

Examiner Sports Sam Dunk!



Panas Slugger Throws Down on Somers, Knocks in 5 in 12-1 Win

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

Walter Panas sophomore Sam Stafura (8) is greeted at the plate by rowdy teammates after stroking a three-run, first-inning home run (inset) in the Panthers' 12-1 triumph of visiting Somers Saturday afternoon, which the Panthers would follow up with an 11-1 loss to visiting John Jay EF, who scored 10 runs in a horror-show seventh for the Panthers, spoiling an otherwise splendid opening day of baseball... see Baseball Notebook

Yorktown Scars Lakeland, Cops Sorrentino Cup; Panas Tops Somers *Carmel Suffers Walk-Off Loss to RCK, Fox Lane Rallies to Beat Jay EF*

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @directrays
& Rob DiAntonio @RJD_Photos

The last time we checked in on the Section 1 baseball scene in the Examiner region (Middle-Northern Westchester/Putnam Counties), the diamonds were as hot as ever in Class A and B where both Lakeland and Westlake were crowned champions, respectively. The region did not have a representative in Class AA, which saw Suffern eke out RCK for the title. So, believe it or not, that leaves the Hornets and Wildcats as the reigning Section 1 champions after more than 700 days of inactivity.

Lakeland followed up 2018's state runner-up performance in impressive fashion, going back-to-back for the first time ever and were poised to three-peat when the COVID-19 pandemic initially introduced itself to us and put a permanent halt on the 2020 spring seasons.

So, we essentially missed out on what might have been an historical run by the



Carmel senior C Anthony Febo clocked two-run homer in 5-4 opening day loss to host RCK Friday.

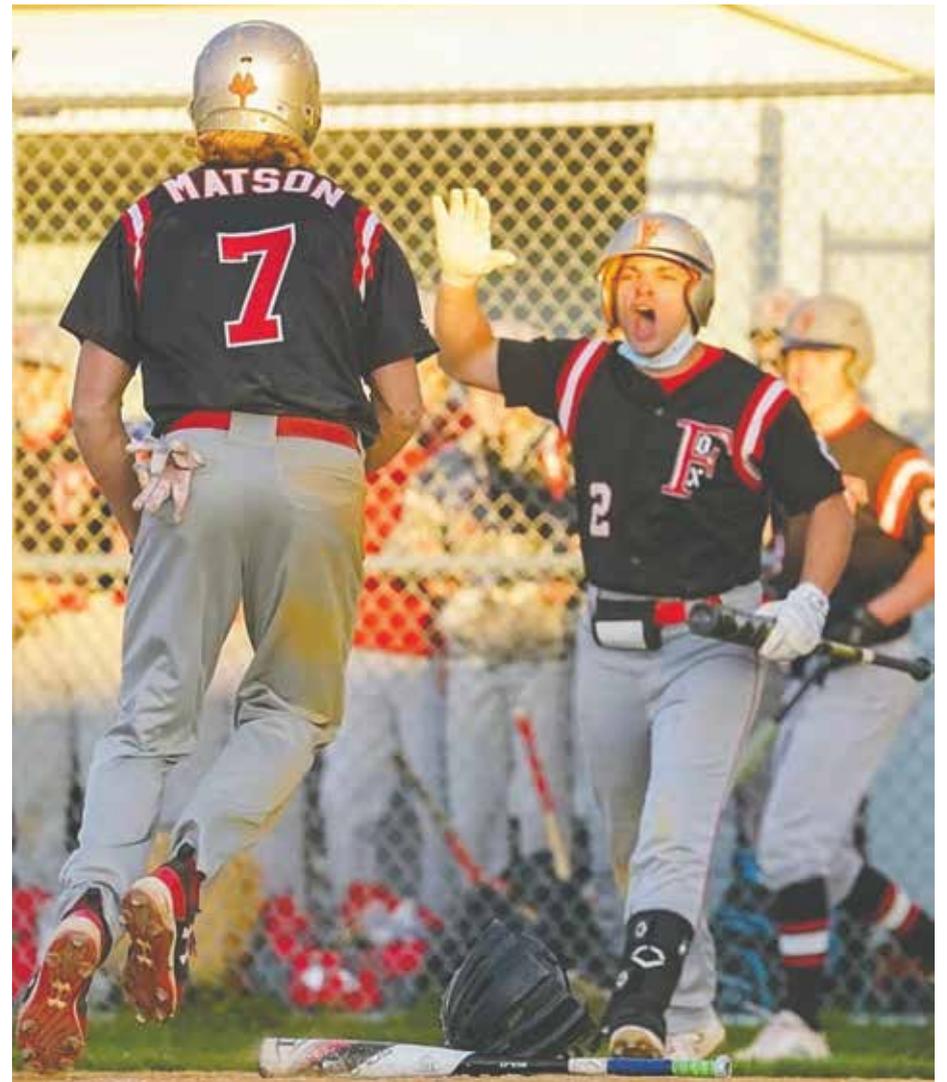
Joe Vetrano- Even Berta-led Hornets, who went 24-3 in 2019 with a dynamic cast of seniors. But Lakeland, like most teams, will be introducing a new cast of characters for the 2021 campaign, which opened up late last week.

Only teams like Class AA Carmel and Fox Lane and Class A Panas and Yorktown, which were youthfully infused with talent back in 2018, are returning varsity-tested players in 2021, but the early returns indicate that baseball is as hot as it was when we were forced to cancel spring sports last year.

Examiner area baseball coaches are encouraged to hit us up at -- raygallaghersports.com and/or robertdiantonio@yahoo.com -- with game-by-game or weekly results (Sunday deadline) for inclusion in our weekly Baseball Notebook. Here's a look at some of what went down in Week 1.

CLASS AA

CARMEL opened the season with a loss that could be coined a moral victory for Coach Joe Hackert's Rams, who suffered a 5-4 walk-off loss to host Roy C. Ketcham, arguably the top program in Section 1 the past 25 years. Tied 1-1 in the fifth, Carmel



Fox Lane's Jack Williamson (2) greets Logan Matson after scoring go-ahead run in recent Fox Lane win over John Jay EF. (Courtesy of Twitter)

senior and Iona-bound C Anthony Febo, a kid to keep an eye on, crushed a two-run bomb to spark the Rams.

"It was a great high school baseball game," Hackert said. "I'm very pleased and impressed with my guys and how positive they were immediately after the game. They said they can't wait to play them again in sectionals. After over 700 days off, that was some game played by both squads."

RCK P Xavier Kolhosser vs. Carmel P Jack Sullivan, a pair of highly-touted aces, was everything it was billed to be -- a 1-1 stalemate -- before both starters yielded to their respective relievers. The Rams went up 4-1 when Ronnie Shofi smashed a solo home run to deep left-center field, going back-to-back with Febo. The heart of this Carmel order looks like it can mash.

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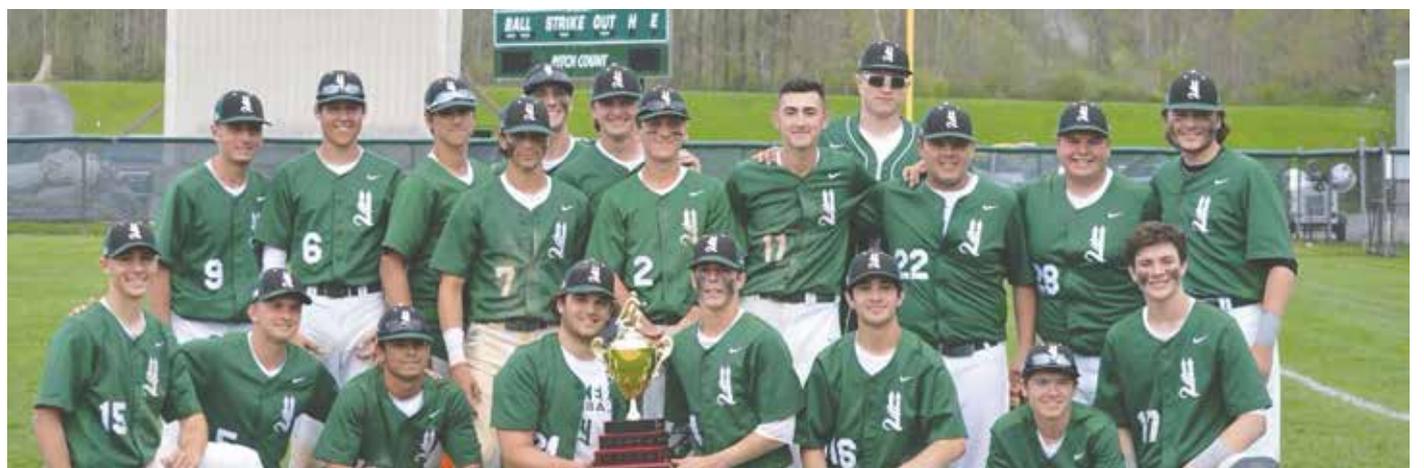


Fox Lane P Micahel Lombardi figures to be among best in Section 1 this season.



Uconn-bound Carmel P-SS Jack Sullivan's Rams suffered 5-4 walk-off loss to host RCK Friday

RAY GALLAGHER / ROB DIANTONIO PHOTOS



Yorktown Huskers pose with coveted Sorrentino Cup after knocking off Lakeland, 16-0. (photo courtesy of Twitter)



Horace Greeley's Jakob Murakami heads for third in 12-1 loss to host Tuskers on Friday.

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FOX LANE started its season with a bang, rallying with a 10-run seventh inning to break open the game and defeat host John Jay-East Fishkill 14-7 on Thursday.

"This is the grittiest team in Section 1," Fox Lane junior Michael Lombardi said. "We are never out of a game and we always bring great energy no matter the situation. Even after a rough sixth inning where we gave up



Panas chucker Aidan Cohall was simply superb in Panthers' 12-1 win over visiting Somers Saturday.

the lead, we were able to stay calm and pick up our teammates to grind out the win."

Lombardi led the way both at the plate and on the mound. He was 4 for 4 at the dish with a home run and a double. He also tossed 5.1 innings and struck out 12.

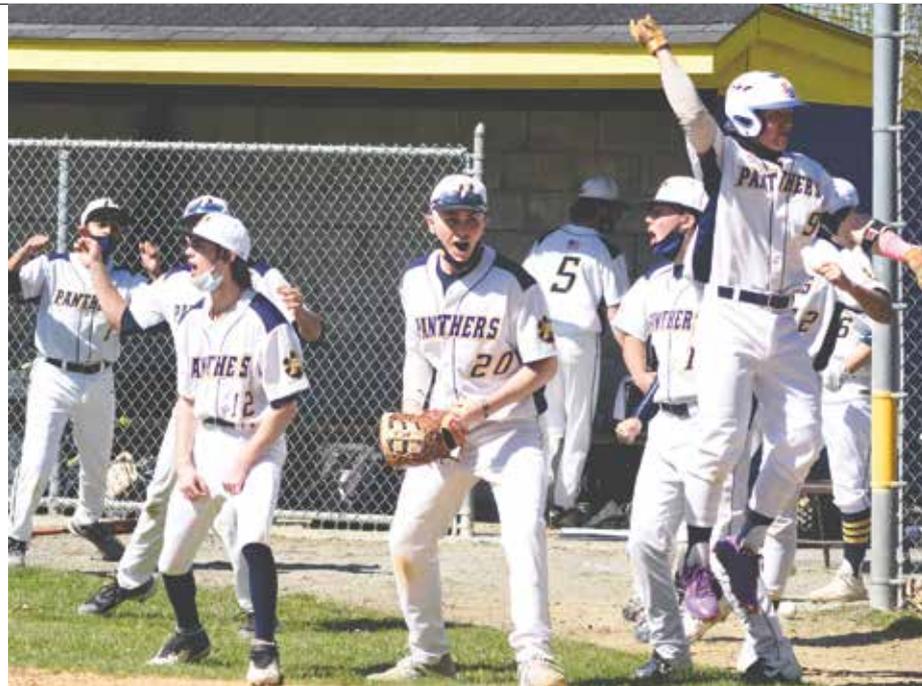
"Having good plate discipline was huge for me," Lombardi said of his success offensively. "I was able to be aggressive without expanding the zone and I capitalized when they left the ball over the plate. On the mound, getting ahead of hitters was the key. Getting ahead 0-1 allows us to be creative on the mound with pitch calling and always keeps the opposing team on their heels."

Aidan Hicks (4 for 5), Bruno Spadafora (3 for 4, RBI), Logan Matson (RBI single to break tie) and Luke Torre (big hit in the seventh) also did the job at the plate for a Foxes squad that is just happy to be playing high school baseball again in 2021.

"It meant a lot to be back on the field with my teammates again," said Lombardi, who is committed to Tulane. "Losing our season last year really put things in perspective for us. It reminded us how short our high school careers really are and how we can never take it for granted. It definitely brought us closer together as a team."

CLASS A

Folks are going to want to keep tabs on **YORKTOWN** this season. While under the radar coming in, Coach C.J. Riefenhauser's



Panas players react to Sammy Stafura's 3-run 1st-inning bomb in Panthers' 12-1 win over visiting Somers Saturday.

club has set its sights on the top prize, a sectional title, and a 16-0 Sorrentino Cup win over **LAKELAND** has set the wheels in motion. The 39th annual Sorrentino Cup game was the first win for first-year Husker Coach Riefenhauser, the former Mahopac grad and MLB hurler.

WALTER PANAS is another club that is going to surprise folks this spring. Veteran Coach Anthony Fata has some table setters and the heart of the order can flat-out rake, including St. John's-bound junior Aidan Cohall and sophomore slugger Sammy Stafura, who cracked a three-run dinger and two-run double off the top of the fence in Saturday's 12-1 win over visiting Somers. Cohall, the ace of the staff, earned the win.

Most of the team has played together at a high level since their Cortlandt American Little League days and travel baseball. They are stoked to make a run.

"We feel that this Panas team can be something very special," Stafura said. "We are very young and basically all of us have played together since a very young age. We have been looking forward to this Panas team for many years already."

And he wasted no time in spotting the Panthers a 3-0 first-inning lead.

"I just had a lot of confidence in my swing

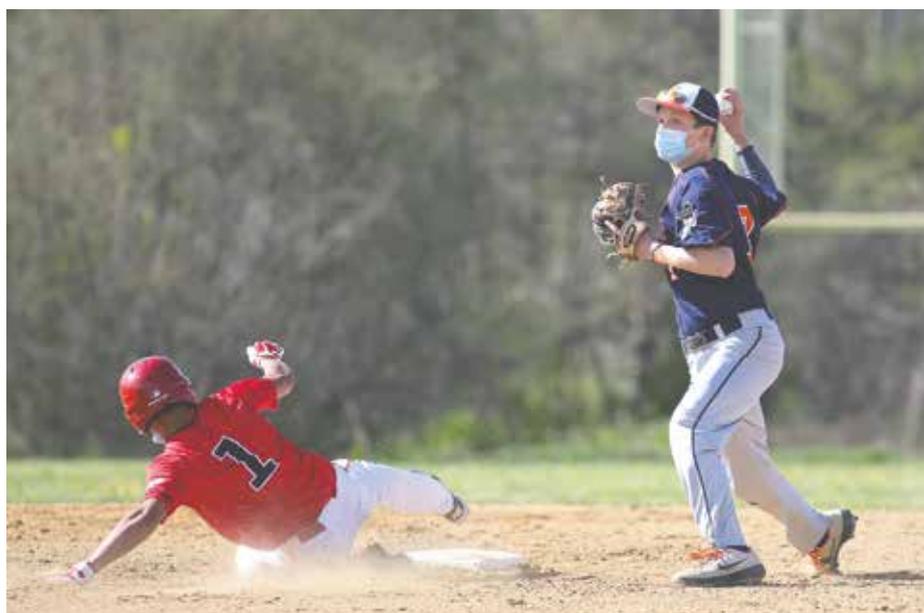
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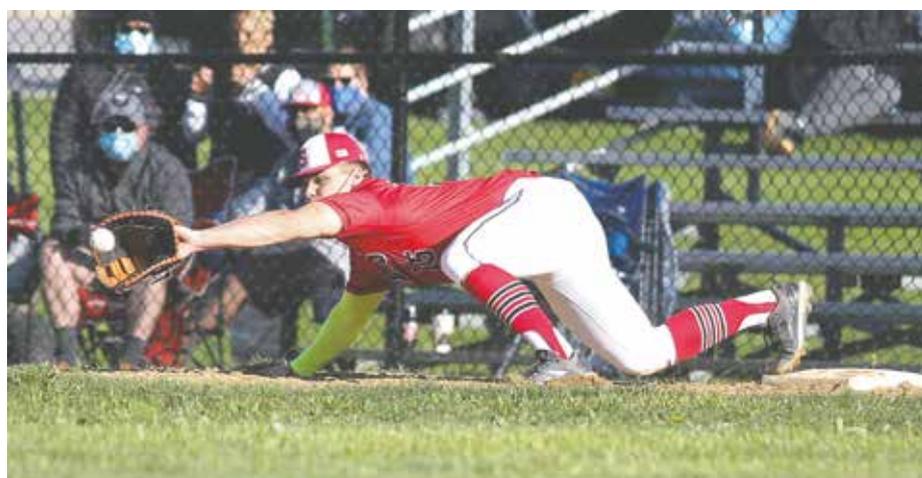
Somers sophomore P Jake Polito did not allow a run in relief in Tuskers' 12-1 loss to host Panas Saturday.



Somers' Daniel Turner fired four scoreless innings and struck out seven in win over visiting Greeley.



Greeley shortstop Jack Pluta tries to turn two as Somers' Ravi Dass slides into second.



Somers senior 1B Jack Kaiser tries to stretch and make the catch at first against the Quakers.

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from all of the work that I put in during the off season," Stafura added. "I know that if I just put the barrel on the ball good things will happen. I also have gotten a lot stronger, so that definitely helps as well."

The Panthers suffered an 11-1 loss to John Jay EF later in the day, blowing a chance in the sixth inning of a 1-1 game when they left the bases full with none out and three cracks to take the lead. The Patriots then went off for 10 in the seventh.

SOMERS came out strong in a 12-1 win over **GREELEY** the day before. P Dan Turner earned the win, fanning seven over four frames. Evan Carway hit a two-run home run for Somers, which earned first-year Coach Anthony Nappi his first win.

BYRAM HILLS scored four runs in the seventh without a hit to pull out a 5-1 win over host **BREWSTER** in the Bobcats' opener. Michael Ascanio hurled 2.1 innings of hitless relief to pick up the win. Bobby Chicoine got the nod for the start and went 4.2 innings of two-hit ball while striking out nine Bears and giving up one earned run. John Gerfen struck out seven over four innings for Brewster.

BREWSTER rebounded from its 5-1 opening-day setback to Byram Hills with an 8-1 trouncing of Lourdes behind A.J. McBride, who struck out seven in the complete game victory. Connor Brooks and Max Palmieri each drove home two runs.

"We are very young and inexperienced having only one returning varsity player," Bears Coach Matt Cunningham said. "That said, we have a quality group of seniors led by our captains Max Palmieri and Jason Cardone. The underclass group is led by junior captain Shane McLaughlin, Matt Salvo, John Gerfen and A.J. McBride. We also have some really promising sophomores in Jason McGill, Collin Brennan and Antonio



Pleasantville's Aidan Finnegan rounds first base in 11-5 loss at North Salem.

Galizia."

The Bears' pitching staff is led by junior John Gerfen, who will certainly be a tough out for any team in the section.

"Gerfen could be really good," the coach said of his lefty ace, who fires it in the mid-to upper- 80's with good secondary pitches. "He's inexperienced and needs to be more efficient to keep pitch count down."

The staff also includes Marco Galizia, McBride, Sean Pawlowski, Collin Brennan, John Pawlowski and Justin Skorewicz.

"As always with so many stacked games, we need these guys to pitch well," Cunningham said.

HEN HUD opened its season against two of the tougher clubs in Class A. The Sailors suffered an opening day 9-1 loss to Beacon, and followed that up with a 10-3 setback to Yorktown.

CLASS B

PUTNAM VALLEY junior IF Joe Maloney went 3 for 5 with a home run and



Tusker Evan Carway helped Somers coach Anthony Nappi pick up his first win as the Tuskers' head coach with his two-run homer against Greeley.

four RBI in a 13-2 win over Irvington. Jacob Nachamie went 3 for 4 with two RBI to support winning P Dylan Watson, enabling first-year Coach Ken Santoanni his first career win.

Ben Raphael picked up the win on the mound, striking out seven over three innings in **BRIARCLIFF'S** 16-0 victory over Hastings. Leading the 1-0 Bears at the plate were Tom Poggi (4 for 5, 3 RBI, 3 runs), Jackson Mauro (4 for 5, 3 runs, RBI, 2 steals), Max Haberman (3 for 4, 3 runs, RBI), Marc Milano (3 for 4, 2 RBI, 2 runs),

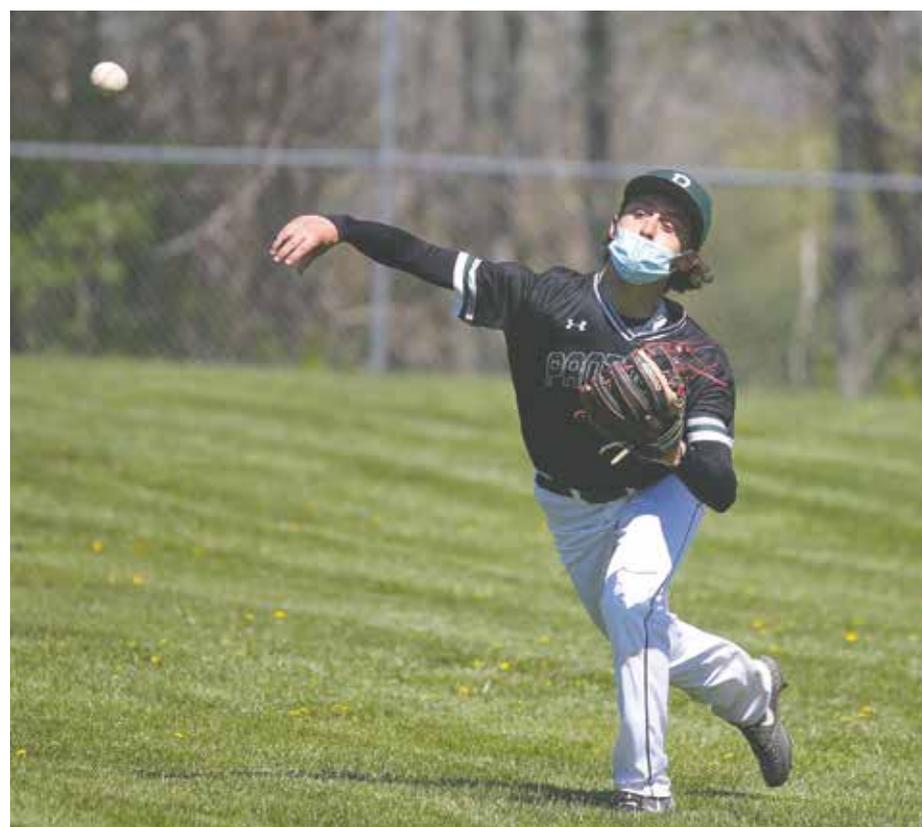
Zack Diamond (2 for 3, 2 RBI) and Jayden Amador (2 RBI, 2 runs).

VALHALLA began its campaign with a 7-4 win over **CROTON-HARMON** on Thursday. Jason Rodriguez (2 for 2, 3 RBI) sparked the Vikings at the plate. Christian Rossi earned the win in relief while Jake Sekinski picked up the save. Evan Kurtz (3 for 4, double, run) and Korey DeBeer (2 for 3, RBI) led Croton.

PLEASANTVILLE dropped its opener to host North Salem, 11-5, on Saturday.



Pleasantville 3B Will Lent can't get the tag down in loss to host North Salem.



Pleasantville outfielder Matt Satriale fires it into the infield at North Salem on Saturday.

Usual Suspects Expected to Contend for Sectional Titles *Yorktown, L/P Leads Loaded Class B, Briarcliff Heads Class C*



Mahopac sophomore Jake Degnan is pressed by Somers' Cole Zampaglione in Indians' 9-8 win over Tuskers.



Lakeland-Panas' Tyler Nocito looks to get off a shot in 18-6 win over Somers.

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays
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After more than a 700-day pause due to COVID-19, one can put the usual suspects in the title-contending basket because that's where they all belong: Class B Yorktown, Mahopac, John Jay CR, Rye and Lakeland/Panas will have at it in the most competitive class; Briarcliff looks like a sure bet in Class C if the Bears play their cards right, Class D's Bronxville and Pleasantville could be on a collision course, plus Class A's Mamaroneck, which just might breeze to a title with Lakeland/Panas and Mahopac dropping down to Class B in 2021.

CLASS B

Class B lax is sure to draw the attention of most Section 1 fanatics, and many coaches are touting **YORKTOWN**, the 40-time Section 1 champions, as the favorites, despite the Huskers having lost the last two title tilts to reigning champion John Jay. The long-awaited arrival of Husker junior and Fairfield commit Harry Griff, who was injured his freshman year, and Air Force signee G Adam Norris, are just two of the prime time reasons Yorktown is in the mix, despite losing All-American Duke-commit Keith Boyer (torn labrum) to a season-long injury.

"Norris is a stud," Yorktown Coach Sean Carney said. "We have a very good offense with

a lot of players there in the mix. Our D is young but very good, and our goalie is special."

Griff, the ultimate dual-threat attackman with elite feeding and dodging ability can also finish. And there are whispers that Norris is among the top Yorktown goalies of the past decade. His brother, Spencer, a skilled middie, will join him at the Air Force academy.

Carney's Huskers were on pause and forced to cancel the season opener against Hen Hud last week but are on track to open Thursday at Wappingers where the likes of Dylan Beck and Will Embury, both captains with Boyer and Adam Norris, are on a mission to win the Huskers' first Section 1 title since in 2017, which is an eternity for

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Mahopac G Brett Crecco is about to be dogpiled by likes of Sean Massett, John Bosio (22) and rest of Indians after 9-8 win over visiting Somers Thursday.



Mahopac freshman Danny Koch makes move on Somers sophomore Luke Kennedy in Indians' 9-8 win over Tuskers Thursday.



Somers senior TJ Degnan gets some time in box for this hit on Mahopac freshman Danny Koch in Tuskers' 9-8 loss to Indians.



Mahopac sophomore Gavin Vigiucci takes run at Somers sophomore Luke Kennedy in Indians' 9-8 win over Tuskers Thursday.



Lakeland-Panas' Justin Stabile makes his move while Somers' Ben Ericson defends.

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the Yorktown lax fraternity, a brotherhood unlike any other in the section.

The Yorktown midfield is loaded and might be the ticket that provides a ride to the sectional finals. Seniors Evan Makar, Brendan Regan and Brendan Doller will be a handful to contend with.

LAKELAND/PANAS is not to be slept on this season, just ask **SOMERS**, which hung around for a quarter before the Rebels unleashed the fury of Conor Hufnagel (5G, 3A) and Reed Thompson (5G), who combined for 13 points in an 18-6 season-opening win over the visiting Tuskers. Rebels Nick Graap (1G, 3A), Liam Burke (2G, 2A), Tyler Nocito (2G, 1A), Justin Stabile (2G, 1A) and Auggie Kocaj (1G) all found the scoring sheet for a unit that will put up some big numbers this season when given the chance.

Siena-bound senior D Mark Cummins leads a stout defense, which, if it reaches its potential, could be one of the last two teams standings when the sectionals roll up in late May.

"Definitely, all the guys are itching to get better and you saw it on Saturday," Cummins said. "There's something different about this team. We're all playing with a chip on our shoulders, like we have something to prove, and I love it. Expect us to make some noise early in June."

MAHOPAC Coach John Bota has a tremendous mix of senior leaders to go with an up-and-coming group of underclassmen, many of which found their niche in a 9-8 season-opening win over visiting Somers last Thursday.

Mahopac sophomore Jake Degnan had a nose for the net since he toiled at backyard Fourth of July parties as a fifth-grader, and his varsity debut was more of the same when he went for three goals, including two in the pivotal fourth quarter, to go with one assist.

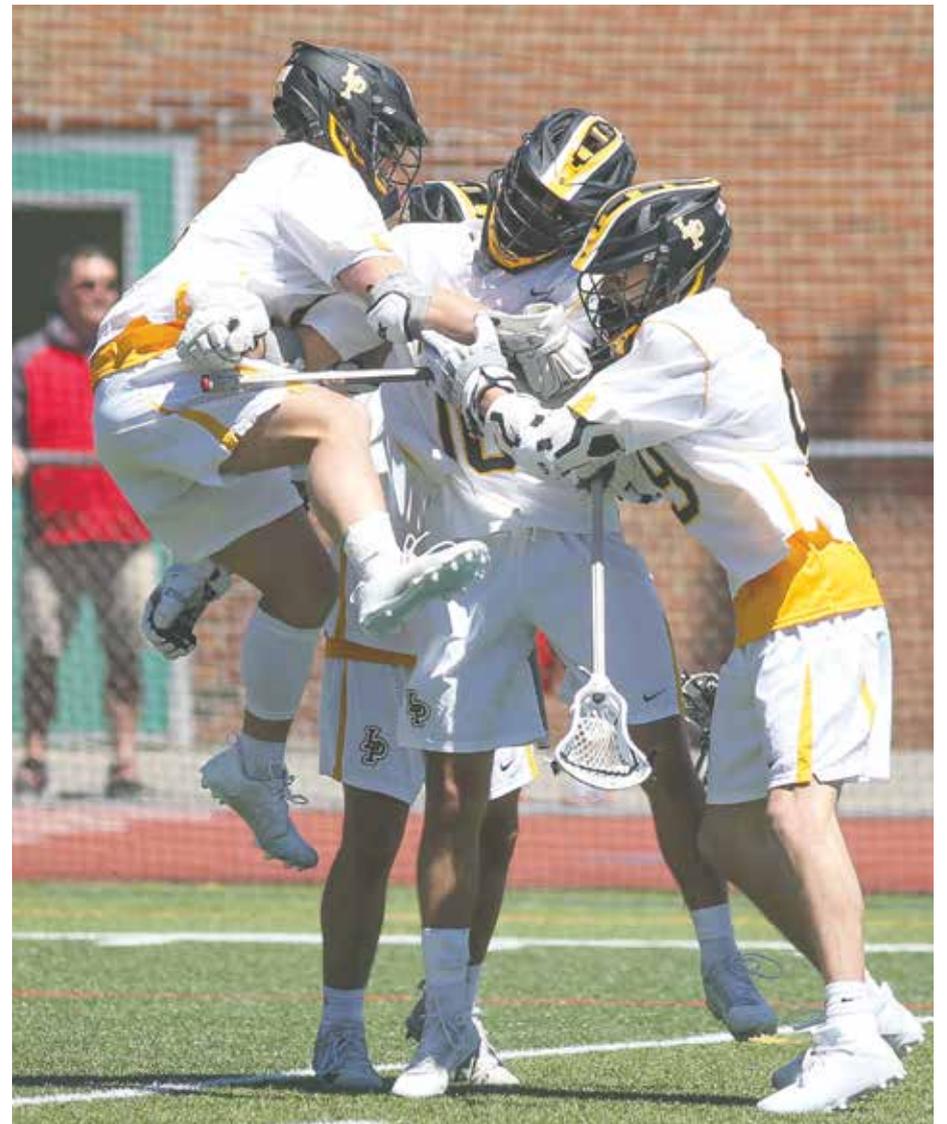
The Indians went up 9-6 when Degnan sprung free for a pair in the fourth and then hung on in the final minutes. Army-bound junior M Mike Harney and Mike Rettberg each added two goals and two assists for the Indians as Bota, a former Indian great and sectional champ in 2012, notched the first career victory of his career.



Somers' Zach Nyikos looks to make something happen while the Rebels' Nick Conetta defends.



Lakeland-Panas' Conor Hufnagel tore up Somers and had good reason to celebrate in 18-6 win over visiting Somers.



Lakeland-Panas players had plenty to celebrate in an 18-6 rout of Somers on Saturday.

Junior M Chris Evans won 13 for 20 on faceoffs for the tribe and senior LSM John Nolan wrought havoc, creating four turnovers while junior pole Sean Massett scooped six ground balls and kept Somers hotshot T.J. Deagan (1G) under wraps.

Tuskers Nick Newman, Zach Nyikos and Lorenzo Sessa each scored twice for the Tuskers, and Henry Ellison (1G) gave the Tuskers life with 90 seconds to play, cutting the deficit to one.

In Saturday's 13-5 loss to reigning Class A champ Mamaroneck, Harney scored twice for the Indians and G Brett Crecco stopped 20 shots.

"Agreed, Mamaroneck is on another level," Bota admitted. "I think Class B could be very interesting, a lot of good teams, but I think we can compete and get to semis and give ourselves a shot to compete in that section title game with the right matchups. It's going to take some maturing from our underclassman. Our offense is very young but talented. I am confident in their capabilities. We set lofty goals to accomplish greatness here."

FOX LANE started off 2-0 and the defense locked down in a pair of 9-2 wins over Wappingers (Thursday) and Harrison

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Somers' Nick Newman goes on the attack while Lakeland-Panas' Liam Burke tries to slow him down in Tuskers' loss to Rebels.



Lakeland-Panas' Vincent Scialdone wins a face-off and goes on the attack while Somers' Michael Micceri chases.

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Boys Lax Notebook

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(Saturday).

"I'm extremely happy with our defensive play, considering it was a big question mark coming into the season," Foxes Coach Craig Henley said. "Everyone on the defensive side of the ball is a first-year varsity player after last year was cancelled, so they've had a bunch of catching up to do. It's a small roster but the entire team practices hard and encourages each other. That has boosted our learning process. The kids are very receptive to coaching and are helping each other along the way. A very fun group to be around."

Jack Cicchelli led the Foxes with four goals in the win over Harrison. Will Shepherd added two goals while Everett Banks, Jacob Wollman and Dan Leader also scored. Banks paced the squad with four goals against Harrison in a game where five different Foxes scored.

The Foxes have a big test against powerhouse Pleasantville on Thursday at 5 p.m.

"The good start is a great reward for their effort at practice, but everyone realizes we have to improve in all aspects," Henley said. "I'm just happy that these kids are able to have a season, especially because they seem to be such a tight-knit group."

CLASS C

BYRAM HILLS blanked host **BREWSTER** 15-0 in the Bobcats' season opener on Thursday. Benny Rakower (3 goals, 4 assists) and Hayden Fruhling (3 goals, 3 assists) led the offense.

"Brewster played us in a zone which allowed us to be shooters," said Fruhling, a senior who is coming off a section championship in football where he led the team at quarterback. "We played an unselfish game and moved the ball at a pace which allowed us to find weaknesses in the zone. Overall, it was a great game and it proved that we have some young guys with a lot of talent on both ends of the field."

Bobcats freshman goalie Jack Quinn picked up the shutout in his first career start in net.



Pleasantville's Nick Bates winds up to fire a shot on goal in the second quarter of the Panthers' 16-2 rout of Haldane.



Pleasantville senior Rial Boes is defended by Haldane's Josh Reyes as he moves toward the cage in the second half of the Panthers' win over the Blue Devils.

"We played a really strong game defensively," Fruhling said. "Jack Quinn has been extremely vocal with the defense and the communication they have had has allowed them to play as one and work through any of the offenses success. We played an aggressive and physical game and didn't allow Brewster to gain any momentum."

PUTNAM VALLEY saw Jack Murphy bag a career-high five goals and dish three assists in an 18-9 win over Dobbs Ferry. Ethan Mounier added four goals and three assists and Ryan Denike tallied four more goals to go with one assist. Rangy senior Garrett Leitmann finished with two goals and two assists for Putnam Valley, which failed to put its best foot forward in a 15-5 loss to Pleasantville. Mounier had two goals and one assist for the Tigers, who got one goal apiece from Hayden Gumbrecht, Murphy and Denike. The Tigers should post a fair amount of wins within their league this season with Croton, Haldane, North Salem and Pawling serving as their foes, but getting back to the elite, championship level of 2004-10 seems unlikely. A league title, though, is there for the take.

CLASS D

PLEASANTVILLE exploded for 51 goals in three wins over Dobbs Ferry, **PUTNAM**



Ryan Challice of Pleasantville fires in one of his seven goals during the Panthers' 16-2 rout of host Haldane on Saturday morning.



Pleasantville senior Brennan McDermott, who had a goal and four assists, controls the ball behind the cage in Saturday's lopsided win at Haldane.

VALLEY and **HALDANE** to begin the 2021 season. Panthers junior Ryan Challice scored a staggering 19 of those goals.

"The key to the strong start came from offseason preparation," Pleasantville senior Brennan McDermott said. "We've been having practices or games as a team twice a week since September. Therefore the shortened preseason didn't have too much of an effect on us because we're already used to playing with each other."

McDermott netted seven goals and had an assist in a 20-10 win over visiting Dobbs Ferry to kick off the season last Wednesday. Challice notched five goals and three assists. John Keating and Nick Bates tallied two goals each. Kieran Cotter won 22 of 30 face-offs.

"Our offense has been scoring a lot of goals because of quick ball movement in transition and success clearing the ball," McDermott said.

Two days later, the Panthers disposed of host Putnam Valley, 15-5. With the game tied 2-2, Pleasantville went on a 5-0 run to take a 7-2 lead into halftime. McDermott was a passing machine with nine assists



Haldane's PJ Ruggiero controls the ball in the second half of loss to Pleasantville Saturday.

and added three goals while Challice scored seven goals and had an assist. Bates added two goals while Ryan Raefski stopped 14 shots in net. Ethan Mounier led PV with two goals and an assist.

In Pleasantville's 16-2 rout of host Haldane on Saturday, Challice sparked the attack with seven goals and two assists. Bates (3 goals, 1 assist) and McDermott (1 goal, 4 assists) also contributed for the Panthers, who built an 11-1 halftime lead. PJ. Ruggiero and Evan Giachinta scored for Haldane.

The Panthers endured a heartbreaking overtime loss to rival Briarcliff in the Section 1 Class D championship game in 2019 then had to go through the cancellation of the 2020 season due to COVID-19.

"It means everything to our whole team that we finally get the chance to get back on the field," McDermott said. "The whole Class of 2021 has been working toward this season since June of 2019."

CLASS A

WHITE PLAINS (2-1) kicked off the season with wins over Ardsley and Clarkstown South. The Tigers bounced back from a 12-2 loss to host Pelham on Thursday with a nail biting 5-4 victory over visiting

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Pleasantville's Joe Keating moves on Haldane's PJ Ruggiero in the fourth quarter of Saturday's 16-2 Panther road victory.

Ossining's Scarduzio Rehabs, Recovers for Senior Seasons

Mahopac Shuts Down Carmel, Rams Knock of Brewster for 1st Time

By Tony Pinciario

Kacie Scarduzio was on her way to a brilliant and lengthy **OSSINING** lacrosse career when she made varsity as an eighth-grader. The current senior immediately established herself as an impact player her first two years. The future looked promising, but a major knee injury Scarduzio suffered in the first varsity basketball game of her sophomore year robbed her of two seasons -- basketball and lacrosse. Then COVID denied all student-athletes of their 2020 spring season.

"I was devastated when I found out I tore my ACL, both meniscus and sprained my MCL," said Scarduzio, who began playing lacrosse in fifth grade. "It was extremely hard for me to come back from an injury like that, but it was worth it."

Scarduzio returned to the hardwood this past winter and has resumed her outstanding lacrosse career, scoring seven goals in Ossining's 14-12 triumph over Our Lady of Lourdes. She netted seven more goals, and had an assist, in a 17-12 loss to Briarcliff.

Ossining lacrosse Coach Patrick Wheeler could not be happier for Scarduzio.

"I'm an Ossining guy so I grew up watching Kacie's uncles play football and her family around our firehouse," Wheeler said.

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Fox Lane's Eugenia Kaltsas attacks the cage as Somers' Kayli McMorroch chases in Foxes loss to Tuskers.



Fox Lane's Kate Loughney races up the field while Somers' Ashley Hershfield goes for the steal.



Fox Lane's Grace Giannettono looks to get ball out of defensive end as Somers' Teagan Ryan tries to stay in front in Foxes' loss to Tuskers.

ROB DIANTONIO / JERRI COHEN PHOTOS



Somers' Ashley Hershfield sends a pass from behind the cage against Fox Lane.



Somers' Ashley Hershfield, Ella Kittredge, Lauren McCartin, Julie Sirchia and the Tuskers are off to a 3-0 start with wins over Greeley, Fox Lane and Carmel.

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"I have literally known Kacie since birth, and that is what makes my job working at Ossining such an amazing thing.

"A kid I love has faced such adversity," he added. "I was in the gym as part of our basketball staff when she had her injury. Kacie is one of the toughest kids I have ever seen. She pushed herself so hard to be ready for 2020. I am just so happy she can have the opportunity to play with her teammates, because in all honesty, that's all she cares about. That is why she has been such a pleasure to coach the last five years."

Even though Scarduzio was injured her sophomore year and COVID halted the spring 2020 high school season, she will continue her lacrosse magic in September at Iona College in New Rochelle.

When Scarduzio was not doing school work, she was rehabbing. She overcame the physical and mental challenges because she was determined to resume her athletic career once the doctors cleared her.

"It was extremely hard for me to sit on the sideline for a full year," said Scarduzio, who plans to major in Childhood Education. "My anger made me push myself harder and

work hard to get back on the field and court. I was either at PT doing exercises or doing them at home, but I always had a stick in my hand working on my skills.

"The feeling of playing the sport I love kept me going and, surrounding myself with supportive friends and family who always pushed me and never let me give up."

Ironically, Scarduzio joined her friends in fifth grade playing lacrosse. She said she didn't like the sport, so she stepped away. It was brief respite as Scarduzio returned in seventh grade to lacrosse, joined a travel team and was a varsity player in eighth grade.

"I was honored to play on a varsity lacrosse team as an 8th-grader," Scarduzio said. "I was more nervous than anything because I was playing with girls way older than me but, at the same time, I was extremely excited to be given that opportunity. It's been an awesome experience to play on the same turf field for my whole high school career, especially lacrosse. I'm playing with some of my childhood friends,



Putnam Valley senior M Lindsey Cohen (13 G, 5A 1st 3 games) has been gripping and ripping to start the season.



Putnam Valley senior M Catherine O'Sullivan is off to a blistering start for Tigers.



Somers goalie Nikki Cassara looks to clear as Maddie Lyle runs with her in Tuskers' 17-9 win over Fox Lane.

who I've known for years, and playing with them is fun and makes me grateful to play my senior season with them given the circumstances. And being able to play in college is a great opportunity and I am honored to continue my lac career."

Scarduzio said Fairleigh Dickinson, Western Connecticut and Virginia Wesleyan showed interest in her. When she was contacted by Lauren Kahn, a former Nanuet basketball and lacrosse great, Scarduzio went to for a visit.

"I never looked into going to Iona because it was so close to my hometown but I've heard of Coach Kahn and how great of a player and coach she is," Scarduzio said. "When she called me, I was extremely humbled and excited to get the opportunity to play for her. I visited campus to attend basketball games, but when I went to campus for my unofficial visit it felt like home so I decided to commit."

Scarduzio said the great aspect of attending Iona will be having her parents, family and friends at games because of the easier and somewhat shorter commute.

Wheeler will be an Iona women's lacrosse fan with Scarduzio wearing the maroon and gold.

"Undoubtedly, Kacie earned this," Wheeler said. "She lost an entire season to injury and another to COVID. She has pushed herself as hard as anyone could to get back on the field and court. The adversity she has overcome is not seen by most, and she has punched it in the face!"

MAHOPAC returned to the field, opening its 2021 season with a busy schedule as the Indians defeated archrival **CARMEL**, 15-8, and registered

a huge victory, 11-10 over perennial Section 1 Class A champion North Rockland. Suffern spoiled Mahopac's perfect week with a 17-6 win.

Mahopac ran away from Carmel in the second half, outsourcing the Rams, 9-4. Avery Przymylski had a hat trick for Mahopac while Gigi Genovese, Mia Del Bene, Ava Jennings, Tatiana Moran and Amanda Beberman had two goals apiece.

"Carmel controlled most of the first half with a one-goal lead until about five minutes left when Mahopac went on a three goal run to take a 6-4 lead into the half," Jim Lieto said. "After the first 20 minutes of the game, we finally shook off the rust and started clicking again. Our defense was very strong in the second half and I am really excited about how well we spread the goals around on offense."

Carmel was led by Taylor Roth with a hat trick and an assist and Alex DeFillipo tallied two goals for the Rams, who also defeated Brewster for the first time ever earlier in the week behind two goals apiece from Izzy Faudar, Laila Rosenquest and Kylie Rosenquest.

The Indians raced out to a 9-5 lead at halftime and staved off a late North Rockland charge in the win. Przymylski finished with a team-high five goals. Jennings added two goals and two assists and Savino chipped in with two goals and an assist. Jennings and Przymylski each scooped up four groundballs. After Przymylski gave Mahopac an 11-9 lead, Mahopac coach Jim Lieto said the defense held firm.

"After that, it was a mad scramble for North Rockland with attempt after attempt to score," Lieto said. "Our defense was phenomenal, holding North Rockland to only one goal with 56 seconds remaining. On the ensuing draw Ava Jennings was able to get possession and Mahopac held on for the victory.

"I'm really proud of the girls' performance as they kept their heads on straight against a really talented North Rockland team. I love how they handled both being up and withstanding a late rally from North Rockland. So many girls stepped up in big moments. Ava Jennings ground ball on the final draw was incredible. She really put herself out there to come up with a huge

continued on page 14

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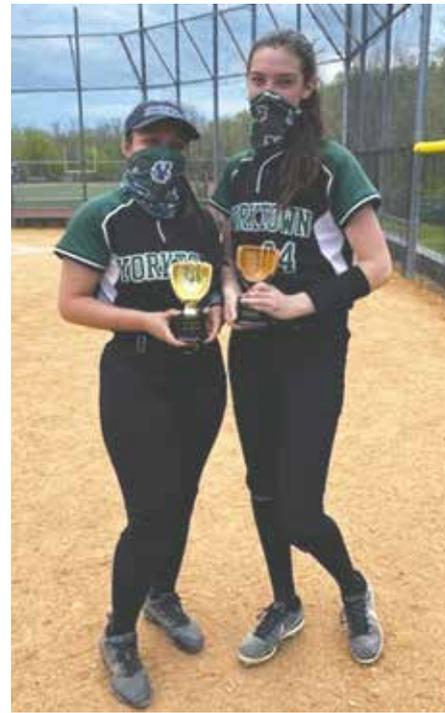
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Nationally-ranked Mahopac players, now 2-0, take field for first time in over 700 days due to COVID-19 pandemic last Wednesday in win over Clarks. North.



Yorktown MVP Breanna Vo and All-Tourney P Maya Servedio are all smiles under the mandates masks after winning Yorktown softball tourney title.



Mahopac C Michelle Dellamura has been and will be a vital cog for sectional-title-minded Indians in 2021.



Mahopac Coach Cristina Giansante (R) shares light moment with Indian slugger Lauren Zecca in season-opening win Wednesday.

FOCUS ON SOFTBALL

Yorktown Cops Tourney Title

Mahopac Nips Lakeland, 1-0



Lakeland's Amanda Cohen makes the catch in right field in 1-0 loss to Mahopac Saturday.



Mahopac slugger Lauren Zecca tracks a bomb that led to five RBI in season-opening win Wednesday.



Mahopac's Ashley Usewicz, who crushed game-winning RBI double in 1-0 win over Lakeland Saturday, takes a rip.



Mahopac senior hurler Shannon Becker fired two shutouts with 25 whiffs to open the 2021 campaign.



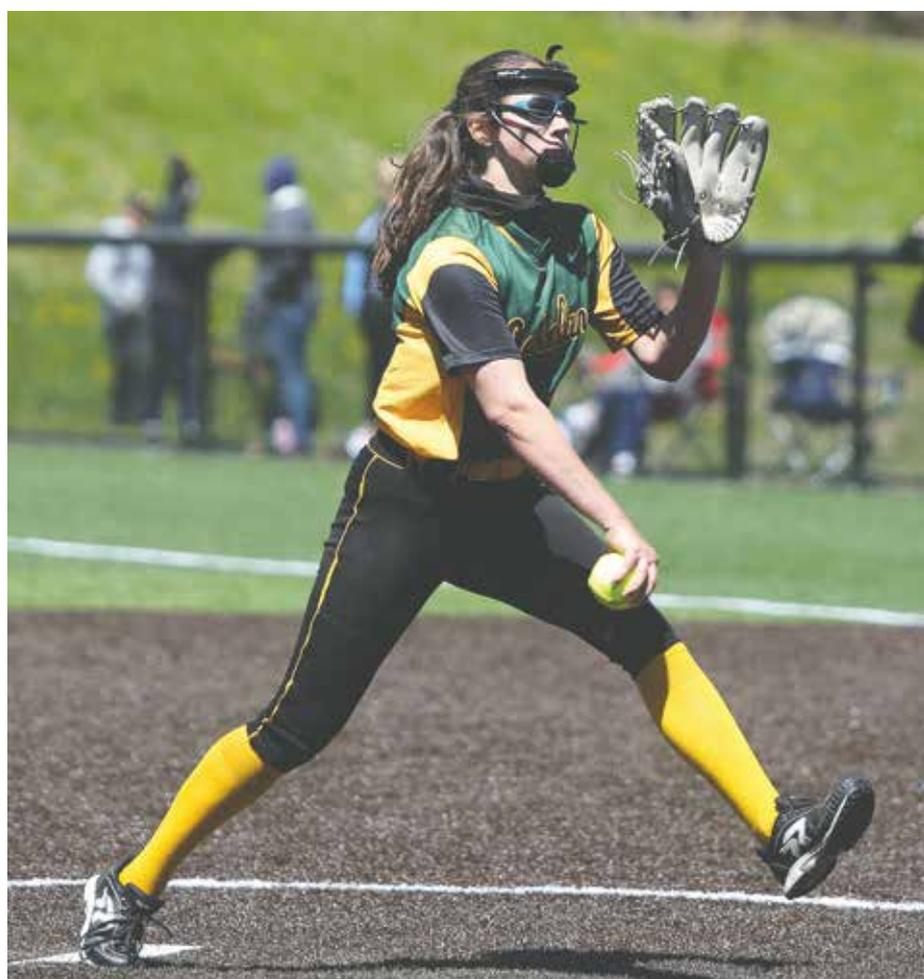
Mahopac's Gabby Marino knocked in two runs in season-opening win over Clarks. North.



Mahopac's Shannon Becker hands out high fives in the Indians' 1-0 win at Lakeland.



The Yorktown Huskers had plenty to celebrate in their 15-5 opening day win over Walter Panas last Monday.



Lakeland hurler Stella Bale, a legit D-1 prospect, was masterful in 1-0 loss to visiting Mahopac, fanning 13.



Lakeland's Hannah Matusiak gets low to make the catch at first vs. Mahopac.



Yorktown Huskers pose with hardware after holding off Ardsley 2-0 for Yorktown tourney title Sunday.

Girls' Lacrosse Notebook continued...

continued from page 9
possession.”

Mahopac had six players make college commitments, highlighted by seniors, Genovese (Pace University) and Moran (Mercy College). Four juniors also chose their colleges -- Audrey Colucci (Lynn University, Fla.), Jennings (University of Cincinnati), Przymylski (Coastal Carolina, SC) and Savino (University of Indianapolis).

Genovese had a hat trick in the loss to Suffern.

Mahopac had a successful 2019 season, advancing to the Section 1 Class A semifinals.

SOMERS could not have asked for a better start to 2021, going 3-0 for the week with victories over Carmel, Horace Greeley and **FOX LANE**. The Tuskers opened the season with a win over Carmel as Ella Kittredge scored five goals and added four assists. Lauren McCartin, Noelle DeMarinis and Julie Sirchia each had a hat trick and Sirchia collected three assists.

Teagan Ryan and Kittredge each had four goals against Fox Lane. McCartin, DeMarinis and Sirchia had two goals apiece. Eugenia Kaltsas netted four goals for the Foxes. Alix Riley added two goals and an assist.

Kittredge continued her early-season scoring spree with six goals against Horace Greeley, giving her 15 in three games. She also registered three assists. Ryan scored three goals and Molly Fink netted two goals.

It was only natural that **HORACE GREELEY's** Grace Arrese would follow her older sisters in the family tradition -- lacrosse.

“I began playing lacrosse in kindergarten,” said Arrese, now a senior captain for the Horace Greeley varsity lacrosse team. “My dad coached all of our youth lacrosse teams, so I’ve had a stick in my hand since I was really young. My two older sisters were both varsity and are college lacrosse players.”

Following the cancellation of the 2020 New York State high school season because of the COVID pandemic, Arrese is back on the field as one of the leaders and impact players for coach Dennis Hurlie.

Arrese, a four-year vet, was an important player on the 2019 Horace Greeley field

hockey team that won the Section 1 Class A title, beating perennial champion Mamaroneck, and advanced to the NYSPHSAA Class A title game.

Arrese will attend Wesleyan (Conn.) in September and continue playing lacrosse and field hockey. Wesleyan is a member of the New England Small College Athletic Conference. The NESCAC has been referred to as the Ivy League of Division III based on its excellent academics.

“I was looking, primarily, at NESCAC schools for both sports,” said Arrese, who is considering Economics and/or Environmental Sciences as a major/minor. “I love both sports so much and wanted to try and play both in college, which is what drove me to go Division III and NESCAC specifically where there are two-sport athletes on many teams.

“The academic reputation of Wesleyan and the NESCAC schools was the key factor in my decision. I know how important my college education will be and I like to challenge myself in the classroom, so having the opportunity to attend such a highly competitive academic school was my greatest hope.”

Hurlie is impressed with the work ethic and leadership of Arrese. He feels she will continue to excel in both field hockey and lacrosse at Wesleyan.

“The first thing you need to know is how hard Grace worked in the offseason to keep her and a group of her teammates working and staying in shape in anticipation of this season,” Hurlie said. “I’ve only known Grace for a mere few weeks, but it is clearly evident to me how much respect she has earned from her teammates and how gifted a leader she is. She and her fellow captains, Grace Byrne and Mia Scott, have made the start to this season very smooth and enjoyable.

Arrese was happy to be back playing field hockey in the fall, especially after Greeley’s success in 2019 and winning the section. She is even happier to play her final season in the sport she began as a kindergartner.

“It’s been super enjoyable,” Arrese said. “We feel so lucky to be able to play our senior seasons and have our senior days. Most of our starting lineup at field

hockey was returning and while we were so disappointed that states were cancelled, getting a pretty full season and winning the section considering the circumstances was just awesome.”

Horace Greeley lost to Somers (14-4) and Tappan Zee (16-8) before bouncing back with a 17-4 win over Brewster.

Molly Byrne had three goals and six assists in the win and Taylor Rice added three goals and an assist. Erica Rosendorf contributed two goals and eight draw controls.

Byrne had a hat trick and Arrese chipped in two goals in the Tappan Zee game and Finley Pollard scored twice against Somers.

PLEASANTVILLE opened its season with a nice victory, defeating Class A power Lakeland/Panas, 20-15 as Reilly Byrne fueled the Panthers with eight goals and four assists.

Abby McAllister added seven goals and four assists and Jess Beck scored her first varsity goal.

“We trailed 6-5, and then went on a 5-0 run to go up 10-6,” Pleasantville Coach Jaime Williams said. “We made some adjustments on the draw because we weren’t getting the ball. Our defense made some key plays to get us back in the game.

“I was pleased that we didn’t panic or give up when we trailed. We have a lot of two and three-sport athletes, so they know how to compete in tough situations. It was nice to see how we could handle that in a first game and early in our season. That certainly builds our confidence as a team. We still have some things to work on but our goal is to get better every practice and game.”

BREWSTER had a rough start to the 2021 season, dropping a 10-6 verdict to Carmel and a 17-4 decision to Horace Greeley.

Brewster coach Sara Didio, who guided the Bears to the 2018 Section 1 Class B title and trip to the state final four, cited seniors and the defense’s backbone-- Chelsea Steere and Gabriella Pastore, who will continue playing in college.

Steere is going to Mercer University (Ga.) and Pastore is going upstate to SUNY-Cortland.

“Chelsea and Ella are both strong leaders

on the defensive end for us,” Didio said. “We had a tough week, but we’re glad to be back out there. We are young, offensively, so we just need some of our younger players to step up and create some good connections on the field, which will come.”

In 2019, Brewster advanced to the sectional semis before a loss to Hen Hud.

BRIARCLIFF started the season 2-1 with wins over Putnam Valley (14-11) and Ossining (18-12). Cassie Lawler had four goals against PV while Dylan Krsulich and Rosie Swidler added three goals each. Lawler exploded for seven goals in the senior day win over Ossining while Krsulich (4 goals) and Swidler (3 goals) helped stuff the stat sheet. Charlotte Baer made six saves in net.

Paola Galiano and Grace Wickey had two goals apiece in the Bears’ 6-5 loss to Pearl River on Saturday.

PUTNAM VALLEY began the 2021 season with a new coach -- Amanda Vasta, a Walter Panas graduate who played lacrosse for former Lakeland/Panas Coach Sharon Sarsen.

Vasta was the Putnam Valley varsity assistant last year before the spring season was cancelled after one week of practice.

“I am excited to be able to work with a hard-working group of young women,” Vasta said. “There are a lot of younger and talented players and I am determined to grow the program here at Putnam Valley while helping them achieve both academic and athletic success. I look forward to a great season!”

The Tigers suffered a 19-9 loss to Croton and a tough 12-11 overtime setback to Irvington.

Lindsey Cohen paced Putnam Valley with four goals and two assists against Croton. Natalie Mazza, Yarella Orellana,, Eva Dechent and Jordan Tucker had solo tallies for Putnam Valley.

Cohen also had four goals against Irvington. Cat O’Sullivan added a hat trick and Jordan Tucker rang up four assists for the Tigers, who also fell to Briarcliff.

Girls’ Lax coaches are encouraged to hit us up at -- tfinch23@optonline.net -- with game-by-game or weekly results (Sunday deadline) for inclusion in our Girls’ Lax Notebook.

Boys' Lacrosse Notebook continued...

continued from page 7

Clarkstown South on Saturday.

“It was a huge deal to us coming out of our loss a few days before,” White Plains junior goalie Nicolas Spista said. “We kept fighting every quarter and wanted to improve upon our mistakes from the prior game. I was able to see the amount of heart everyone had in order to come out with the win.”

Colin Walsh netted three goals for White Plains to spark the offense. Spista made nine saves in net and even scored a goal and dished out an assist. Jake Strobel added one goal while Nick Armogida passed for two assists.

“The key defensively was to just be in a position to always help the guy next to you,” Spista said of holding South to just four goals. “The defense played their leverage

very well which kept them to only shooting from the outside.”

Spista made 14 saves in the loss to the Pelicans.

“I thought the kids responded well after losing to Pelham and getting ready to play against South,” Tigers coach Mark Armogida said. “A big part of our defensive effort was winning face-offs and playing solid defense. We gave up two goals on broken clears and another on a man up, so other than that we were solid. The South goalie played really well and kept them in the game. We just need to finish more of our chances on offense and be less selfish. If we can do that our goal production will go up.”

Behind four goals and an assist from Ryan Ortiz, White Plains routed host Ardsley 12-2 last Tuesday in the Tigers’ opener. Matt

Prout, Paola Medelius and Walsh tallied two goals and an assist each. Armogida, Ortiz, Medelius and Prout scored their first varsity goals. Jack Herman won 13 out of 14 face-offs.

“Being back on the field with the team after missing last season was an incredible experience,” Spista said. “Once things started to open up again, we took advantage of the opportunity during quarantine to compete against other teams which helped us in the long run. Competing all year round kept our bond strong and will continue to keep getting stronger as the season progresses.”

CARMEL saw the rise of freshman Matthew Risley, who pegged six goals in his varsity debut, a 15-9 win over Rye Neck Saturday. Can’t recollect many Carmel

freshmen that ever went for a six pack in his initial foray, could be uncharted waters. Ram senior M Ryan McDonlad added three goals and set up another for a Carmel club that is loaded with freshmen talent.

CHSAA

KENNEDY PREP senior A Jack McNerney has 24 goals and 15 assists for 39 points

through five games, an insane pace for Coach Vin Savastano’s Gaels (4-1). In his 31st year of coaching varsity lax, Savastano has reunited with former player Scott Berniker to form a great 1-2 punch.

A Heartfelt Thank You Note to Somers Grid Boss Tony DeMatteo

Fifty-Two Years, 7 Sectional Titles, 360 Wins Later, Coach D Calls it a Career



By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor
@Directrays

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor
@Directrays

Thanks Coach, D! Thank you, Tony DeMatteo, for 52 years of football grandeur, for two state titles at Roosevelt (1996) and Somers (2016), the seven Section 1 titles (between 1995-2021, including the 2021 co-title), the 360 career wins and the reclamation project you brought to the Somers football program back in 2000 before announcing your retirement last Thursday. Lives were forever changed the day Somers High hired you.

Thanks for the street cred you gave me as an aspiring cub reporter. Back when you and your buddy -- Yorktown Coach Ron Santavicca -- embraced me on football Fridays in the wee '90s, I knew I had succeeded in my field. I knew that once I had the respect of the Vince Lombardi of Section 1, I had been accepted.

But I wasn't the only one to feel that way; everybody that ever played for DeMatteo feels the same. When I asked you about why you would retire just five wins shy of the 365 victories needed to set the all-time NYS record for career coaching wins, you told me, "That number doesn't matter to me. Multiply that number by three and that's the number of kids I feel I've affected in my lifetime, and that number is more important to me."

To which I replied: "Three? Try 20!"

So $365 \times 20 = 7,300$ student athletes, which is a somewhat more appropriate number because it wasn't just his football players DeMatteo affected in a positive manner: That \$hi+ was infectious! And it spread throughout the Somers community and spilled on over into Mahopac and Yorktown. Sorry 'bout the cuss word, there, but there's no better way to explain the situation Coach DeMatteo has created at Somers, a contagious, morale-building spirit

that spawned @TuskerNation.

Most 78-year-old coaches have lost their fastball by their late 60s. Kids tend to tune out the elderly at some point (unless they have a Hallmark card filled with birthday loot), but this DeMatteo cat, born and raised in Yonkers while attending Stepinac High and Rhode Island University, could still fire that speedball by you while pushing 80.

"Not only was he the best coach, but also the most loving, inspiring, intuitive and caring human I've ever met," said former Somers QB Jeff Weiner, a key member of the 2000 title-winning Tuskers. "I love him so much and I'm so thankful for the countless talks we've had over the years that helped shape me into the person I am today and the person I will be tomorrow."

Weiner's words are merely an echo chamber for thousands of impressionable youngsters DeMatteo molded into men, and coaches into mentors. The DeMatteo coaching tree is like a redwood forest risen across Section 1: He's had more than three dozen of his former assistants and players go on to become inspiring head coaches, including great ones like Lou DiRienzo (Lincoln, New Rochelle, Iona Prep), John Castellano (Nyack, Poughkeepsie, Westlake), Jimmy Clark (John Jay-Cross River), Bill Tribou (Horace Greeley) and Santavicca (Yorktown).

His current staff is loaded with talent, including his son, Anthony Jr., who just might have what it takes to walk in his old man's shoes should Somers A.D. Roman Catalino rubber-stamp what most expect, another DeMatteo continuing the Somers tradition forged by Tony D.

Every summer, for 52 years, he dusted off the playbook of life and taught lessons in humanity and humility. Sure, the repetitious dives and waggles were sprinkled in time and time again in that Wing-T offense he made his bones on, but it was the way DeMatteo carried himself, the buttons he pushed, the tough love he served when necessary, the

Direct Rays

way others looked to him for answers in trying times, the way others emulated him and snuck a learned peak when things went right, as it often did, that mattered most.

"Coach DeMatteo is the epitome of a pinnacle leader,"

said 2016 All-NYS stud lineman Nick Gargiulo, now playing at Yale. "His impact on the Somers community is immeasurable.

It was never about winning. It was about developing future leaders and creating an environment where everyone is valued. Coach DeMatteo built a culture of excellence over his career and allowed his players to be a part of it. I'm forever grateful that I had the opportunity to play for such a great coach, and I certainly wouldn't be where I am today without him."

The 360 victories were just icing on the cake he baked, whether it was an inner-city slice of pie he dished out for 30 years and 208 wins at Yonkers-based Roosevelt High, or an upper-crust pastry served for 22 years and 152 triumphs in Somers... every bit of it icing! Because what mattered most was the soulful delivery that touched the hearts of thousands of student athletes -- from astronauts to doctors -- thousands of families and just about everybody DeMatteo connected with, including the 2020-21 Tuskers, which were recently crowned Section 1 Class A co-champions after a 17-14 win over John Jay CR.

DeMatteo suspected this year's team as having the potential similar to past title winners, but the COVID-19 pandemic canceled the state tournament, pushed the season from September to March and shortened it to just six games. Fittingly, Somers won all six, outscoring opponents 176-29, and might have had the potential to set DeMatteo up for the record-breaking win under normal circumstances. Instead, the abbreviated 6-0 season left DeMatteo with a career record of 360-115-4.

"Don't worry about winning and losing, win more than you lose, but help people along



A profile in coaching excellence for 52 years, new adventures await recently-retired Somers grid Coach Tony DeMatteo.

the way, because it's the greatest feeling in the world," DeMatteo said. "People have been very good to me and my family, so I'm simply returning the favor, doing what I can to make a favorable impression.

"Football has been very good to me, so it was an emotional decision," DeMatteo admitted, "but I'm done. I'm going to enjoy life now, with my wife and my family, who I love dearly. I've accomplished just about everything I could accomplish. I want to go and see the grandkids play and just be grandpa now, so I won't be joining another staff or anything like that."

The last meaningful thing Tony DeMatteo ever did while walking off a football field as a Section 1 grid coach was hug his loving wife, Patti, and, yeah, that gives them both all the street cred they deserve. It's time to fully commit to being the splendid father you've always been, the grandpa those youngins adore and the superb great-grandpa you have the potential to be... you've earned every bit of it, sir. Go ahead, splurge, grab the best lawn chair on the market, kick back and soak it all in #NewAdventuresAwait.



Somers grid Coach Tony DeMatteo looks his wife, Patti, in the eyes knowing full well this would be their final rendezvous.



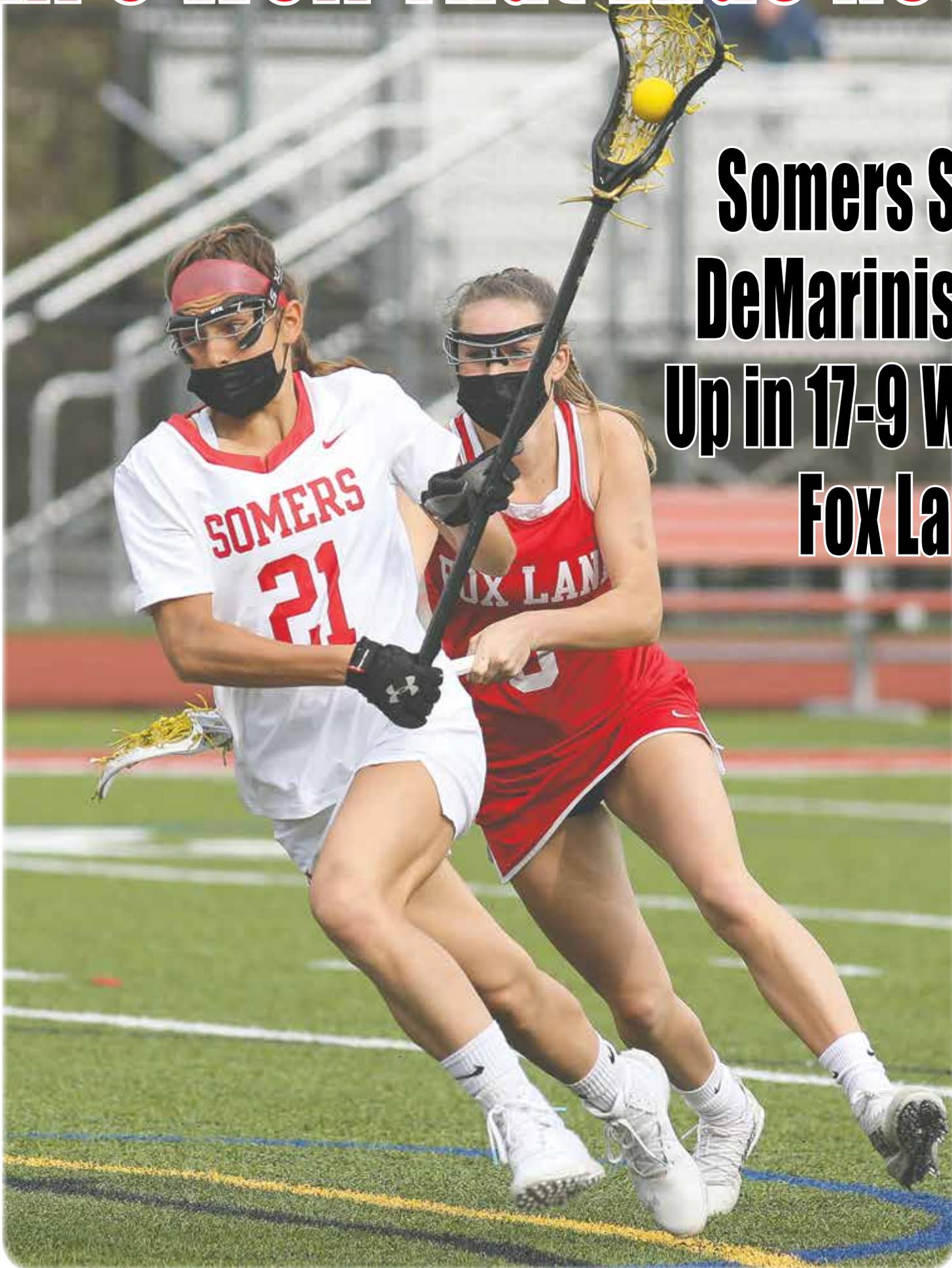
Somers Coach Tony DeMatteo (L) retired last Thursday, possibly opening the door for his son, Anthony, to assume the reins of the Tuskers.



Fittingly, Somers Coach Tony DeMatteo shares one of his final coaching moments with John Jay Coach Jimmy Clark, a DeMatteo disciple.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

All's Well That Ends Noelle!



**Somers Senior
DeMarinis Steps
Up in 17-9 Win over
Fox Lane**

ROB DIANTONIO PHOTO

Somers senior Noelle DeMarinis (21) attacks the cage as Fox Lane's Alix Riley defends in Tuskers' 17-9 win last Wednesday when DeMarinis would score two goals and set up another for the rising Tuskers... see Girls' Lax Notebook