Yorktown senior striker George Popovic (11) has snapped off 19 goals and 16 assists through 16 games after finding the back of the net four times in the last three games, including a pair of game-winning overtime goals in the host state-ranked (No.13) Huskers’ 2-1 triumph of top-ranked Somers last Tuesday and a 1-0 win over Greeley Saturday. The All-Section Popovic cracked off two more tallies in the Huskers’ 3-1 win over Indian Michael Rettberg (18) and host Mahopac Thursday while he and teammates like Derek Beloff-Davis and Ryan Tomeny (inset) improved to 14-1-1 on the season with a top three playoff seed in the bag... see NWE/Putnam Boys’ Soccer Notebook
State-Ranked Carmel, Somers Clinch League Titles, Roll On

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

State-ranked Class AA (No.12) CARMEL and Class A (No12) SOMERS clinched their respective league titles last weekend and both remain on the fast track for their respective sectional title tilts on November 12/13 on the swank campus of Arlington High School.

CLASS AA

CARMEL handled Suffern easily, 31-7, and improved to 6-0 behind another stout defensive effort and a methodical offensive game plan that featured plenty of grind and a blend of chicanery. Ram QB Kevin Dall hit on 8 of 14 for 149 yards and a TD pass to Andrew Fiore (3 catches, 67 yards, TD) before the duo switched places on an end-around, reverse throwback with Fiore jetting off the end to take a hand-off before finding Dall alone in the end zone. It was a thing of beauty. Carmel RB Dylan Shields was a workhorse, carrying 21 times for 115 yards while FB Nick Rosaforte had nine totes for 64 yards and a score.

“We were very sloppy on offense,” Rams Coach Todd Cayea said. “Penalties, bad snaps, miscommunication... we need to clean that stuff up. That TD run against us was 79 yards, so other than that they had 30 yards total offense. Our D played well. We get (Josh) Massi back this week, and that’s big on both sides of the ball.”

The Rams, winners of the League I-B title, will close out the regular season at home against North Rockland (3-3) Friday and expect to have pivotal senior RB/LB Josh Massi back from a three-week injury layoff.

CLASS A

SOMERS wasted little effort in its 49-0 whitewashing of visiting John Jay last Friday. The state-ranked (No.12) Tuskers (6-0) remained undefeated and scored all 49 points before the half, sharing the wealth with six different TD scorers, including junior QB Matt Fitzsimons, who three a pair of TD passes and rushed for another. RB's Matt Kapica (5 rushes, 105 yards) and Luke Savino (6 for 88) both rushed for a pair of scores while Trey Mancuso and TJ Olfers each snared a TD strike from Big Fitz of 53 and 52 yards, respectively. Savino went 7 for 7 on PAT’s. In all, 21 players had at least one tackle (11 for loss of yards and 3 sacks) to contribute to the shutout of the state-ranked (No.27) Wolves (4-2).

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Sports

Carmel K Nick Sodano sets to split uprights from 38 yards out in 31-7 win over Suffern Saturday.

Somers defenders DT Christian McGrane (L) and DE Matt Brennan combine to smother John Jay RB Chris DiChiara in host Tuskers’ 49-0 win over Wolves Friday.

Somers RB Matt Kapika finds a hole to drive a truck through in Tuskers’ 49-0 win over visiting John Jay CR Friday.

Somers RB Derek Marcus finds crease in Tuskers’ 49-0 win over visiting John Jay CR Friday.

Week 7 Examiner Area Super 7 Grid Poll

No.1 CARMEL -- Coach Cayea’s state-ranked (No.12) Class AA Rams (6-0) are the most complete team in Section 1-AA, which is slightly down this season (only 1 state-ranked team), but nonetheless, Carmel is the cream of the crop and we fully expect the Rams to hoist their first sectional title since 1998 come Nov.12/13. Just 4 teams within the NYSPIAA tournament are ranked above the Rams so expectations are high.

No.2 SOMERS -- Coach Anthony DeMatteo’s state-ranked (No.12) Class A Tuskers (6-0) have just six teams ranked above them in the NYSPIAA tournament field, and something tells me they are being sorely underrated after waxing John Jay CR, 49-0, in what coulda been a 60-0 game had they wanted.

No.3 PLEASANTVILLE -- Coach Becerra’s state-ranked (No.25) Class B Panthers (6-0) have been doubted and questioned time and time again this season, but when the bell rings the League B-South champs freakin’ answer. There are no givens in a highly competitive Class B postseason, but anything less than the finals would be disappointing at this point.

No.4 MAHOPAC -- Coach Dominick DeMatteo’s Class A Indians (4-2) were still in the fog of the fireworks for much of the first half in their 28-17 win over Yorktown, but the defensive front came up huge when it had to, all but securing a playoff spot with winless Panas standing in the way in Week 7.

No.5 WHITE PLAINS -- Coach Lindberg’s Class AA Tigers (4-2) clinched the League I-C title with a massive no-doubt-about-it win over Fox Lane and let’s just give them the respect they deserve. There have been some ups and downs along the way, but way more ups!

No.6 BYRAM HILLS -- Coach Berk’s reigning Class B champion Bobcats (3-3) have found the waters rough to sail in League B (1-2), but ain’t nobody wanna see the reigning champs in the opening round of playoffs.

No.7A HEN HUD -- Coach Big Cat Catano’s Sailors (3-3) were cruising along with two big wins over previously state-ranked Ardsley and Westlake before a dreadful loss to Pearl River, who had wins over Westlake and Briarcliff (a combined 2-9) #CantSugarCoatIt.

No.7B HALDANE -- Coach McConville’s Class D Blue Devils (5-1) continue to fly under the radar because they are, well, Class D, but I don’t know how this Class D grid program, one of just two in Section 1, continues to put a quality product out there year after year when so many others are failing to do so #HatsOff.

HM YORKTOWN -- Coach Ypsilantis’ Huskers (2-4) are down this season when compared to the lofty standards of Cornhuskers past, but you didn’t see an ounce of quit in any one of them in the loss to Mahopac Friday, nor any point this season.

HM VALHALA -- Coach Triolo’s state-ranked (No.11) Class C Vikings (4-2) can’t let a disappointing loss to Haldane infect what they had going on previously #StillInTheHunt.

-- by Ray Gallagher
Somers WR TJ Olifers (9) and teammate Francesco Gioffre celebrate Olifers’ 52-yard TD catch in rout of John Jay CR Friday.

continued from page 4

Like-minded, tone-setting and purposeful, Somers will play out the string this week in a regular-season finale at one-win LAKELAND, a 14-0 loser to BREWSTER (4-2).

“Our coaches put in so much work with the game plan, and they get us so ready to play so that we’re a machine once Friday comes,” said 6’3” 285-pound D-I prospect Jake Polito, who was flying up and down the field throwing blocks and making tackles.

“One of my lessons (former) Coach (Tony) DeMatteo taught me is once you flip that switch, you’re not in the business of taking bodies, you’re in the business of taking souls. That quote is the best way I’d describe our mentality. We don’t wanna injure anyone, but we wanna make them hurt. Once we set the tone and they realize how long of a night it’s gonna be, that’s when we get started.”

And that’s when it’s over for Section 1 foes.

MAHOPAC RB Joey Koch hadn’t pointed skyward toward his grandmother three times in a game since his career varsity began in the spring of 2021, but the shifty junior got three nods of approval from grandma Koch after Joey K dropped a career-high three TD’s and 188 yards on 27 carries the host Indians’ 28-17 victory over YORKTOWN Friday night on Homecoming Weekend.

Indian QB Anthony DeMatteo hit on 5 of...
Mahopac’s Anthony Porco flexes after sacking QB in Indians’ 28-17 win over Yorktown Friday.

continued from previous page

8 passes for 115 yards and fired a game-sealing TD strike to a streaking Michael Callahan (2 grabs, 94 yards), who took the seam to paydirt before getting air-lifted by OL Adam Montalvo.

Mahopac DL Anthony Porco had a sack and an INT and David Ortiz forced a fumble to lead the Indians’ defense. Sophomore Justin Price had a ‘Pick 6’ that gave Yorktown a 17-14 lead and had the Mahopac Maniacs in a brief tizzy before shouting down Yorktown’s Crop in the end.

BREWSTER escaped LAKELAND with a crucial 14-0 win that kept the Bears (4-2) alive in the playoff picture entering the final week of the regular season. Brewster QB Chris Donohue returned from a three-week layoff due to injury to run one score in from seven yards out before firing a perfectly thrown ball to the corner of the endzone where WR Nick Sayegh made a great catch.

“Lakeland came in hungry and really played a gritty game,” Bears Coach Ed Mulvihill said. “We have a lot of respect for their coach Mike Meadows and his staff, so we knew they’d come in with a solid plan. We told our kids we would need some of them to step up their games and make big plays.”

Donohoe, the third-year signal caller, did just that, connecting on 12 of 15 for 127 yards. He also hit on some big pass plays to move the chains. Brewster RB’s Will Martinez (7 for 48) and Joey Anfuso (8 for 31 rushing, 2 for 32 receiving) gave the Bears (4-2) a boost out of the backfield. Defensively, Bears Jack Golinello (9 sticks, sack) and Willie Martinez (fumble recovery, INT) led the charge for the Bears, who will finish the regular season with a critical game against a scornful John Jay squad.

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“We’ll have our hands full,” Mulvihill said, “but I like the direction we took this week.”

Lakeland QB Steven Dedvukaj hit on 7 of 14 for 71 yards and Stephen Carroll led the defense with 15 tackles for a Lakeland club that dipped to 1-5, out of the playoff picture.

CLASS D

HALDANE had its biggest win of the season, a 28-27 win over visiting, state-ranked (No.11) VALHALLA, in which Blue Devil QB Ryan Van Tassel did a little bit of everything, including three TD passes and 195 yards. He also rushed for the game-clinching, third-quarter score. Blue Devils Thomas Tucker, Evan Giachinta and Ryan Irwin all hauled in a TD pass.

“The guys are making plays all over the field,” Haldane Coach Ryan McConville said. “We compete each day in practice and the kids are buying in. This was a great team win!

“Ryan has done a great job to lead the offense and make some big time throws with his arm,” the coach added. “The playmakers, Irwin, Tucker, Giachinta, Carone and Forcello are doing exactly that, making big plays. The pass protection has been good, but we have to do a better job running the ball. Defensively, we’re playing very tough. We are forcing a lot of turnovers and our LB Mason and Stubblefield are making lots of tackles. We are doing a good job with pass coverage but have to clean a few things up. Overall, the guys are playing well and today they figured out how to win.”

A win of this nature should vault the Blue Devils into the state rankings and provide every reason to believe they can challenge state-ranked (No.9) Tuckahoe for Class D supremacy.

Mahopac spared nothing on Homecoming Day, complete with sky divers and fireworks.

Mahopac R8 Joey Koch salutes his deceased grandma after scoring one of three TD’s in Indians’ 28-17 win over visiting Yorktown Friday.

Haldane QB Ryan Van Tassel surveys field for portion of his 190 passing yards and three TD passes in win over Valhalla Saturday.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTO

Haldane kick returner Soleil Gaines averaged 26 yards on five returns in host Blue Devils’ win over state-ranked Valhalla Saturday.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTO
Hen Hud Exploring Deep Waters; Lakeland Wins 25th Straight League

By Tony Pinciaro

Midway through preseason, HEN HUD senior and captain Taeghan Dapson realized the varsity field hockey team had the potential for a promising season.

“Truthfully, at the start of the season, we had a lot of new players and only six returning starters,” said Dapson, in her fifth varsity season. “We knew a lot of work had to be done, and we were excited to get the season started. Preseason was a good indicator for the remainder of the season because of the hard work and effort I saw from my teammates.”

This combination, of hard work and effort, has resulted in Hen Hud having one of the most successful seasons in program history.

After sweeping Our Lady of Lourdes (7-1 and 3-1) and winning a nail-biter, 1-0, over Putnam Valley, Class B Hen Hud sports a 9-5 record.

Hen Hud hosted Pleasantville (Monday) and Yorktown (Tuesday). The Sailors qualified for the Section 1 Class B Field Hockey Championships which begin play with out-bracket games, Friday. The first round commences Monday, 10/25.

This current three-game winning streak has catapulted Hen Hud into consideration for a possible top-eight seed. That would result in a first-round home game. However, the Sailors are focused on Pleasantville first, then Yorktown.

The team’s success, to date, was established on the success of 2020.

“Last year’s team was pretty strong,” Dapson said. “Besides this year, that was the strongest team I had been a part of, winning six games while playing some pretty good competition.”

This allowed Hen Hud to come into preseason with confidence as it acclimated the newcomers to varsity. Once the newcomers adjusted, Dapson said each player has raised their respective level of play.

“What is making the difference this season, compared to others, is the core athletes we are able to put on the field,” Dapson said. “We may not have the most field hockey knowledge, but everyone has stepped up and taken responsibility.”

Hen Hud opened last week with a 7-1 victory over Lourdes as Paige Johannsen scored a career-best four goals and Logan Gougelmann added two.

Caitlin Pignataro completed the scoring while Dapson collected two assists. Rowan Dapson, Sydney Muranaka and Ella Sylvester each had an assist.

Hen Hud and Putnam Valley were in a defensive struggle as the game remained scoreless into the second half. That changed when Johannsen converted a Taeghan Dapson centering pass with eight minutes remaining in the game. The defense and goalie Emily Hunt (eight saves) made that goal stand.

Putnam Valley goalie Kylie Recuppio had an excellent game with 13 saves.

“Putnam Valley and Lourdes’ games were really big this season,” Dapson said. “It took a team effort for both wins and everyone came together to get the much-needed win over Putnam Valley.”

Dapson was referring to the second victory over Lourdes, following the win over Putnam Valley. Gougelmann had a hat trick and Taeghan and Rowan Dapson registered assists.

“This season has been one like none other,” Taeghan Dapson said. “I’m so glad that I am able to play with this group of girls for my last season.”

LAKELAND remained unbeaten, but it was fit to be tied as Scarsdale and John Jay-Cross River played the Hornets to a pair of 1-1 draws.

Lakeland used two goals in the fourth quarter to defeat a pesky North Salem team, 3-0.

Emily Yazzetti and Mia Smith each had one goal and one assist Bella Basulto scored a goal and Jaden Ray had an assist as the Hornets clinched their 25th-straight league title.

continued on next page
Lakeland senior Jayden Ray controls ball in Hornets’ 1-1 tie with John Jay CR Saturday.

Ray Gallagher / Matthew Turri Photos

1-1 tie.

Lakeland freshman Keira Gallagher (2nd from R) gets caught up in a crunch of Jay players in Saturday’s Hornets’ 1-1 tie with John Jay CR Saturday.

In what could be a preview of the Section 1 Class B Field Hockey Championships title game, Lakeland and John Jay each scored in the third quarter.

Yazzetti scored for Lakeland with Smith assisting. Pagliaroli handled four of five saves.

Parodi and Altimari collaborated on Yorktown’s goal against Pawling. Parodi finished off a penalty corner on a feed from Altimari.

Pleasantville goalie Izzie Baxter had an excellent week in three games, totalling 38 saves.

Even though the Panthers lost to Rye, 4-0, and White Plains, 3-2, Baxter kept her team in both games, finishing with 22 saves against Rye and 15 against White Plains.

Natalie O’Malley (assisted by Ryan Sullivan) and Ava Horigan had goals against White Plains.

Baxter was called upon once in posting a 2-0 victory over Ursuline as Caitlin Rubsamen scored twice and Sullivan rang up an assist.

Pleasantville is 7-5-2 this season. The Panthers closed out the regular season, Monday at Hen Hud.

Pleasantville has qualified for the Section 1 Field Hockey Championships which begin Friday, 10/22.

A short-handed Horace Greeley had a tough week, playing Lakeland (a 3-0 loss) and John Jay-Cross River (a 5-0 loss), the prospective top-two seeds, respectively, in the upcoming Section 1 Class B Field Hockey Championships.

The Quakers did manage a 2-2 draw with North Salem to salvage the week and give them a final record of 7-6-3.

“We had a tough week with a couple of players injured and having such a small crew, and we played against some really good teams this week,” Greeley Coach Sukhwinder Sandu said. “Hopefully, we should be back and ready for the playoffs.”

White Plains has qualified for the Section 1 Class A Field Hockey Championships, which begin with out-bracket games, Friday, 10/22. The first round starts Saturday, 10/23.

NOTES: Regular season ends tomorrow. Seeding meeting is Tuesday. Out-bracket games begin Friday. First round (Class A and Class C) is Saturday while Class B goes Monday, 10/25, Class A and Class C quarters are Tuesday,10/26, with Class B going Wednesday, 10/27. The semis for all classes are Friday, 10/29. Lakeland will host the finals, Sunday, 10/31 – Class B (10 a.m.), Class C (noon) and Class A (2 p.m.).

Lakeland senior Sara Costa sets things up in Hornets’ 1-1 tie with John Jay CR Saturday.
Newspaper

Yorktown Topples Somers in OT, Could Tango Again in Class A Semis

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

YORKTOWN’s George Popovic certainly drilled some of the biggest goals of the regular season last week, including last Tuesday’s OT stunner over visiting SOMERS when the state-ranked (No.13) Huskers (14-1-1) knocked off the top-ranked Tuskers, 2-1, on the senior strikers 40-yard bomb into the top corner of the far post. Popovic followed that up with Saturday’s game-winner, sending a free kick into the top left corner for a 1-0 OT triumph of visiting Horace Greeley.

The senior, who has drawn D-I interest from several programs, is on the kind of roll that has the Huskers dreaming about a second sectional title in the last five years.

“Luckily I’ve been doing my thing,” said Popovic, who has 19 goals and 16 assists through 16 games. “Number one, my teammates have made life easy for me. When everyone is making the right and simple play, it’s easy to win games and tally up individual success. Another thing is my coaches put me and the team in the best position to succeed, they are geniuses, listening to their insight on who I should line myself up against or where I should position myself has been a huge factor to our overall success this year.

“The regular season is in the past now, and we are happy with how we performed there,” Popovic added, “but now it’s a new season and all of that is in the past so now we have to prove we can keep getting results when it really matters.”

What matters now is the path to the finals, which got a heck of a lot tougher when Somers was dealt the No.2 seed and Yorktown drew the three, which means the two best teams in Class A will likely meet in the semifinals should they handle their business. Tappan Zee, who Somers staggered by eight goals earlier this season, earned the No.1 seed while Eastchester secured the No.4 and Saunders rounds out the top five (Byram Hills was expecting the 6th seed).

In the Yorktown/Somers game, the Popovic goal, assisted by Mason Murphy, touched off a mad-cap crazy as Yorktown’s infamous Crop stormed the field in raucous fashion after the Class A superpowers waged an epic battle. The loss was the first of the season for Somers (13-1).

“The boys left everything they had on the field,” first-year Yorktown Coach Zoran Milojevic said. “We needed that win.

Senior M Peter Tinaj spotted the Huskers a 1-0 lead two minutes deep off an assist from Chris Coppolla, but Somers M Daniel D’ippolito found teammate Bennett Leitner, who cashed in the equalizer with 27:38 before the break. Tinaj and Somers G Anthony Tucci were delivered a red card and the game ended 10-on-10. Yorktown G J.P. Prucco, who has been a solid keeper of the cage all season, had six saves, including a giant denial in OT. Yorktown’s entire defense was superb, as was Somers in this frenzied pitch rivalry that ranks among the best in the section.

“We needed this one bad,” Popovic said before adding two more tallies in Thursday’s 3-1 win over MAHOPAC.

Popovic has flashed proof of his scoring prowess all season, finishing and dishing with equal ability.

“It’s an incredible achievement, in my opinion,” Milojevic said. “One of my promises at the interview process was to help our players continue to play soccer past high school. George is being lured by several D1 colleges, Peter Tinaj is talking to D2 and D3 schools and Mason has options ranging from D1 to D3.”

Husker Derek Belloff-Davis chipped in with a goal and an assist while Ryan Tomeny and Matt Pozo each set up a goal for the Huskers. Indian Manny Perez knotted the game at 1-all off a first-half PK.

LAKELAND had a shot at the League II-D title but a 1-0 loss to host Lourdes put an end to that on Thursday. Lourdes captured the League II-D title. Lakeland G Chris Ciraco (11 saves) kept the Hornets (8-7) in the game, but the offense could not generate enough flow as the Hornets were shutout for the third straight game.

It’s entirely possible that Mason Murphy’s No.3 seeded Yorktown Huskers collide with Aedan Hopper’s No.2 seeded Somers Tuskers in should both advance as expected.

“I don’t think in my 17 years at Lakeland we have lost three games in a season by a 1-0 score, let alone three in a row by that score,” Lakeland Coach Tim Hourahan said. “It was an absolutely brutal week, having also lost the league title to Lourdes. We were feeling great coming into the week, but now we need to find a way to keep battling and reset with the sectionals coming. Our opponents are just making the breaks for themselves and we are kind of searching. We are a resilient group and I expect to play well in the new season at 0-0 with everyone else.”

PEEKSKILL defeated Lakeland for the second time in the last three matches between the two when Zion Arevalo snagged a rebound off the keeper for the game’s only goal with 19 seconds left in regulation. Angel Menjivar (nine saves) posted the clean sheet for likely No.10 seed Peekskill (11-5) while Ciraco made nine saves in a defensive struggle.

HEN HUD knocked off PANAS, 4-2, when Sailors Helmer Herrera and Zach Zalamea each scored their initial varsity goals. Tyler Robinson and Mateo Castro (2) also scored for the Sailors (6-8), who are potentially looking at an out-bracket playoff game to reach the field of 16. Kyle Arriano scored for the Panthers (4-11), who will find it tough to qualify for the postseason.

PANAS 4, HEN Hud 2

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Yorktown junior M Lucas Buono (R) is pursued by Mahopac junior M Luke Healy in Huskers’ 3-1 win over host Indians Thursday.

Mahopac junior Luke Healy collides with Yorktown senior Jack Prybylski in Indians’ 3-1 loss to visiting Huskers Thursday.

Yorktown junior M Chris Coppolla heads ball back into opposing territory in Huskers’ 3-1 win over Mahopac’s John Kroni Thursday.
SOMERS -- State-ranked (No.1) Tuskers (14-1) were dealt that slice of humble pie most great teams need before they enter the playoffs, despite the devastating ramifications that knocked them off the top seed and set up a potential No.3 Yorktown vs. No.2 Somers semifinal. But getting there won’t be easy with No.15 Rye up first before the 7/10 winner (Clarkstown North/Nanuet) in the quarters.

YORKTOWN -- State-ranked (No.13) Huskers (14-1-1) will surely rise in the state polls after a stunning week of perfection, and now they know they got what it takes to win 2nd sectional title since 2017, third since 1990. Potential No.14 seed Lakeland could be the first block in the road, according to KDJ bracketology.

CARMEL -- Class AA Rams (11-5) fell out of the state rankings after losses to Arlington and state-ranked (No.4) John Jay EF last week but hold firm to the No.4 seed, which could set up another wicked nail-biter with JJEF in semis, whom they just lost to in OT on a PK. Nonetheless, the Rams have had one heck of a two-year run here. Let’s hope for future prosperity.

WHITE PLAINS -- Class AA Tigers (8-8) split with Ossining (7-5-4) on season but have better league mark, so they get the nod over the Pride, but both 10th-seeded White Plains and No.9 Ossining have been wildly inconsistent, though both are capable of pulling off first round stunners on the road, just don’t bet the house on a second-round win should they be so fortunate.

OSSINING -- Class AA Pride (7-5-4) see White Plains.

BYRAM HILLS -- Class A Bobcats (12-2-1), the likely No.6 seed, should host No.11 Riverside in the opening round before getting a crack at No.3 Yorktown in what should/could be a whale of a quarterfinal #FingersCrossed. Yorktown’s road to the finals could be #Redonkulous if it has to go through perennial powers Byram and Somers just to reach the finals.

PEEKSKILL -- Class A Red Devils (11-5) might draw the No.9 seed, which could pit them against No.8 Lourdes, whom they split with, before a crack at a beatable No.1 Tappan Zee.

WESTLAKE -- State-ranked (No.12) Class B Wildcats (14-1) capped the League III-A title and should/could draw the No.2 seed overall, which, if both advance, might set up a wild quarterfinal against No.7 Pleasantville if the current seeds hold true, before later matches with No.3 Bronxville and No.1 Irvington. Indeed, the seeding Gods were not kind to the Wildcats.

GREELEY -- If Class A Quakers (8-6-2) got credit for losing one-goal games to state-ranked hustlers like Somers and Yorktown, they’d be right up there with the rest of the top challengers instead of being the likely No.12 seed, which is why we won’t ignore them in this here poll. Prediction: If current seeds hold true to KDJ bracketology form #QuakersBustaBracket vs. No.5 Saunders then #DarkHorseFinal4 #UpsetSpecial vs. No.4 Eastchester is also possible.

LAKELAND -- Class A Hornets (8-7-1) had about as rough a week as you could hope for entering the playoffs, so their mettle will be tested as they try to build a foundation here for future Hornets. Seeds 12-14 were tied as of press time so go figure their path but it won’t be easy.

-- by Ray Gallagher
Focus on Girls Soccer

Yorktown, Lakeland Hoping for Strong Playoff Push; Mahopac Falls Short of Qualifying

Lakeland’s (L-R) Tyler Hormazabal, Nadia Parisi and Linda Daly hope to keep good times rolling in Class A playoffs this week.

Yorktown junior Kristin Linahan (24) and Mahopac senior Marissa McCarney battle for head ball in Huskers’ 1-0 win over host Indians Wednesday.

Mahopac senior Maddy DeCola has been the heart and soul of the Indians, notching both goals in 2-2 draw with JJCR Friday.

Yorktown’s Jules Van and Lakeland’s Laura MacDonald are hoping for big efforts as Class A playoffs approach this week.

Yorktown junior Olivia Lucas and Mahopac senior Sophia Arenas battle for 50-50 ball in Huskers’ 1-0 win over Indians Friday.

Mahopac junior Piper Klammer looks to gain zone on Yorktown senior Rachel Gevanthor in Indians’ 1-0 loss to visiting Huskers Wednesday.

Mahopac senior Jenna Mayer looks to gather ball against defense from Yorktown’s Olivia Lucas (14) and Peyton Case in Indians’ 1-0 loss to Huskers.
White Plains Defeats the Foxes in a Huge League Matchup

By Andy Jacobs

Midway through the fourth quarter of Friday night’s showdown with White Plains, the Fox Lane football team found out just how fleeting momentum can sometimes be.

Just when it appeared the Foxes had positioned themselves for a late-game comeback, bringing their sullen sideline suddenly to life, the host Tigers had a response that erased the Fox Lane enthusiasm even quicker than it had arrived.

Jefferson Boyce’s 80-yard kickoff return for a touchdown just moments after the Foxes had finally gotten on the scoreboard all but sealed the contest and helped lift the Tigers to a 27-7 victory, giving them a stranglehold on the Class AA, League C title with one week remaining in the regular season.

“I mean, the kick return after they get back in the game is a monumental change in emotion,” said Tigers head coach Mike Lindberg, whose team was clinging to a 13-7 lead before Boyce’s electrifying touchdown. “You could just see they were up and then it was right back down for them and our kids just fed on it.”

“We just came up short,” said disappointed Fox Lane coach Drew Giuliano. “All we needed to do was make a tackle on the kickoff and then it’s a game.”

On an evening when the Tiger defense rose to the occasion by limiting Fox Lane’s ground game to a mere 11 yards on 19 carries, it still took the big kickoff return from Boyce with six minutes remaining in the game to finally end any doubt about the outcome. Both teams stepped onto the turf at Loucks Stadium with identical 3-0 league records and at halftime there still wasn’t much separating them.

It was the Tigers who seized control as the last bit of daylight disappeared in the first quarter. They took possession to start the game and methodically marched 91 yards despite three penalties, in a 10-play drive that lasted over eight minutes. Quarterback Jay Biondi spotted a wide-open Elijah Pierre over the middle in the end zone for a 20-yard touchdown that, with the point-after from Nicolas Spista, gave White Plains a 7-0 lead.

“Yeah, it just set the tone for the whole game,” said Lindberg of the long and time-consuming opening drive. “And we overcame penalty after penalty, and we just kept chipping away.”

“That was OUR game plan, to control the clock and possession and all that,” said the Foxes’ Giuliano. “But it just didn’t work out that way.”

In fact, the Foxes only managed to run three plays from scrimmage in the first quarter and wound up with a total of two yards. Fox Lane finally gave its fans something to cheer about when Will Shepherd picked off a third-and-28 Biondi pass early in the second quarter and returned the ball to the Tigers’ 30-yard line.

But the Foxes could only advance as far as the 19 before their threat ended.

As much trouble as the Foxes had running with the football in the first half, their ground game was stymied even more after halftime. They finished with just two yards on 12 carries. When they went three-and-out to start the third quarter, White Plains got the lead back.

White Plains senior running back Elijah Pierre tries to slip past Fox Lane’s Logan Matson in Friday night’s 27-7 Tiger home victory.

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PANthers Remain Unbeaten

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Panthers' Kieran Cotter carries the ball vs. host Ardsley on Friday night.

Valhalla Surprised by Haldane

Valhalla’s Bendan O’Neil tries to prevent Haldane’s Michael Murray from making a reception in the second half of the Blue Devils’ 28-27 win over the Vikings.

Basaika Butcher turns on the speed as he runs with the football in the Vikings’ 28-27 loss to host Haldane.

Devan Cooper tries to elude Haldane’s Jesse Osterfeld in Saturday’s game.

Erik Coleman tries to get to the outside as he runs with the ball in the Panthers’ 19-18 win over Ardsley.

The Panthers’ Kieran Cotter carries the ball vs. host Ardsley on Friday night.

Daniel Picart carries the ball in Friday night’s 19-18 victory over host Ardsley. His touchdown on a punt return brought the Panthers from behind for their sixth straight win.

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Byram Hills Trio Earns Trip North to State Tourney

Byram Hills senior standout Alyssa Margolin added to her impressive Bobcat résumé last Wednesday afternoon when she captured the singles title at the Section One Tennis Tournament. Margolin won the first eight games of the match and went on to defeat Bronxville’s Victoria McEnroe 6-0, 6-3. In the final game, Margolin managed to break her younger opponent’s serve one last time as a McEnroe down-the-line backhand fell harmlessly into the net on match point.

The Section One championship earned Margolin a trip to next week’s state tourney up in Schenectady, where she’ll be joined by her Bobcat teammates Chloe Bernstein and Jenna Kleynerman, who advanced to the finals of the doubles competition, but had to settle for second place after losing 6-2, 6-4 to Rye’s Charlotte Ausfahl and Juliette Stone.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

White Plains Defeats the Foxes in a Huge League Matchup

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ball at its own 25-yard line and proceeded to keep it for over six and a half minutes.

Junior running back Jacob Lee began the 75-yard drive by getting to the right sideline and picking up 45 yards. Nine plays later, the Tigers added to their lead when Biondi tossed to his left to Pierre, who then ran into the end zone for a 12-yard touchdown. Despite the PAT sailing wide, White Plains had a 13-0 advantage with 3:10 left in the third quarter.

“It’s always huge to get two scores,” said Lindberg, “especially when your defense is playing so well.”

But the Foxes, who were held without a first down in the third quarter, got an immediate jolt back to life four minutes into the fourth when quarterback Jack Travis connected over the middle to Luke Feingold, who caught the ball at his own 35 and then raced all the way down to the Tigers’ 2-yard line for an 82-yard pickup.

On third down, Michael DeBono, with a second and third effort, plowed past the goal line from two yards out and the extra point cut the Foxes’ deficit to just six points. But the Foxes’ sudden euphoria lasted barely a minute.

That’s because Boyce picked up the high-bouncing football on the ensuing kickoff at his own 20-yard line, broke one tackle, then cut to his right near midfield and outraced everyone to the end zone for his 80-yard TD return. The PAT from Spista increased the Tigers’ margin to 20-7.

“Yeah, that was deflating,” said Giuliano. “That’s tough. Like you want to come out and make the play and then get our defense riled up to make a play. But it just didn’t work out that way.”

If the Foxes weren’t deflated enough after the return by Boyce, they certainly were a moment later when, on first down from their own 30, a Travis pass on a crossing route to Pedro Silva was read by Spista, who jumped in to make the interception and score on a 30-yard pick-six. The two Tiger touchdowns 19 seconds apart turned the White Plains stands to bedlam and sent the Foxes’ fans fleeing back to their cars.

“We just didn’t execute and we didn’t tackle and we had a couple mistakes in the first half, things we don’t characteristically do,” Giuliano said. “It’s tough, but to me already just a memory. The league (title) would’ve been awesome and we wanted to take it back to Fox Lane, but the playoffs are a more important thing.”

Meanwhile, Lindberg could bask in his team’s impressive bounce back after last week’s loss at Arlington when injuries left him with few options on offense.

“We got half of our guys back and a lot of the other kids just really stepped it up, they really did,” he said. “I’m so proud of how the TEAM played. It was a real team win.”

Fox Lane quarterback Jack Travis throws a pass on the run in the first half of Friday night’s game at White Plains.

Jenna Kleynerman

Chloe Bernstein

2021 SECTION ONE TENNIS CHAMPION

Alyssa Margolin

- Byram Hills -

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Westlake goalkeeper Francesco Michilli slides to the turf to make a save in the first half of last week’s 7-2 win over host Valhalla.

Cassia George of Valhalla takes the ball up the field in the Vikings’ 4-1 loss to visiting Irvington.

Bridget He of Valhalla concentrates on a backhand return during the second-singles match last week against host Westlake.

Westlake senior Gianluca Ruggiero races up the field with the ball in the Wildcats’ 7-2 victory at Valhalla under the lights last Wednesday.

Valhalla freshman Juliana Conley heads toward the goal in the third quarter of last Tuesday’s game vs. Irvington.

Senior Thomas Casale of Valhalla controls the ball in the Vikings’ home game vs. Westlake last week.

Lily Ratti of Valhalla races toward the ball as she plays defense in the Vikings’ home loss to Irvington.

Westlake’s Lia Bucello smacks a forehand return during her 8-1 victory at first singles last Tuesday against visiting Valhalla.

Westlake’s Isaiah Ortiz (center) celebrates with teammates Gianluca Ruggiero and Martin Sunjic after scoring a first-half goal vs. Valhalla in last Wednesday night’s game.

Pablo Perez of Greeley settles the ball at midfield during last Thursday’s game at Brewster.

Horace Greeley senior Jared Damon moves the ball up the field in the second half of Thursday’s rout of Brewster.
Valhalla’s Vincent Reyes (right) and Westlake’s Luca Mulhare give chase for the ball in last Wednesday night’s game.

Simon Margolies of Greeley searches for an open teammate in the first half of the Quakers’ 6-0 victory at Brewster.

Valhalla senior Payton Kelly keeps her eyes on the ball near midfield in the Vikings’ 4-1 loss to Irvington last Tuesday.

Veronica Ludwiszewski of Westlake hits a backhand en route to an 8-2 win in her second-singles match last week vs. the Valhalla Vikings.

Dimitri Tonelli of Valhalla has his sights set on the ball in the first half of Wednesday night’s home game against Westlake.

Valhalla junior Ava De Natale tries to move past Irvington’s Carleigh Taylor in last Tuesday evening’s Viking home game.

Valhalla’s Lori Rivera follows through on a serve in her match at first singles last Tuesday afternoon at Westlake.

Greeley’s Marlon Perez (right) receives congratulations from teammate Diego Weiss after scoring his third goal in Thursday’s 6-0 rout of host Brewster.

Greeley’s Diego Weiss controls the ball during the first half of Thursday’s easy win over the Brewster Bears.

Westlake senior midfielder Dominic DeVito settles the ball during the Wildcats’ win at Valhalla.

Valhalla junior Ava De Natale tries to move past Irvington’s Carleigh Taylor in last Tuesday evening’s Viking home game.
Byram Hills’ Alyssa Margolin Captures the Singles Crown at the Section 1 Tournament