

ExaminerSports

Leits Out for Maine-Endwell!



Somers Senior Nets Milestone Goals, Pilots Tuskers to 3rd NYS Final 4 in 6 Years

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Somers senior striker Bennett Leitner potted the 50th and 51st goals (pictured here) of his splendid varsity career in the state-ranked (No.4) Tuskers' 4-0 win over Section 4's top-ranked Maine-Endwell in the NYSPHSAA Class A regional final last Saturday at Byram Hills where the Tuskers advanced to their third Final 4 in six years where they will face Section 6 champion Williamsville South in the state semis... see Boys' Soccer Notebook

Somers Tackles Maine-Endwell, 4-0, for NYS Regional Crown

State-Ranked (No.4) Tuskers Advance to 3rd NYS Final 4 in 6 Years

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

SOMERS has taken the Section 1 Class A soccer mantle and run with it, taking three of the last Section 1 titles and appearing in three NYSPHSAA Final 4's to go with a state title and championship appearance. For a good while, it was **BYRAM HILLS** representing Section 1 on a regular basis, and while the Bobcats have maintained an exceptional standard, they could only play host to Somers vs. Section 4 champion Maine-Endwell in last Saturday's NYS Class A regional title tilt between the state-ranked (No.4) Tuskers and top-ranked Spartans, who had no answers for Somers in a 4-0 whitewashing.

Coach Brian Lanzetta has transformed the Tuskers (20-1) into a dominant, statewide powerhouse, and his club got after Maine-Endwell (14-1) with fury, putting a pair between the pipes in the first seven minutes. Before the Spartans, ranked No.22 in the country, knew what hit them, tallies from Noah Saks and Bennett Leitner's 50th career goal provided all the cushion Somers would need. Somers senior M Daniel D'Ippolito set up the first goal, a smashing direct kick that rebounded off the goalie to Saks. The Big Dipper, perhaps the finest overall player in Section 1 this season, also scored a breakaway goal with 12 minutes left.

"In all honesty, I felt like with them having the three-hour bus ride that we might catch them early if we could jump on them, that was the game plan, to jump out early to hope that their legs were a little shot," Lanzetta said. "They were big, they were strong and they were physical, but I think we've figured

out things defensively, and then on top of that with Daniel and Bennett up top with that 1-2 punch combo that's very hard to contain. You might stop them five times, but they're gonna keep on coming and coming at you all game. At some point or another they're going to put the ball in the back of the net.

"Daniel and Bennet were on the state championship run team that fell short back when they were freshmen, so guys like Lucas Fecci and Jon Riina definitely molded them into that same style of player that they were," the coach added. "They are literally the same double package as those guys were for us. They are definitely in the discussion together as all-time greats, but Fecci and Riina won a state championship, so we're

continued on next page



Somers captain Jake Riina is all smiles after locking down NYS Class A regional soccer title Saturday at Byram Hills.



FAB 5 -- Somers captains Jake Riina, Daniel D'Ippolito, Aedan Hopper, Micahel Micceri and Bennett Leitner get ready to hoist hardware after 4-0 regional win over Maine-Endwell.



Somers senior F Jaques Verard drills shot on goal in Tuskers' 4-0 NYS Class A regional title win Saturday.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS



Somers M Daniel D'Ippolito breaks a defender's ankle with crafty move in 4-0 NYS Class A regional playoff win over Maine-Endwell.



Somers’ Noah Saks (8) and teammate Aiden Hopper (R) react to Saks’ initial tally in 4-0 Class A regional playoff win over Maine-Endwell Saturday.



The Gatorade showers have become par for the course for Somers coaching staff.



Somers senior Jack Silverman hustles for 50-50 ball in Tuskers’ 4-0 NYS Class A regional win over Maine-Endwell Saturday.



Somers senior M Michael Micceri clears zone in Tuskers’ NYS Class A regional title win over Maine-Endwell.

Examiner-Area Top 10 Final Pitch Poll

- No.1 SOMERS** -- State-ranked (No.4) Tuskers (20-1) managed to squeak past Section 9’s state-ranked (No.5) Beacon, 1-0, in the opening round of the NYSPHSAA tourney Wednesday before blowing out nationally-ranked Maine-Endwell, 4-0, in the regional finals. Can’t help but think we’ll see an Amityville vs. Somers state finale on Sunday. All-Section honors: D’Ippolotio; Leitner; Michael Micceri; HM Jacques Verard; Aedan Hopper.
- No.2 WESTLAKE** -- State-ranked (No.13) Class B Wildcats (18-1) knocked off a pair of state-ranked clubs -- No.18 Bronxville and No.4 Irvington -- to secure the first sectional title in school history and better prepare them for the rigors of state play where they will open up against unranked surprise Section 9 champion Marlboro before visiting the Long Island survivor in the quarters. Oh, and good luck defending your first sectional title with Byram Hills dropping down to Class B next season. 15 seniors led by Ruggerio and Sunjic will be tough to replace. All-Section honors: Martin Sunjic; Gianluca Ruggiero; HM Isaiah Ortiz.
- No.3 YORKTOWN** -- State-ranked (No.6) Huskers (16-2-1) continued a tradition of wicked-good soccer; I’m watching Chris Coppola and Ryan Tomeny for sure, but Huskers will lose a ton of talent. All-Section honors: George Popovic; Peter Tinaj; Jack Prybylski; Mason Murphy; HM Lucas Buono.
- No.4 BYRAM HILLS** -- Class A Bobcats (13-3-1) -- a perennial powerhouse -- will own Class B until proven otherwise in the days ahead. Returning All-Section captain Jesse Goldstein will need to ensure that. All-Section honors: Ross Eagle; Jesse Goldstein; HM Nico Bisgaier.
- No.5 CARMEL** -- Class AA Rams (12-6) need to summon the levels beneath them to continue this upward trend. All-Section honors: Dwyant Suazo; HM Tayte Wong; Joe Galeano.
- No.6 WHITE PLAINS** -- Class AA Tigers (8-9) have a ton of underclassmen on that roster we see. All-Section honors: Kevin Espinosa Duque; Brenнын Ordenez; HM Andrew Fajardo; Alejandro Vega.
- No.7 OSSINING** -- Class AA Pride (7-6-4) have a strong feeder system in place and should return a wealth of newcomers. All-Section honors: Justin Tuba.
- No.8 BRIARCLIFF** -- Fifth-seeded Class B Bears (10-6-2) are one of them programs that hope to stick a fork in the spokes of potential Byram Hills dynasty (#Potential). All-Section honors: Tyler Cho; HM
- No.9 LAKELAND** -- Class A Hornets (9-8-1) have a legit player to watch in junior Micahel Rodriguez (15G, 7A) and Bryan Jaramillo (3X All-Leaguer). All-Section honors: Michael Rodriguez; HM Bryan Jaramillo; Connor Daly.
- No.10 PEEKSKILL** -- Class A Red Devs (11-6) have had two solid years running and could be building something sustainable. All-Section honors: Erick Guinassaca; Alex Sapatanga; Johnny Morocho.
- No.10A GREELEY** -- Class A Quakers (8-7-2) had three 1-0 losses to champion Somers and semifinalists Tappan Zee and Yorktown, so there’s something there to build on. All-Section honors: Pablo Perez; HM Alex Mancini.

All-Section: Kyle Arraiano, Panas; Tyler Robinbson, Hen Hud; Thomas Casale, Gabe Franchi, Valhalla; Ryan Kang, Pleasantville; Ryan Vele, Croton; William Sniffen, Haldane; Trevor Fraioli, Fox Lane

-- by Ray Gallagher

Class AA Carmel, Class A Somers Romp in Sectional Semis *Rams Rumble vs. Arlington in Finals, Tuskers Tackle Rye*

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

Three Examiner-area teams clinched a spot in the Section 1 finals after romping through Friday's semifinal round, including Class B Pleasantville, Class A Somers and Class AA Carmel. All three will vie for their respective championships this weekend at Arlington High, as will Class D Haldane in its annual matchup with rival Tuckahoe.

CLASS A

MAHOPAC, ranked No.25 in the NYS Class A rankings, gave No.6 Rye (10-0) everything it had in Friday's 17-14 semifinal loss to the host Garnets (8-0), who came from down 14 points to prevail over the upset-minded Indians (6-3) when Tommaso Grani's 26-yard field goal sealed the deal in overtime. Despite three-straight denials from the one-yard line by a stout No.2-North-seeded Mahopac defense, Rye advanced to Friday's sectional finals at Arlington where the No.1-South-seeded Garnets will face No.1-North seeded **SOMERS**, a 35-6 winner over No.2-South Pelham.

Somers will play Rye Friday at 7 p.m. Rye ended the Tuskers' 2019 season, beating them in the sectional semis.

The state-ranked Tuskers (No.11) dominated from start to finish, pulling their starters after taking a 35-0 lead into the break. Speedy junior RB Ravi Dass Jr. rushed for 104 yards on a mere three totes, including a 65-yard scoring jaunt without a hand laid on him for a 21-0 lead. Previously, WR Trey Mancuso (3 grabs, 81 yards) opened the scoring, snaring a 41-yard TD pass from QB Matt Fitzsimons (8 of 11, 201 yards, 2 TDs), who torched the Pelicans (7-2) repeatedly. Somers RB Matt Kapica (4 rushes, 29 yards) followed with the first of two rushing scores, providing a 28-0 edge.

WR Michael Bookhall (2 catches, 57 yards) concluded the scoring with a 14-yard TD grab.

"It feels great and what's even better is that we can all share in the contribution to our success," Mancuso said. "You never know who it's gonna be on any given Friday and that's awesome. I love being a part of this team. It's truly a team!"

The Tuskers barely threw the ball again in the second half, in which the Pelicans asked for running time with little chance against a Dylan Faller-led defense. The senior DE racked up seven sticks (4 for loss) and a sack. Ethan Krauss added four tackles (2 for loss) and a sack, both doing so in a half of football.

Rye, which needed extra time to knock off Mahopac, will have its hands full with a Somers team that has a locomotive feel to it at just the right time. Fitzsimons has emerged beyond anyone's wildest dreams, setting new standards and breaking school records with regularity.

"This all feels great, all my teammates around me are 'all in' and everyone is clicking," Fitzsimons said. "We are putting in the work to get the job done and no one on this team is satisfied yet. To have the opportunity to be in the finals and make history is one of the greatest feelings I have had. Now all we gotta do is pull through and get it done."

MAHOPAC had its finest season in three years end in heartbreaking fashion when the Garnets marched to the one-yard line in overtime before kicking the game-winning field goal. Mahopac junior RB Joey Koch had 23 carries for 119 yards, including 109 yards and a touchdown (his 16th of the year) in the first quarter, but the rushing lanes were nearly non-existent from that point forward despite Koch having averaged seven yards per carry and coming up just 38 yards shy of



Carmel QB Kevin Dall scoots for plus yardage in Rams' 42-7 Class AA playoff win over visiting Suffern.

1,000 for the year. He finished with a team-best 16 TDs on the year.

The Indians recorded five sacks, including two apiece by seniors Steven Perrone and Anthony Porco, making it tough for Rye to get any traction prior to its game-tying, fourth-quarter drive, capped by QB Owen Kovacs' two-yard score with 2:02 left in regulation.

Mahopac had the ball first in overtime and was held scoreless when LB Jack Garnett blocked the go-ahead field goal try.

Mahopac QB Anthony DeMatteo (4 of 7 for 30 yards) connected with Perrone for a 6-yard touchdown on the game's opening

drive, but, after Koch spotted the Indians a 14-0 lead, the sledding got tougher on each ensuing drive. Ryan Rondeau blocked a punt and scored for the Indians.

Mahopac's season concluded in gut-wrenching fashion but finished as the No.3 team in Class A in the opinion of many observers.

"This was such a special group of kids," Mahopac Coach Dominick DeMatteo said. "They carried our program, our school and our community so far this season. At the end of the day, Rye made more plays than us. They have some special players. However,

continued on page 8



Carmel RB Josh Massi follows block from Nick Rosaforte to paydirt in Rams' 42-4 Class A playoff win over Suffern.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS



Carmel TE TJ Fusco trucks a Suffern defender in Rams' 42-7 Class AA playoff win over Mounties Friday.



Somers sophomore RB James Balancia grabs a chunk of yards in Tuskers' 35-6 Class A playoff rout of Pelham Friday.



Somers junior RB Stefan Swee chugs for tough yards in Tuskers' 35-6 Class A playoff win over visiting Pelham Friday.



Somers QB Mac Sullivan gets some intel from Tuskers Coach Anthony DeMatteo and Assistant Mike Sokolofsky in Class A playoff rout of Pelham.



Tuskers Stefan Swee (25), Matt Demm (12) and Matt Brennan celebrate Somers' 35-6 Class A playoff rout of Pelham Friday.

MATTHEW TURRI PHOTOS

Week 10 Examiner Area Top 5 Grid Poll

No.1 CARMEL -- Coach Cayea's state-ranked (No.8) Class AA Rams (9-0), the No.1 League B seed, are a heavy favorite vs. Arlington entering the sectional finals as Carmel embarks upon what would be their first trip to states since 1998 when then-QB Joe Mastromonaco's Rams made history but were one-and-done in the state tournament. Something tells me the 2021 Rams can make some dang history so long as they heed the advice of their coaches and not the soothsayers that put the cart before the horse.

No.2 SOMERS -- Coach Anthony DeMatteo's state-ranked (No.11) Class A Tuskers (9-0), winners of 15-straight games, are making their sixth Section 1 title appearance since 2012, and it says right here in this space that they will prevail and make states for the first time since 2016 when one of my all-time favorite teams went the distance on the #RoadToCuse.

No.3 PLEASANTVILLE -- Coach Becerra's state-ranked (No.19) Class B Panthers (9-0) have something truly special in this Daniel Picart kid, who went for 20 carries, 178 yards and three touchdowns in semifinal win over Ardsley. Just a soph, we get two more years of this explosive playmaker, who will need another prime-time effort to take out state-ranked (No.23) Nanuet in Saturday's 4:00 p.m. Class B title tilt.

No.4 MAHOPAC -- Coach Dominick DeMatteo's Class A state-ranked (No.25) Indians (6-3) were the third best team in Class A IMO, but, with the loss of so many seniors, this junior class needs to step up ASAP with a strong off-season regimen.

No.5 BYRAM HILLS -- Coach Berk's reigning Class B champion Bobcats (5-4) went out heads held high in heartbreaking 14-10 semifinal loss to Nanuet, who will have it hands full vs. P'Ville in Saturday's sectional finale.

HM HALDANE -- Coach McConville's state-ranked (No.13) Class D Blue Devils (6-2) hope to show the same kind of fight in their upcoming sectional title tilt with Tuckahoe that the coach's father did when he won the nod in the recent Putnam County Sheriff's race in his third try #CongratsSir #VotedHardForYou. Now, go shock state-ranked (No.9) Tuckahoe!

HM KENNEDY -- Gaels will play at No.2 St. John the Baptist Saturday in the CHSFL semifinals after RB Chris Kalle blew up on 25 carries for 161 yards and two touchdowns in a 35-12 playoff win over Xaverian.

HM LAKELAND/PANAS/OSSINING -- All 3 clubs could have phoned it in for Week 9 but they played and walked off victorious, and there is nothing more gratifying than winning your last game #HatsOff. Now, get to work #OffSeasonMatters. JV call-up Sean Perry had five catches for 101 yards for the Hornets while Panther sophomore QB Travis Carlucci fired two touchdown passes to Nate Lugo. Alex Adair cruised for 191 yards and two touchdowns for the Pride.

HM Everyone Else -- Thanks for slapping on the pads, strapping up your chin strap and playing the greatest game ever invented #WeightRoomMatters.

-- by Ray Gallagher

Sports

Volleyball Notebook

Sectional Titlists Hen Hud, Walter Panas Extend Volleyball Prowess

By Tony Pinciario

Looking back at the pandemic-altered 2020 season, **HEN HUD** was quite happy to turn the page and look forward to 2021. Even with the 2020 varsity volleyball season pushed back to spring 2021, Hen Hud was shut down, because of Covid. As a result, Hen Hud did not have a chance to play in the season-ending county tournament.

"The girls were so psyched for this season because of the abrupt ending we had last year," said senior and captain Mackenzie Calhoun. "We never got the chance to compete for another section title."

Section 1 titles and trips to the New York State Volleyball Championships Final Four are synonymous with Hen Hud and legendary Coach Diane Swertfager, the best of the best.

Hen Hud had a Section 1-best 15 sectional titles heading into the Class B tournament. At the conclusion of its title-match against Briarcliff, the top-seeded Sailors added No.16 with a sweep, 25-12, 25-15, 25-8, over third-seeded Briarcliff.

"This means so much to us all, but especially Franny (Tissoni) and I," Calhoun said. "Because we got shut down last year, we never got the opportunity to win

a section title and now, our senior year is our last chance, and we are so lucky to have succeeded this year."

Hen Hud, now 23-0 this season, will host the Section 4 champion, Wednesday, 11/10, in a subregional. The winner advances to play the Section 9 champion, Saturday, 11/13, 4 p.m. at Millbrook High School.

The regional-final winners advance to the State Final Four, Saturday-Sunday, 11/20-21, at Cool Insuring Arena, formerly known as the Glens Falls Civic Center.

Calhoun noted that Hen Hud had a good feeling about the 2021 season based on all but one graduated senior returning to the team.

"We definitely sensed that this was a special year," said Calhoun, a four-year varsity starter and the recent Con Ed scholar-athlete award recipient. "We only lost one senior so this team is mostly the same girls, and we couldn't wait for the chance to play together again. Our last regular season we went to states and we would love that opportunity again."

After a dominant regular season, Hen Hud swept its way through sectionals. The Sailors are playing excellent volleyball, but Calhoun and her teammates believe they can still play at a higher level.

"I don't think we have reached our peak yet," Calhoun said. "After the regular

season ended, I could feel us improving and I think even after sectionals we have yet to reach our peak."

"During sectionals the team was really pleased with our energy and hustle. We have never felt so hyped, especially with our awesome fan section and cheers we make up for each other. We would never let a ball hit the floor and the hustle was insane. Everyone would get so excited for each other that it made playing fun."

The fun will continue for seniors Tissoni, Calhoun and their teammates as the Section 4 champions come to Hen Hud with a berth in a regional final on the line.

"We're beyond excited to be hosting regionals, Wednesday," Calhoun said. "It pumps us up that we will be home, not only because of the familiarity, but also the opportunity to have our big fan base and defend our house!"

Top-seeded **WALTER PANAS** was rolling in the Section 1 Class A Volleyball Championships title match, taking the first two games from second-seeded Nyack. The Panthers appeared to be on the verge of a sweep before Nyack came roaring back to even the match at two games apiece, forcing a decisive fifth game. The pressure was mounting, but Tristan Demas and her teammates knew what needed to be done before game five began.

"The only big adjustment we made was our mindsets," Demas said. "Volleyball is a huge mental game and in sets three and four we felt we didn't really play as a team. However, in the fifth set, we turned that around and moved as a unit to pull through and win the title."

Panas responded to Nyack's momentum and took the decisive fifth game for a 25-15, 25-21, 17-25, 22-25, 25-22 victory.

The Panthers will play the Section 4 champion in a subregional, Thursday, 11/11, 12:30 p.m. at Arlington. The winner advances to the regional final, noon, Saturday, 11/13, where it will meet the Section 9 champion at Millbrook H.S.

The regional-final winners advance to the State Final Four, Saturday-Sunday, 11/20-21, at Cool Insuring Arena, formerly known as the Glens Falls Civic Center.

Along with regrouping and working as a team, senior Alanna Mansell pointed out a couple of other key adjustments.

"Going into the fifth set our blocking strategy and defense changed and one of our seniors, Siena Beiber, stepped up and gave us clutch serves during critical moments," Mansell said.

Panas regained its championship status after two years in which the Panthers did not make the sectional finals. This was after then-three-time reigning champ Panas

went to three consecutive state tournaments.

"The past couple of seasons have been tough for us trying to follow up such a successful team," Mansell said. "It's not that we were not successful, we had finished in the sectional semifinals, but we are all hard on ourselves and strive to be the best of the best."

Demas and Mansell pointed out that Panas defeated Nyack, in four games, at a regular-season tournament. Once Nyack evened the match, the pressure of a winner-take-all game faced both teams so poise and composure would play a key role. As would focusing on each point.

"The key for us was to just relax and have some fun," Demas said. "We know that we have the talent and confidence amongst all of our teammates and we just had to focus in on one point at a time."

"Yes, every point in the fifth set matters. We hustled for every ball and were relentless throughout the entire set."

Now that Panas returns to state play, where it



Top-seeded, undefeated Hen Hud poses with hardware for 16th time since 2000 after sweeping third-seeded Briarcliff, 25-14, 25-14, 25-8, Saturday at Mahopac.

continued on next page

Sports

Volleyball Notebook

continued from previous page

was a three-year regular from 2016-18, the Panthers are hoping to make it an extended stay.

"I started off my Panas volleyball career off with a state title and it would be really awesome to end it that same way," Mansell said. "I am extremely proud of everyone for sticking together and winning this section championship, but we are moving forward with hunger. We will play another section champion on Thursday and, hopefully another one after that, too."

WHITE PLAINS burst upon the scene in Class AA this season, registering an undefeated regular season and the No. 1 seed in the Section 1 Class AA Volleyball Championships.

The Tigers won their first two sectional matches before No. 4 North Rockland upset White Plains in four.

Despite the final result, White Plains' Coach Caitlin MacDonald is proud of her girls and excited about the future.

"This season meant a lot to me as it was our first undefeated season in my 10 years coaching White Plains," MacDonald said. "Our girls worked very hard through every practice and every game and were extremely proud of their well-earned undefeated record. Our players need to learn from this experience. They need to be mad that we lost, and take time to be upset and challenge themselves. They need to work harder during the next season, then we did in this previous one. If we are able to do that, and really, truly



Walter Panas volleyball players pose with Section 1 title plaque after thrilling 5-set Class A championship win over Nyack at Mahopac High Saturday.

work harder every year than we did the last, this will be an amazing program for a long time."

BRIARCLIFF had an outstanding season, winning two sectional matches among its 17 victories. The only drawback

for the Bears and Coach Matthew Cochenour is that the Bears were in the Section 1 Class B Volleyball Championships, where perennial power 15-time Section 1 champion Hen Hud was seeded first. Briarcliff was seeded third and reached the

title match where Hen Hud was waiting and the Sailors swept the Bears.

"I was very proud of how the girls came together and worked hard to continue developing their skills and our successes this year reflected that," Cochenour said.



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Sports

Boys Soccer Notebook...

continued from page 2

not done with the discussion just yet. They gotta go out and get a state title to claim the reins on that."

Somers G Anthony Tucci made just one save as the Tuskers put the clamps on the overmatched Spartans. Leitner iced the cake with his second goal off a feed from D'Ippolito.

"We knew about that long bus ride for them and that's unfortunate, but we didn't take them lightly or take them for granted," said Leitner, just a pup on the 2018 unit that ended in the state final with a 2-1 loss to Amityville.

The other thing nobody on Somers takes for granted is the D'Ippolito/Leitner connection, which, at times, is a lit fuse as they continue to push one another to be the best they can be.

"Oh yeah, we get after it sometimes," Leitner said, "but that's only because we hold each other to a very high standard. When things don't go our way, we hold each

other accountable. When things do work out and we capitalize on our opportunities we try to make it as beautiful as possible."

The program itself is in a beautiful place, having found a way to replenish its stars with a feeder system second to none and a know-your-role, pay-the-piper mentality.

"We credit the Feccis and Riinas because they really raised us as kids," Leitner said. "Those guys brought us in under their wing, and to be where we are now, we hope we're making them proud."

Somers senior D Jake Riina, truly raised under the Riina/Fecci wing, doesn't appear to be quite as hyper-intense as his brother Jon was, but his free spirit is just as much a driving force behind Somers' success. He knows he'll have to see his brother on Thanksgiving and hopes to be on equal footing.

"This is the greatest feeling right now, but it'll only be better when we win states. We knew if we could put these guys away early it would be a better experience for all

of us," said Jake Riina, a captain. "We need to work on some things this week defensively if we're going to match those guys and win states."

Somers will face Section 6 champion Williamsville South at 2 p.m. Saturday in a NYSPHSAA semifinal at Middletown High's Faller Field (grass surface). The other side of the bracket features a Section 11 Amityville team that Somers is all-too-familiar with from past tournament experiences and Section 3 champion East Syracuse-Minoa.

For the second time in Section 1 history, four teams survived and advanced to the Final 4. Class AA Mamaroneck, Class B Westlake and Class C Hamilton all joined Somers by advancing to the NYSPHSAA semifinals Saturday at Middletown High School. The last time Section 1 sent four programs to the Final 4 was 2016 when New Rochelle, Somers, Hastings and North Salem each won the tournament.

"The four teams that have advanced represent all the battles and all the wars we had within," said Matty Allen, the Byram



Tuskers Noah Saks, Michael Micceri and Dan D'Ippolito are stoked to celebrate a Saks goal in Tuskers' NYS Class A regional title triumph.

Hills Coach and president of the Section 1 Coaches Association. "We take pride in the idea that we have contributed in some part to their success in getting them ready to challenge the best in the state. Plus, it shows how competitive and how strong the Hudson Valley is when it comes to soccer. Add in the Hudson Valley Camp and this area is a hotbed for recruiters to witness quality soccer. That's what the big four do for us."

Grid Notebook...

continued from page 4

our kids showed tremendous resiliency and grit against Rye and throughout their high school careers. I could not be more proud."

CLASS AA

CARMEL is climbing the state polls, to

the point where the eighth-ranked Rams (9-0) are the second-ranked team in the upcoming NYSPHSAA tournament after Coach Todd Cayea's club ransacked visiting Suffern, 42-7. Only Section 5's McQuaid, ranked No.5 in NYS, comes in higher among the teams in the state playoffs. There's a

ton of work to do before we sink our teeth into the possibility of this kind of matchup on the #RoadToCuse, and that begins with Saturday's Class AA title match with No.3B seeded host Arlington, which No.1B Carmel rocked back in Week 1 to the tune of 34-7.

After Suffern marched the length of the field for a score, the Mounties were the first team to do so all season on the stingy Carmel defense. Of the five TDs the Rams have allowed all season, four were on big plays, so this drive was a bit concerning as the teams went into the half with Carmel holding a 21-7 lead.

Coach Cayea told the Rams to trust the game-plan and their abilities at the break and Carmel went back to work, taking over defensively before running up three more second-half scores.

"Make no mistake, Suffern was no joke,"

Carmel RB/LB Josh Massi exclaimed! "None of the teams we play are a joke. They are all well coached, and we respect all of our football brothers within the section. But when it comes to game time, we come to compete. We only need to be reminded of a mistake, and attempt to adjust immediately. Coach Cayea merely encouraged us to stay on our assignments and trust our abilities. We always want to play to our full potential and give the other team and spectators a good, clean game. We're humbled to be where we are."

Massi amassed 160 yards and three first-half touchdowns on 19 carries. Thomas Keating and Nick Rosaforte added touchdowns for the Rams.

Carmel has now won 12 straight and 14 of 15 going back to its 2019 Class AA championship loss to New Rochelle. All

that said, Arlington has seen a shift in its strategum as the father/son tandem of Assistant Coach Mike Rescigno and sophomore QB Mike Jr. has evolved into a multi-faceted operation with a six-game win streak in tow. Coach Rescigno, a Carmel graduate and former Yorktown High head coach, adds an element that has taken the Admirals to the next level.

Carmel has sought and found that level since Day 1, according to RB/LB Dylan Shields.

"The very first day of camp, the players and coaching staff all sat down and discussed our vision and where we wanted to go this season," said Shields, who had four carries for 70 yards and a score. "It's amazing that we have finally met our goal that we talked about since day one. We've been taking it one game at a time and focusing on getting better as a team. We work hard every day and play with confidence each game. We're very excited for this game Saturday night, not only for us but for our community."



RICH MONETTI PHOTO

Somers WR Michael Bookall snags a 14-yard TD strike in Tuskers' 35-6 Class A playoff win over Pelham Friday.



GIL MCMAHON PHOTO

Mahopac RB Steven Perrone (7) pulls into paydirt in Indians' 17-14 Class A playoff loss to Rye.

Focus on Lakeland



Lakeland Field Hockey Falls, 1-0, in NYS Regional Finals

Lakeland's inspiring field hockey run came to an end in 1-0 double OT loss at Rondout Valley Sunday, the Hornets 1st loss in a regional final since 1999. Lakeland (17-1-2), winners of 13 straight Section 1 titles on 10 of the last 11 state nuggets, made Hall of Fame Coach Sharon Sarsen proud just the same.

photo continued from previous page



GIL MCMAHON PHOTO

Mahopac QB Anthony DeMatteo picks up block from OT Adam Montalvo in Indians' 17-14 Class A playoff loss to Rye Friday.



Lakeland's Leonard Repeats as 50M-Freestyle Champ

Lakeland-Panas swimmer Delaney Leonard was crowned two-time Section 1 50-meter freestyle champ last Thursday at the Felix Festa Middle School pool, clocking in at 23.8 seconds.



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Sports

Crushing Cross Country! Locals Make it Happen at Bowdoin Park



Putnam Valley's Gabriella Randazzo (R) took 5th in Section 1 Class C meet at 20:37 and qualified for states as did teammate Bronagh Cassidy (eighth, 21:12).



Lakeland-Panas' Bobby Mayclim finished sixth in Class A and punched his ticket to states.



Flanked by teammates, Peekskill's Brianna Carter sports her silver medal after placing 2nd at Section 1 Class B meet Saturday, thus qualifying for states.



Brewster junior Patrick Ford was tops among the 146-runner Section 1 Class B title race in 16:58.3 and will head to Chenango Valley State Park for states.



Yorktown cross country members, including state qualifier Sydney Leitner (kneeling far right) pose at Bowdoin Park Saturday.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS



The Haldane girls and boys' X-C teams were crowned Class D champs Saturday at Bowdoin Park.



Somers girls cross country team and coaches proudly pose with sectional Class B runner-up title plaque Saturday.

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Sports

Last-Second Touchdown by Nanuet Dooms the Bobcats

By Andy Jacobs

In an instant, the dream of a sectional championship turned into a nightmare for the Byram Hills football team on Saturday afternoon.

Quarterback Ryan Frondi lofted a 25-yard touchdown pass into the waiting arms of James Moran with just eight seconds left on the clock, lifting the host Nanuet Golden Knights to an improbable 14-10 victory in a Section 1, Class B semifinal game that brought a crushing end to the Bobcats' season.

"Listen, Nanuet's a very good team and I think we didn't finish drives," said disappointed Byram Hills head coach Simon Berk shortly after the unfortunate turn of events for his players. "If you let a good team like that stay close, anything can happen in high school sports. I thought their best players made a great play at the end of the game, and that's how it goes."

On a day when the Bobcats never trailed for the first 47 minutes of the contest, it was the Golden Knights who wound up making the biggest play of all. The Frondi-to-Moran pass capped off a season-saving, 13-play, 73-yard drive over the final three and a half minutes that erased the Bobcats' three-point lead and vaulted Nanuet into next Saturday's sectional final against Pleasantville.

"Yeah, it's frustrating. It's kind of similar to what happened to us the first time we played them," said Berk, recalling the 19-14 home loss to the Golden Knights a month earlier. "Didn't finish drives, some turnovers, some bad plays, bad calls by myself. I thought our defense played outstanding today, honestly. That last drive obviously hurts. But that's a tough team. That's a team that comes at you all day, and they didn't let up once."

The Bobcats, who finished with a 5-4 record, didn't waste much time gaining an



The Bobcats' Michael Rocco carries the football in the second quarter of Saturday afternoon's Class B semifinal against host Nanuet.

early advantage over a Nanuet team that won its first six games this season. They quickly forced the Golden Knights to punt on the game's first possession, then promptly marched the ball 60 yards to get on the scoreboard first.

Junior running back Gavin Javorsky finished the drive with a 15-yard touchdown, running to his left, bursting past would-be tacklers and then twisting his way over the goal line. With the point-after kick from Luke Weiler, the Bobcats took a 7-0 lead just before the midway point of the first quarter.

Early in the second, Byram's Michael Rocco bolted 45 yards on first down, all the way to the Nanuet 37. But the Bobcats' drive ended at the 24-yard line when Javorsky was tackled short of a first down after catching a short pass from Jared Cohen. Late in the quarter, a 25-yard pass from Cohen to Javorsky put the ball at midfield. But a pair of penalties soon left the Bobcats facing a third-and-20 predicament, and big trouble was about to arrive.



Byram Hills running back Gavin Javorsky tries to elude Nanuet's Brendan Bennett in the first half of the Section 1, Class B semifinal game this past weekend.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Byram Hills quarterback Jared Cohen searches for an open receiver as he drops back to pass vs. the Nanuet Golden Knights.

Cohen's pass under pressure floated in the air a bit too long and was picked off by the Knights' Frondi, who returned the ball down to the Bobcat 16-yard line with 1:49 remaining in the half. Three plays later, Moran scored on a five-yard run. The PAT from Jack O'Sullivan tied the score with 51 seconds to go before halftime.

The teams remained tied at 7-7 after a scoreless third quarter, but the Bobcats squandered a big opportunity to retake the lead when a 10-play drive that had begun on their own 20 ended with a fumble all the way down at the Nanuet 3-yard line on the next-to-last play of the period.

Byram Hills got the ball back with 8:17 left on the clock and held onto it for the next four and a half minutes. When the drive that began at the Bobcat 32 faced fourth-and-9, Weiler was summoned to try a 28-yard field goal. His booming kick easily sailed through the uprights, giving the Bobcats a 10-7 edge with just 3:47 remaining.

"That's a sophomore kicker," said Berk in praise of the clutch kick by Weiler. "That was his first and only field goal attempt of the season. He works incredibly hard and we had faith in him when the moment came to do it, and he did."

But Weiler's field goal only set the stage for a miraculous late drive by the Golden Knights that wound up breaking the Bobcats' hearts. Up until then, Nanuet hadn't gained a single yard through the air. But Frondi kept



The Bobcats' Gino Secchiano tries to run past Nanuet's Tyler Conjura during Saturday's Class B semifinal game.



Justin Barad turns upfield after making a catch in the 14-10 Byram Hills loss to host Nanuet on Saturday afternoon.

his team's hopes alive when he completed a fourth-and-6 pass to Tyler Conjura for a first down to the Bobcats' 46 with just over two minutes to go.

Then with the clock ticking down toward 10 seconds and the desperate Knights staring at third-and-11 from the 24, Frondi rolled to his right and sent a pass high into the air that easily cleared a pair of Bobcat defenders and landed in the hands of Moran in the right side of the end zone, turning the Nanuet sideline into pandemonium and Byram's into silence.

The Bobcats had one last chance with eight seconds remaining and the ball at their 20-yard line. But a razzle-dazzle play with two cross-field passes didn't fool Nanuet and Jablonsky was tackled for no gain as time expired.

"Whew, it's certainly up there," said Berk, asked where this ranks among his most bitter losses. "With what's on the line, how close these guys came, this one will sting for a long time. You know, I'm not gonna sugarcoat it. Losing always hurts, but they have to be proud of the effort they put forth this season and I'm a very proud coach."



It was a disappointing finish for Ben Dreiling and his Bobcat teammates as Nanuet scored in the final seconds to win Saturday's Class B semifinal 14-10.

Sports

Fourth-Quarter TDs Carry Pleasantville Past Ardsley



The Panthers' Michael Hundzynski returns a punt in Pleasantville's semifinal win over visiting Ardsley on Friday evening.

By Andy Jacobs

A pair of fourth-quarter touchdown runs by Daniel Picart lifted the Pleasantville football team to a come-from-behind 24-14 victory over Ardsley in a Section 1, Class B semifinal playoff game at a chilly but filled-to-capacity Parkway Field on Friday night.

The two touchdowns by the super soph kept the Panthers undefeated this season and earned them a berth in the sectional final against Nanuet next Saturday afternoon at Arlington High School.

The Panthers, now 9-0, had found themselves trailing 14-10 as the game headed to the final quarter. But they had the ball at the Ardsley 24-yard line after a clutch third-and-15 pass completion from Michael LaCapria to Dom Matica picked up 12 yards on the last play of the third quarter.



Erik Coleman of Pleasantville runs with the ball after making a catch in the semifinal win over Ardsley.

TONY HUMBERTO PHOTOS

That would be the last of the heroics from the Panthers' senior signal caller because Picart then took over the rest of the way in the Pleasantville wildcat offense. He carried the football on 13 successive offensive plays by the Panthers in the fourth quarter, putting them ahead to stay 90 seconds into the final period when he followed the blocking of Kieran Cotter, Joe Reich and Michael Gordon and scored from nine yards out.

The point-after kick from John McCarthy gave Pleasantville a 17-14 advantage and the Panther defense followed it up by forcing Ardsley into a three-and-out. A short punt enabled the Panthers to start another drive from their own 48-yard line with 8:43 left on the clock. With Picart taking the snaps, he kept the ball himself 10 straight times over the next four minutes as P'ville marched down the field.

His final carry was the most dazzling of



Pleasantville senior running back Kieran Cotter protects the football from the hard-charging Christian Dash of Ardsley during Friday night's Section 1, Class B semifinal playoff game.



Pleasantville sophomore Daniel Picart finds room to run as he carries the football in Friday night's Class B semifinal vs. Ardsley at Parkway Field. He scored all three of the Panthers' touchdowns in the 24-14 victory.

the drive as he crossed the goal line from six yards out, using back-to-back spin moves to evade tacklers and give Pleasantville a 10-point cushion with time running out on the visitors. Ardsley's last gasp came when quarterback Michael Belarge's third-and-10 pass way down the field with three minutes remaining was intercepted by Matica, who returned the ball nearly 40 yards to the Ardsley 43.

The Panthers had defeated Ardsley by a point when they met during the regular season just three weeks earlier. This time, with the stakes much higher, Ardsley began the game with an 11-play drive that used up nearly seven minutes, but stalled at the P'ville 28-yard line.

On first down, LaCapria handed the ball to Picart, who burst into the secondary like he was shot out of a cannon, then got to the right sideline where he outran everyone all the way to the end zone for a 72-yard

touchdown that put the Panthers on the scoreboard first.

Ardsley star Ryan Watson ran for an 11-yard gain to the Pleasantville 45 on the final play of the opening quarter, but spent the rest of the night sidelined with a shoulder injury. The visitors moved the ball all the way to the 17-yard line, but on fourth-and-20, Belarge was flushed out of the pocket and his pass on the run toward Connor Jones was picked off by Michael Hundzynski, ending the threat.

Late in the half, Ardsley finally managed to get even following Jack Phelan's interception of a LaCapria pass that gave it possession at the P'ville 14-yard line with 1:47 remaining. A 15-yard penalty set Ardsley back, but Belarge soon connected on a 16-yard touchdown pass to James Weber and the extra point tied the score with 1:16 to go.

That left just enough time for the Panthers to run six plays, including a 22-yard run by Cotter and a 14-yard pass from LaCapria to Aidan Picart. With three seconds remaining on the clock, McCarthy booted a 37-yard field goal that gave Pleasantville a 10-7 halftime lead.

Midway through the third quarter, Daniel Picart, who finished with 178 yards on the ground, lost the football and Ardsley recovered at the P'ville 35-yard line. On first down, Weber scampered 30 yards before he was brought down by Picart. Two plays later, Belarge ran off right tackle two yards into the end zone to give Ardsley its only lead of the night.

But Belarge's short touchdown run just set the stage for a fourth-quarter of complete redemption for Daniel Picart, who carried the football over and over again and provided the two touchdowns that will have Pleasantville playing for a sectional championship this coming weekend.



Pleasantville senior quarterback Michael LaCapria calls out signals during the Panthers' 24-14 playoff win over Ardsley at Parkway Field.

Sports



Valhalla's Basaika Butcher runs with the football in the first half of the Vikings' 56-22 rout of Croton in Friday night's Class C semifinal game.



Valhalla running back Robert Foisset follows the blocking of Jack Sullivan (left) and Harrison Phillips in the second quarter of the 56-22 demolition of Croton in Friday night's semifinal playoff game.



Quarterback Michael Dawson, flanked by teammate Kaleb Olmeda, carries the ball in Valhalla's lopsided playoff victory over visiting Croton-Harmon.



Valhalla lineman Andre Falco brings down Croton's Edwin Dowd during the first half of the Vikings' Class C semifinal playoff victory.

Vikings Trounce Croton in the Class C Semifinals



Devan Cooper is on his way to the end zone for a long touchdown in the second quarter of Valhalla's easy playoff win over the Croton Tigers.



Basaika Butcher and Devan Cooper do some high stepping as Valhalla easily runs past Croton and earns a spot in Saturday afternoon's Class C title game vs. Dobbs Ferry.

BYRAM HILLS

New York State Team Champion

2021 Tennis

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

The Byram Hills girls' tennis team captured the first-ever New York State team championship on Friday afternoon, sweeping all five matches from Friends Academy in the Division Two title match at the indoor courts on the grounds of the USTA BJK National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows. Bobcat players, left to right, Sydney Levy, Chloe Bernstein, Jenna Kleynerman and Alyssa Margolin helped Byram put an exclamation point on a memorable 2021 season by overwhelming the opponent from the North Shore of Nassau County. "It's pretty awesome," said Bobcats coach Mike Racanelli afterwards. "It's a great honor. We're so happy to be in this position. There's a lot of great teams that fought for this spot. We just set our goals high. Great things come when you put your heart into things, work hard and stick together."

Sports



Pleasantville's Adriana Catalano finished third in the Class C race with a time of 20:25.9.



Emma Dolgin of Briarcliff paced the Bears with a 14th-place finish in the Class C race.



Freshman Lauren Isbell (left) and eighth-grader Caroline Pastor of Briarcliff run side by side as they head down the hill during the Class C race.

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

Section One Championships

Saturday, November 6, 2021

Bowdoin Park, Wappingers Falls



White Plains junior Sophie Ginsberg led the Tigers with a ninth-place finish in Class A.



Gabriella Borello of Westlake speeds downhill a mile from the finish in the Class C race.



Junior Rachel Akinla was the third Fox Lane runner to cross the finish line and took 20th place overall in the Class A race.



White Plains sophomore Gianna Priore reaches the top of the challenging hill a mile into Saturday's Class A race.



Fox Lane junior Morgan Eigel was fifth in Class A, completing the Bowdoin course in 19:40.3.



Pleasantville's Kate Moroney finished second among the Panther runners in Saturday's Section 1 Championship.

Sports



Westlake senior Martin Sunjic gets set to send a shot at the goal during the first half of last Wednesday's opening-round win in the Class B state playoffs.



Westlake senior Thomas Giaccone heads the ball away from Sam Lofaro of Marlboro in the second half of last Wednesday's 1-0 Wildcat win in the state playoffs.

Westlake Soccer Team Advances in Regionals



The Wildcats' Gianluca Ruggiero races upfield with the ball in the second half of Wednesday's 1-0 win over Section 9's Marlboro at Faller Field in Middletown.



Thomas Lyden of Westlake wins a battle in the air against Marlboro's Alexis Camacho in the Wildcats' 1-0 regional win last week in Middletown.



Westlake's Alex Guaman draws plenty of attention from Marlboro players as he controls the ball in the 1-0 win by the Section 1 champion Wildcats.



The Wildcats' Isaiah Ortiz dribbles away from Marlboro's Dylan Gunsett in last Wednesday's state playoff game. He scored the only goal as Westlake advanced to the regional final.



Westlake goalkeeper Francesco Michilli turned into the hero on Saturday as he converted the clinching penalty kick in overtime after making a big save moments earlier in the regional final win over Section 11's Babylon.



Kristian Shkreli moves toward the ball early in the second half of Westlake's 1-0 victory over the Section 9 champion Marlboro Iron Dukes.



Westlake defender Dylan Pray sets his sights on the ball while Marlboro's Brady Felker tries to stop him in the first half of last week's Class B regional game in Middletown.

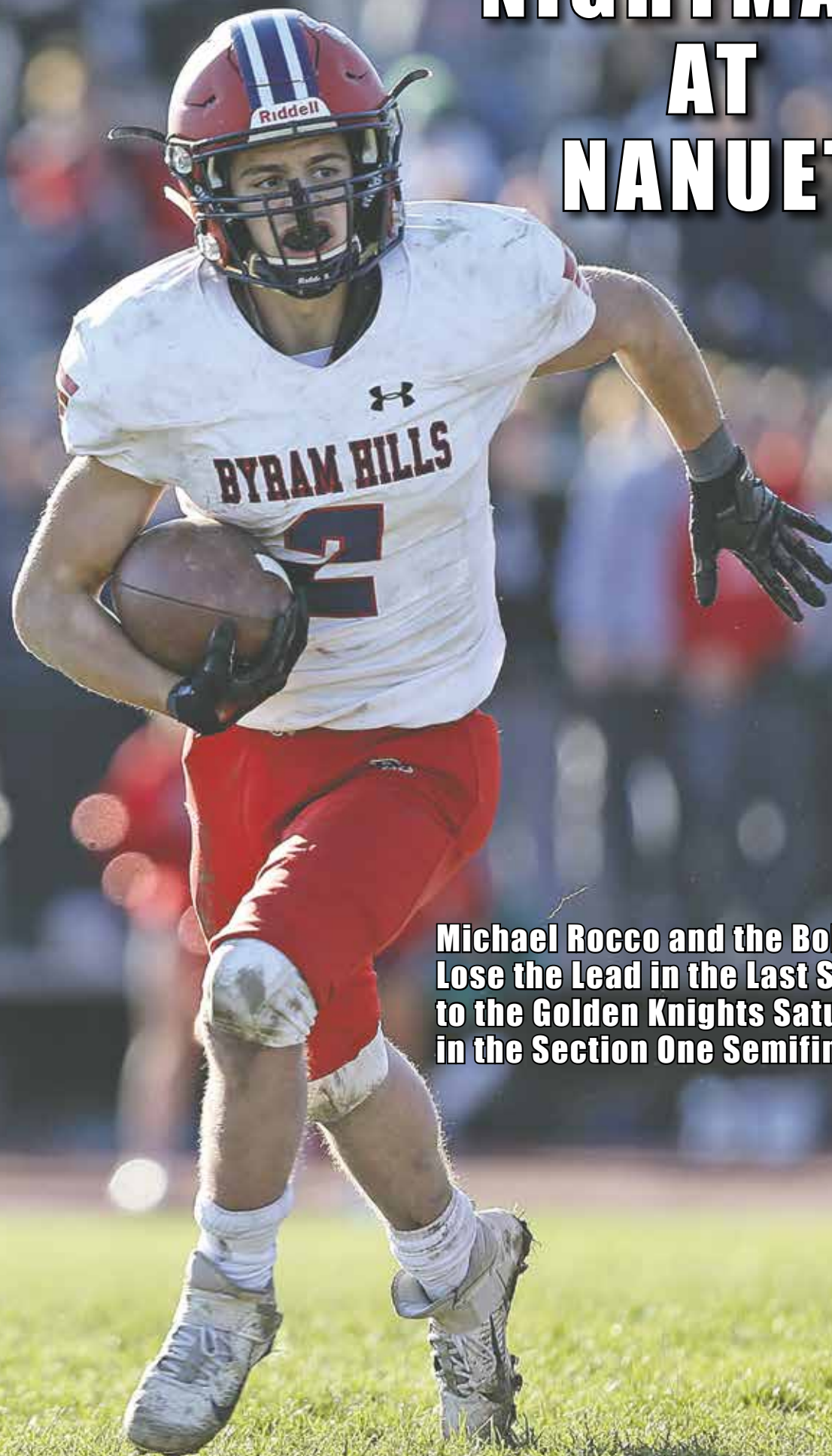


Westlake junior Roberto Molina chases the ball in the first half of last Wednesday's regional playoff vs. Marlboro.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

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NIGHTMARE AT NANUET



**Michael Rocco and the Bobcats
Lose the Lead in the Last Seconds
to the Golden Knights Saturday
in the Section One Semifinals**