlier. Nothing about him being the first great four-back for coach Gary Kehler.  
 Some people think any discussion of Westfield's great running backs should include Rudy Brown.  
 The all-time leading runner at WHS is Glen Kehler, who had 2,797 yards on 511 carries. He and Butch Woolfolk are rightly considered the two best ever at WHS. But just for argument's sake, let's suppose Rudy Brown had carried the ball as often as Glen. Rudy would've had over 3,800 career yards. And while there's no arguing that Woolfolk's one season as a starter was the stuff of legends, Brown's three years at WHS saw him gain more yards on fewer carries than Butch's magic fall of 1977.  
 Rudy Brown was that good.  
 Beyond his football talent - and whether or not he tried to be this we can't say - Brown was an inspiration to the youth in the black community during the racially-torn mid-1960s. The Civil Rights movement was powerful and growing in America, where some people had forgotten the bloody Civil War had ended 100 years earlier.  
 To an entire generation growing up in the Columbus School area - Cacciola Place, Windsor Avenue and Ripley Place - and out West Broad near McKinley School, Rudy Brown was "the man" to a younger generation that included guys like Frank Jackson, Kevin Bonner, David Scott, Gist Johnson, Eddie Morton, Greg Braxton, Chris Campbell, Kenny Blackwell, Rich Johnson, Daryl McMillar, Mike Saunders, Spud Monroe, Boo Bowers, the Graves brothers, the Bundy brothers, and many others.  
 Brown's most electrifying game was his senior year, in a 45-27 win at Rahway, when he ran for 223 yards on just 16 carries and scored four touchdowns. Equally as impressive was a 32-20 win over River Dell in his junior year when he gained 199 yards and had 20- and 80-yard touchdown runs called back by penalties.  
 Let's let some of his contemporaries take over here:  
 "He was pretty quick and strong, but mostly just incredibly elusive," quarter-

back Dwight Davies ('64) said. "Nobody ever got a clean shot at him, and he always fell forward for extra yards. I don't ever remember Rudy fumbling."  
 "I used to love handing the ball off to Rudy and watching his speed and quickness," quarterback Dick Stotler ('66) said. "Nobody got to the hole quicker than Rudy. He never said much, just did his job and contributed to the winning effort."  
 Future WHS quarterback Joe Monninger ('71) was in third or fourth grade and might have been at that River Dell game in '64, playing in those never-ending kids' tackle-no-equipment games beyond the fence at the Grove Street goalpost.  
 "I always loved Rudy Brown but I have no idea how good he was," Monninger said. "I just remember his name coming over the loud speaker an awful lot."  
 "He was our hero," said Morton ('72), who starred on the '70 and '71 teams. "He was the best running back ever from Windsor Avenue."  
 "He was the first star I can remember watching on the Westfield football team," said Glen Kehler ('75) said. "I wanted to be the next Rudy Brown."  
 "He was one of my childhood heroes," said Jackson ('70), a three-year starter at WHS. "Rudy was someone I aspired to emulate when I reached high school."  
 The youngster whose youthful running style was most similar to Brown's was Campbell, a Westfield Boys Football League legend from 1965-67. He

gave up football in ninth grade for religious reasons, but went on to be a champion wrestler at WHS, the University of Iowa, and for Team USA in the Olympic Games of 1980 and '92.  
 "Watching Rudy Brown run for touchdowns lifted up the entire black community," Campbell ('73) said. "It encouraged us kids to participate in sports and that led to us having a much broader experience with the community. We learned that the people in Westfield, by and large, did not care about your color when it came to school and sports; they wanted all their children to succeed in life and went out of their way to provide

49ers. (Washington died in 2009.)  
 Brown served three years in the U.S. Marine Corps (1965-68), earning a rank of Lance Corporal. But when he came home, the world was different, seemingly coming apart at the seams. His family had moved to Plainfield. Race riots were tearing apart the Queen City, along with Newark, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, Camden, Jersey City, among others. Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated. Wild rock and roll concerts were held at Altamont Speedway and Woodstock. Drugs were becoming a major problem across America, especially for servicemen coming home from combat.  
 He struggled for a while, living in New York City, before moving to the Midwest. By 1980, Rudy and his girlfriend had a daughter, now a beautician in Atlanta, married with several children of her own. He got a steady job and had spent almost four years working at a meat packing plant, getting his life back together, when he was murdered, stabbed in the back by an assailant.  
 Rudy Brown was 37.



The 1961-62 Edison ninth-grade basketball team. Front row (from left): coach Stan Ziobro, Gordon Peterson, Rudy Brown, Tom Quimby, Steve Haworth, Ken Brix; middle row, manager Mike Feldman, Bob Bonow, Joel Berkeley, Dave King, John Golden, manager Neal Garrison; back row, Greg Chlan, Steve Wright and Steve Hoppin. Missing from picture: Gary Freeman, Jerry Richards.



ON THE BEAM...Blue Devil Megan Melillo holds a handstand on the beam.

the opportunity for that success. He was truly inspiring.  
 "When I think of Westfield running backs, the two names that come to mind are Rudy Brown and Jay Isbrecht," back Chuck Hood ('66) said. "I looked up to both of them. When I was switched from quarterback to two-back as a senior, I switched my number to wear Rudy's number (24)."  
 "The main thing I remember about Rudy," end Mike Mangan ('66) said, "is that he was a (freakin') bruiser!"  
 Brown's senior season ended in a 12-6 loss at Plainfield, Westfield's only loss. Word was that he would join Plainfield High's equally exciting Vic Washington at the University of Wyoming, but that never happened. Rudy went into the service, while Washington went to Wyoming and later starred in both the Canadian and National Football Leagues, playing in the Pro Bowl for the San Francisco

In 1964 he was a living legend in his home town.  
 In 1984 he became an urban legend, dying in a faraway town.  
 Today he is buried in Kenilworth's peaceful Graceland Memorial Park, along with his father, sister and grandparents, pretty much forgotten in a world that speeds by at 80 mph on the nearby Garden State Parkway.  
 But he'll never be forgotten for those who remember him. Not to Tom Quimby ('65), who grew up playing sports with Rudy, in the Pony Leagues and at Edison Junior High. He remembers watching Rudy Brown attack the blocking dummy one day and deciding that he, Quimby, should probably stick to basketball. He remembers catching Rudy on the Royals, the first pitcher to make him wear a protective cushion in his catcher's glove.  
 "He was a man among boys," Quimby said. "Rudy was one-of-a-kind. He had a tough life in many ways, but I remember him always being a good guy to be around."

## Blue Devils Gymnasts Top Raiders, Dayton Bulldogs

The Westfield High School gymnastics team took top honors in highly anticipated meet against Scotch Plains-Fanwood with a 108-45-100.75 victory in Westfield on September 24. Two days earlier, the hosting Blue Devils defeated the Jonathan Dayton Bulldogs, 103.475-51.85.  
 Gymnasts who were key contributors to the victory over the Raiders, included junior Jess Keenan, freshman Lexi Fasano, and seniors Jenna Rizkalla and Hannah Goldring.  
 Westfield gymnasts swept the first three spots on vault, uneven bars, and balance beam. On vault, Fasano took first with a 9.0. On the bars, Rizkalla hit a season-high 9.45, doing a toe front tuck dismount, followed by strong performances from Fasano and senior Mae Devin. Amelia Paladino was the top placer on bars for Scotch Plains-Fanwood.  
 Rizkalla also won the balance beam event and shared the top spot on floor with Goldring. Both gymnasts achieved season-high marks in this event. Jess Keenan came in second for the Blue Devils, followed by

Raider Abby Spector in third place. Hannah Prieto and Megan Melillo also contributed to Westfield's total with strong performances on the vault.  
**WESTFIELD VS. SCOTCH PLAINS:**  
**VAULT:** Lexi Fasano (W), 9.0; 2. Megan Melillo (W), 8.85; 3. Hannah Prieto (W), 8.725; 4. Jess Keenan (W), 8.675; 5. Sydney Keenan (W) 8.375.  
**UNEVEN BARS:** Jenna Rizkalla (W), 9.45; 2. Lexi Fasano (W), 8.95; 3. Mae Devin (W), 8.8; 4. Hannah Prieto (W), 8.7; 5. Amelia Paladino (SPF), 8.35.  
**BALANCE BEAM:** Rizkalla (W), 9.15; 2. L. Fasano (W), 8.85; 3. J. Keenan (W), 8.725; 4. Annie Luongo (SPF), 8.65; 5. Abby Spector (SPF), 8.5.  
**FLOOR EXERCISE:** Rizkalla (W), 9.4; Hannah Goldring (W), 9.4; 2. J. Keenan (W), 9.15; 3. Spector (SPF), 9.0; 4. Megan Melillo (W), 8.9; 5. Paladino (SPF), 8.7.  
**WESTFIELD VS. DAYTON:**  
**VAULT (all Westfield):** 1. Lexi Fasano, 8.8; 2. Sydney Keenan, 8.6; 3. Sarah Fox, 8.4.  
**UNEVEN BARS (all Westfield):** 1. Hannah Goldring, 8.65; 2. Carlie Fasano, 8.25; 3. Jess Keenan, 8.275.  
**BEAM (all Westfield):** 1. Jenna Rizkalla, 9.225; 2. Lexi Holzer, 8.2; 3. Carlie Fasano, 7.9.  
**FLOOR (all Westfield):** 1. Megan Melillo, 9.05; 2. Hannah Prieto, 8.95; 3. Hannah Goldring, 8.9.

Jerry Richards ('65), who played basketball with Rudy at Edison Junior High, was a regular at football games. "I remember a couple of games, but especially the SPFF game senior year, when he had two interceptions in a driving rain storm that led to both of our scores in a 16-6 win," Richards said. "Yes, he could play defense too. They had a lot of runners when he was there, so they all had to share the workload. But you could always count on him."  
 And not forgotten by those guys he grew up around, and influenced.  
 "Rudy wore No. 24," Morton said, "and the kids around Windsor Avenue all decided that if we were ever lucky enough to play football at Westfield High, we would never wear No. 24. That was Rudy's number."  
 Ron (Hall) Holmes ('66) was a year behind Rudy Brown in school, but a similar talent - short and compact, but muscular and quick as a cat. They played alongside each other in the same backfield in 1964.  
 "He was our Barry Sanders," Holmes said, recalling the Detroit Lions star of the 1990s. "Quick and powerful with moves that included a dropped shoulder feint that made you grab nothing but air... unless he put his head down and just ran over you. He had some issues later. But, man, he was a great athlete. I wish I'd had half his talent."  
**R.I.P.**

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