



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

GEARING UP FOR THE COMPETITION...The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Raider lacrosse boys work on their skills to prepare for their season opener against the AL Johnson Crusaders in Clark on March 28.

BRADY LEADS ON ATTACK, PARADA LEADS DEFENSE

Raiders Looking for Maturity In Boys Lacrosse This Season

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

Another step up the ladder of quality was witnessed last year by fans as the Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Raider lacrosse boys, with an enhanced schedule, proved that they were able to hold their own against the stiffest of competition. This year, however, with the graduation of a number of talented athletes, the Raiders are looking to mature rapidly with a large group of underclassmen, who will be inserted into a lineup headed by a small number of seniors.

"I am looking forward to the season with a very young group. We have a small batch of seniors with a heavy dose of juniors and sophomores. We will need to mature and mesh to be successful," Raider Head Coach Nick Miceli said.

Last year the Raiders, who finished with an 11-9 record, proved that they could compete with the big boys. The best example of that came in the Union County Tournament (UCT) semifinals when they took the Westfield Blue Devils to the limit in an 11-10 thriller. The Blue Devils went on to win their third straight UCT title. The Raiders also advanced to the North Group 3 Tournament semifinals where they were finally stopped by the Summit Hilltoppers.

But now, the young Raiders must look for guidance from seniors Jack

Brady, Harrison Parada, Nick Route, Tom Bruckman and Tommy Ryan.

Brady, who has committed to play for Wagner College next year, was the "Master of the Attack". Last year he really set the season on fire offensively with a team-leading 49 goals and 28 assists for 77 points and added 53 ground balls. For his performances, Brady was named First Team All-Division.

Parada, a leader on defense, scooped 69 ground balls last year and was selected Second Team All-Division. Route will also be on defense. Bruckman, as the backup goalkeeper last year, made 26 saves. This year Ryan will be his backup.

Working with Brady on the attack will be juniors Noah Costanzo and Matt Monroy, a midfielder last year, and sophomore Aidan Guma. Last year, Costanzo netted 26 goals and a pair of assists for 28 points and scooped 24 ground balls.

A junior strong group will make up the midfield, led by Anthony Porter and Alex Oslislo, both three-sport athletes. As a linebacker and running back on the football team and two years of varsity on the wrestling team, Oslislo, as well as Porter, a receiver on the football team, are well seasoned for the action offered in lacrosse. Last year, Porter was selected to the Second Team All-Division. Also in the midfield are Tommy

Nakonechny, Ryan Walsh and Jake Murphy.

Handling the faceoffs will be junior Martin Rogoff and sophomore Bobby Root.

According to Coach Miceli, "Midfield should be our strength as we try to control games between the lines. We are looking to learn and get better everyday we are out there."

In addition to Parada and Route, juniors Eddie Smith, Gianni Carosposito and Ryan Johnson, and sophomore Mike Difrancesco will solidify the defense.

"Jack Brady will lead our attack, three-sport athlete (soccer and hoops). He will have help from our two top midfielders Anthony Porter and Alex Oslislo, who are also two tough three-sport athletes for our school. Our defense will be led by four-year starter Harrison Parada and highly sought after junior Ryan Johnson, who has been a three-year starter," Coach Miceli said.

The Raiders opened their season yesterday, March 28, at AL Johnson then they will host the Millburn Millers on Tuesday, April 3, at 4 p.m. Next would be a trip to Cranford's Memorial Field to do battle with the Cougars on Thursday, April 5, at 4:30.

Probitas Verus Honos

April 2, 2013: Nine innings on the mound was not quite enough for junior pitcher Elena Sciarano to pick up the win, so she decided to blast a solo home run in the bottom of the ninth inning to give the softball Blue Devils a 4-3 victory over the Cranford Cougars in their home opener. Julia Criscuolo led the Blue Devils with three singles and an RBI in her four plate appearances, and Chrissy Ferraro went 2-for-3 with a double and two runs scored. Sarah Seitz went 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run scored. Shortstop Allison Verrelli, who went 3-for-4, drove in all the Cougars' runs. Catcher Victoria Mettlin ripped a pair of singles in four at-bats.

April 4, 2013: Great defensive plays highlighted a fierce rivalry, but the hosting Summit Hilltoppers held on to stop the Blue Devil boys lacrosse team, 4-3, in Summit. Blue Devil senior attacker Jack Flaherty (one assist), along with junior midfields Patrick Decker and Dane Huber, each netted one goal. Senior midfielder Matt Webb provided two assists. Garrett Williamson registered 12 saves.

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CAPTAINS - WEIGAND, MEUSEL, SANGIACOMO, BROWN

Blue Devil Track Boys Have Veterans to Lead in All Events

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

Optimism with good reasons should give the Westfield High School boys track & field team a quick boost this season. The Blue Devils return a host of veterans in every event and are backed by a promising group of underclassmen. Part of that reason for optimism is the presence of the members of the cross-county team that not only won the Union County Tournament but also the group section title. Additionally, two stalwarts, Spencer

Weigand, who placed fourth at the indoor Meet of Champions (MOC), Matt Meusel, and junior James McCutcheon. Other key contributors in the group will be seniors Stuart Pollock, Daniel Scalia and Jack Johnson, juniors Ronnie Melao and Cooper Brennan, sophomores Jon Givelber, Will Loggia, Zach Spergel and Kevin Yucetepe, and freshman Will McGlynn.

Senior co-captain Rob Brown will head the sprint crew.

led by senior captains Spencer Weigand, who placed fourth at the indoor Meet of Champions (MOC), Matt Meusel, and junior James McCutcheon. Other key contributors in the group will be seniors Stuart Pollock, Daniel Scalia and Jack Johnson, juniors Ronnie Melao and Cooper Brennan, sophomores Jon Givelber, Will Loggia, Zach Spergel and Kevin Yucetepe, and freshman Will McGlynn.

Senior co-captain Rob Brown will head the sprint crew. zontal jumps will be sophomores Quinn Priscoe and Nick Rubineti in the high jump. The Blue Devils do have several veterans leading the throwing events. "Our throws are led by senior captain Joe SanGiacomo, who is our top javelin thrower. He is joined by discus returners Bennie Buontempo and Declan McCauley. Tim Alliegro is our top returning shot putter. We have a lot of new faces in this event area, so we're excited to get these guys competing to see what kind of



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JUST WARMING UP...The Blue Devil boys track & field team warms up with a few laps around the track before getting into the thick of practice at Gary Kehler Stadium on March 23. The Annual Blue Devil Invitational is set for April 21.

Weigand and James McCutcheon, from the winning distance medley relay team at last year's Blue Devil Invitational return.

"We had a terrific indoor season, so we are excited for what we can accomplish this outdoor season," Blue Devil Head Coach Chris Tafelski said. "All of our event areas are led by strong veterans as well as newcomers looking to make an impact on the varsity level."

The distance group is loaded and

"We have a great group of juniors in Jake Saltzer, Steve Zucker, Ajay Olson and Jackson O'Brien, who stepped up big for this winter, placing sixth in the Group 4 4x400 relay to advance to the MOC," Coach Tafelski added.

Seniors Chris Calimano and Nick Savorgiannakis will head the hurdle events.

A lot of new faces will be presenting themselves in the jumping events, however the top returners in the hori-

impact they can make," Coach Tafelski said.

The Blue Devils will begin their season on Wednesday, April 4, in a meet against AL Johnson and Roselle. Next will be a meet with Governor Livingston and Union Catholic on Monday, April 9, then with Cranford and David Brearley on Monday, April 16. But the big event will be the Annual Blue Devil Invitational on Saturday, April 21, beginning at 9 a.m.



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

ALSO JUST WARMING UP...The Blue Devil girls track & field team warms up with a few laps around the track and appear to be having some fun before getting into the thick of practice at Gary Kehler Stadium on March 23. As always, the Lady Blue Devils have plenty of numbers and plenty of talent across the board.

Lady Laxer Blue Devils Aim to Take Step Up

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and Haley Farella is playing at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

"We lost eight seniors, five of which played significant roles on our team and were a part of our starting lineup," said Coach Cohn. "Other than those five, the rest of our starting lineup are returners, who will be joined by a very talented group of newcomers, some of which are freshman."

Senior midfielder, Natalie Bond is expected to lead the way for Westfield this season. Bound for Stanford after graduation, Bond is a co-captain, who scored 17 goals and had one assist as a junior on her way to second team All-Conference honors.

Bond will be joined at midfield by senior Lucy Gretskey and junior McKenna Edmondson (9 goals, 2 assists). Junior Erin McDonald and sophomore Mikaela Buoscio provide depth here.

Senior Paige Radice and juniors

Olivia Shields and Carley Farella, along with freshman Liz Healy will head up the attack. Senior co-captain Sydney Paoletti returns, as well, after earning Honorable Mention All-South Division recognition as a junior. Junior Kellie Leuthold and freshman Ellie Kate Brown will look to earn playing time at a crowded and talented position.

The defense will be manned by seniors Paige Dumont, Catherine Moriarty, Grace Cash and junior Claire Yamano. Senior Ashley Gigon is also in the mix on defense. Freshman Brooke Scheuermann will look to crack the lineup on defense.

Junior Carlee Swanson will play goalkeeper. Swanson posted a 9-7 record, while recording 128 saves and allowing 133 goals between the pipes last year. Swanson will be backed by freshman Mia Fleming.

"This season I expect our upperclassmen, specifically our captains, to lead our team," said Cohn. "They have experience on the field and are great communicators with their teammates. I think that many of our players are able to lead with great communication but also are able to lead by example, by making plays and using teamwork. They also have the ability to encourage each other to be the absolute best that they can be each day at practice and in games. Our captains this season are Natalie Bond, Catherine Moriarty, Sydney Paoletti,

and Olivia Shields."

In 2017, Westfield scored its share of quality wins with victories over teams like Saddle River Day, Mountain Lakes, Montclair, West Essex and Chatham. But it was the losses to top tier teams like Bridgewater-Raritan and Summit, as well as several close losses that Cohn will use to motivate her troops for the coming season.

"One main goal that I have for the team this year to strive to improve since last season, in the sense that we are need to be able to defeat opponents that we lost by a just a few goals. I want this team to show how talented they truly are against opponents that may seem, on the surface, tough to face. I don't want this team to back down from any opponent because of their program's history or current rank. I want them to keep their confidence high. I know that this group will be able to achieve this goal."

Cohn expects a pair of familiar foes to provide the primary competition in county and conference play again this season.

"In the Union County conference, we will face both Summit and Oak Knoll, which are our two top competitors. In our conference, Summit is the top competitor."

Westfield kicked off the season on March 28 with a visit to Oak Knoll. The home opener is set for Tuesday, April 3, at 4 p.m. against Moorestown.

D. Blair Corbin's
Raiders
Blue Devils
Cougars
Walk Down Memory Lane

From the archives of *The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*

April 1, 2015: It is early in the track and field season but the Westfield High School boys scored the first blow in earning a 74-65 victory over hosting Scotch Plains-Fanwood on April 1. In a meet which also included Plainfield, the Westfield boys 4x400 team played a major role in catapulting the Blue Devils to victory. Josh Capistrano, Nicholas Antonelli, Will Chandler and Christopher Prasek turned in a great performance in stunning the Raider team

that featured Kobe White and Merlin Edmonds.

April 1, 2014: April Fools Day proved to be no joke as offensive muscle molded the outcome of the Westfield High School baseball team's 9-6 season-opening victory over host Scotch Plains-Fanwood. The power hitting came off the bat of senior shortstop Matt Storcks, the major contributor at the plate with seven RBI, including a grand slam home run in the third inning, a two-run triple in the fourth inning and finishing with a RBI sacrifice fly in the fifth inning.



David B. Corbin (April 2015 files) for The Westfield Leader and The Times

STEALING THIRD BASE...Cougars Pat Knight, No. 8, steals third base in the first inning as Blue Devil Chris Rinaldi catches the throw. Knight had a key two-run single, made a saving catch in centerfield and stole three bases (April 2, 2015).

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