

SR POWER - BENCIVENGA, SCHORK, HALPIN, BLEVINS

Cougars Are Keeping the Bar High in Wrestling this Season

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

High standards and goals have been set and most of them have been achieved through the past several years by the Cranford High School wrestling team and this year is no different for the Cougars, who intend to keep the bar of achievement at a high level. They have tacked on an even tougher schedule.

"We did get a tough schedule this year with tougher teams with the Henry Boesch duals (Newton). It's South Plainfield, Hanover Park, Paulsboro, big time teams. We also picked up a Tri with Emerson and Hunterdon

is senior leadership.

"We have a lot of seniors in the room this year and looking forward to a good year for them," Coach Gorman said.

One senior, who had a standout finish last year, is AJ Bencivenga, who placed third in the district tournament, beat some key wrestlers to place third in the region to qualify for Atlantic City (AC) then after losing his first bout, regrouped to win three straight at AC. Bencivenga finished with a 33-9 record at 145-lbs. Bencivenga will remain at 145-lbs.

"In the regions, he turned the corner when he beat [Rhise] Royster from Rahway and he came back and

pleasant surprise last year when he won the UCT 220-lb title, placed second in the region and finished 25-9, will compete at the same weight. Senior Matt Savino, who placed third in the UCT at 285-lbs, has been injured and is out for the season. Senior Zach Blevins (3rd in district at 182) will fill the 195-lb slot. Senior Kyell Roper (3rd in district at 160, finished 18-13) will compete at 152-lbs.

Senior Dan Swanson, who had a few varsity matches last year, will fill the 170-lb slot. Senior Conor Halpin, who placed second in the UCT at 138-lbs but was injured toward the end of the season, will fill the same



David B. Corbin (January 2018 files) for The Westfield Leader and The Times

EXPECTING A GREAT SEASON...Cougar AJ Bencivenga, left, who really turned on the jets during tournament time last year and won three bouts at the NJSIAA Tournament in Atlantic City is expecting even more success this season.

Central and we are still in the Tri with High Point, Cedar Grove. We are keeping the bar high," Cougar Head Coach Pat Gorman expressed.

Last year after the graduation of five NJSIAA qualifiers and five 100+ career victory athletes, very few oppo-

beat the kid [Jacob Stasil] from Watchung Hills. After he beat Royster, it got in his head that, 'I belong to be here with these guys. I am this good!'

So when he went down to the states and took that first loss, probably had a little bit of jitters, but after that he

slot. Senior Dean Smith (3rd in UCT at 132, injured late in season) will wrestle at 132-lbs. Others with varsity experience last year are juniors Jack Korzeneski (138), Justin Alpaugh-McLain (182), Max Nock (160) and Evan Kanterman (160).

"We have guys some guys who had some time in the lineup when we had some injuries. So we are looking for them to be more of a factor in our lineup this year," Coach Gorman said.

Freshman Ronan Waters will compete at 106-lbs, junior Will Fernandez (3rd in district last year) and sophomore Brendan Reilly will vie at 113-lbs. At 120-lbs is junior Pat Kalnins and at 126-lbs will be sophomore Jimmy Gluck and freshman Colin Murray. Sophomore Christian Esposito will be at 132-lbs.

Last year the Cougars competed at the Group 3 level in the sections but this year the Cougars have moved up to North 2, Group 4 and they have been shifted to District 14 (Millburn).

"Our section has changed and our district has changed. Other than that we are looking forward to a lot of the teams around here. Last year Rahway clipped us, Westfield handed us a pretty solid beating. So we are looking to get some revenge on some local teams along the way and hang with those big teams and eke out a couple of wins there," Coach Gorman said.



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UNION COUNTY CHAMPION...Cougar Rob Schork, right, won the Union County Tournament 220-lb crown last year and qualified for the NJSIAA Tournament at AC.

nents may expected the Cougars' ability to operate at a high level. But the Cougars stunned them all when they captured their fourth straight Union County Tournament (UCT) crown and placed second in the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 Tournament to finish with a 14-7 record. In the UCT, the Cougars pulled off some key victories to nip a very tough Roselle Park team by two points, 187-185.

"The county title is always a goal for the team. Last year it was a team effort. We are looking forward to that again. We are looking forward to our conference. Definitely the county got a lot tougher this year," Coach Gorman commented.

To help attain their high level of excellence, the Cougars have acquired two very talented assistant coaches with Derek Francavilla and Cory Marcovitch. Francavilla had been a standout for the rivaling Scotch Plains-Fanwood Raiders and Marcovitch is a home-grown Cougar.

"We have two new coaches, Derek Francavilla, who wrestled at Columbia, and Cory Marcovitch, who wrestled at Ursinus. They are bringing a new kind of aspect and new style that works well with our middle weights and our upper weights. It's like a rebirth. Some of the techniques are changing and it's keeping it fresh for the kids," Coach Gorman said.

Another good thing for the Cougars

put that together and had a great run down there. I am looking for him to capitalize on that down there and get on the podium," Coach Gorman commented.

Senior Rob Schork, who was a very

PUBLIC NOTICE

**TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH PLAINS
2019 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
PUBLIC NOTICE OF FAIR AND OPEN
PROCUREMENT PROCESS -
REDEVELOPMENT AREA
FINANCIAL ANALYST**

In accordance with New Jersey Local Public Contracts Law and N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et. seq., the Township of Scotch Plains ("Township"), County of Union, a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey, is soliciting professional services proposals through a fair and open process. The Township will require the following services during calendar year 2019: Redevelopment Area Financial Analyst.

Submission packages may be obtained at the Township Clerk's Office, (908) 322-6700, during regular business hours, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Submission packages are also available on the Township website www.scotchplainsnj.gov.

The Township of Scotch Plains intends to qualify persons and/or firms that (a) possess the professional, financial and administrative capabilities to provide the proposed services, and (b) will agree to work under the compensation terms and conditions determined by the Township to provide the greatest benefit to the taxpayers of **SCOTCH PLAINS**.

The Mayor and Council reserves the right to reject any or all submissions due to any defects or waive informalities and accept any submissions that in their judgment will be in the best interest of the Township. The Mayor and Council shall award the contract or reject all submissions no later than 60 days from receipt of the same.

Sealed responses to this request for proposals must be submitted to the Township of Scotch Plains, Office of the Municipal Clerk, 430 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076 by no later than **4:00 P.M.** local prevailing time on **TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019** at which time and place responses are scheduled to be opened by the Municipal Manager or his

PUBLIC NOTICE

designee. Each sealed envelope containing a proposal shall be plainly marked on the outside to clearly show the specific service for which an individual or firm is submitting a proposal.

The proposals will be evaluated by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Scotch Plains and contracts awarded based on (1) individual or firm experience and reputation in the field (a copy of the resume of each individual performing the work is to be included); (2) knowledge of the Township of Scotch Plains and subject matters to be addressed under the contract; (3) availability to accommodate any required meetings; (4) compensation proposal; (5) at least 2 references with address and phone number; (6) a certification that no immediate relatives of any principal of the firm is employed by, or serve as elected officials of the Township of Scotch Plains; (7) an explanation as to when each individual performing work received his or her license to practice in this State; (8) a copy of the firm's Certificate of Liability Insurance; (9) a copy of the firm's Business Registration Certificate, and (10) Submission of the information requested in the RFP.

All contracts pursuant to the fair and open process will be awarded by resolution and require a majority vote of the Township Council at a public meeting. In addition to full compliance with N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et. seq. ("Pay to Play"), individuals or firms awarded contracts under these procedures will be required to comply with N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 and N.J.A.C. 17-27-4 (Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity), 42 U.S.C. Section 12101 et. seq. (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990), N.J.S.A. 52:25-24.2 (Disclosure of Ownership) and N.J.S.A. 52:32-44 (Business Registration). Any questions regarding this notice should be directed to the Township of Scotch Plains, Office of the Municipal Manager, 430 Park Avenue, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076, (908) 322-6700.

Alexander Mirabella,
Township Manager
1 T - 12/06/18, The Times Fee: \$86.19



David B. Corbin (February 2018 files) for The Westfield Leader and The Times

PART OF THE RETURNING BLUE DEVIL TALENT...Senior Sam Stravach, No. 2, and junior Faith Dobosiewicz, No. 23, have proven to be strong underneath the boards as well as putting the ball in the basket.

Blue Devils Have Plenty of New Talent in Hoops

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

her career total to 210 (WHS 5th all-time) Sgro's defensive skills came to light well, especially with rebounds and blocked shots.

The two returning starters, seniors Sam Stravach and Lily Maz, also were quite influential on the court. An offensive threat, Stravach got tougher as the season progressed, especially under the boards, was the team leader in rebounds with 171 and was second in scoring with 248 points. Maz was particularly adept defensively, while making 23 steals, but she also dished out 49 assists (3rd on team).

"I think that we have a lot of new prospects with a lot of people, who can be able to show more of what they can do. We lost half of our starting lineup last year, so there are more spots for more people to come up. We have a lot of freshmen coming up to play with the varsity and JV's. I think we have a lot of new talent that I am looking forward to this season to see what everybody can bring," Maz said.

"The team, as Lily said, we have a lot of new players and we have a lot of new talent, then also we have people, who were on the bench last year, who are gone to step up. Every-

one just needs to step up and we need to work as a team and I am excited for the season," Stravach added.

Due to the graduation of Ryan, who was the team's leading scorer, more offensive punch could be expected from Stravach.

"Individually, I just want to grow as a player. I want to work on my shot a little bit. My shot, I was a very hesitant to shoot last year, so I want to work on that more," she expressed.

Several girls came off the bench last year and made fine contributions, particularly juniors Faith Dobosiewicz, Caroline Dwyer and Ali Lisanti and sophomore Emma Pietrewicz. Last year, Dobosiewicz proved to be a talented across-the-board player, scoring inside and outside the perimeter, assists, rebounds, blocks and steals. Dwyer knew how to position herself to contribute both offensively and defensively as could Pietrewicz.

"Faith Dobosiewicz, Caroline Dwyer, Ali Lisanti, all those girls are juniors. They now have an opportunity to step it up in the starting lineup and definitely show what they haven't been able to show before. And Emma Pietrewicz, she's a sophomore and she really brought a lot to the table.

We weren't expecting it. She has definitely grown as a player. I think they will each make an impact on our team this season," Maz said.

The Watchung Division is loaded with the county's top-line teams, beginning with The Patrick School (UCT champions), Roselle Catholic (2nd in UCT), Westfield, Cranford, New Providence and Union.

"I think that the Union County Conference challenges us to the point where we really need to go into every single game thinking that we can win because I think we can compete with every single team that's in this conference," Maz said.

"Every game is definitely a challenge. I think our team, especially since we lack the size, it's harder but I think it really shows our heart. We go game-by-game and we work our absolute hardest. It's our heart that helps us shine through," Stravach expressed.

The Lady Blue Devils will open their season by hosting the Union Catholic Vikings on Friday, December 14, at 4 p.m.

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