Crown Jules!
Yorktown Finds Treasure Trove in Tourney Title Win over Lakeland

Led by tournament MVP Julianna “Jules” Vano (8), the stoked Yorktown Cornhuskers ready to swarm their goalie Erisa Kranasigi, who made a monster save in the penalty kick session of overtime, before the Huskers won the title in the second round of PK’s. Technically, the game goes down as a regular season tie, but it was Yorktown who posed with the championship hardware last Saturday at Charlie Murphy Field... see Focus on Girls Soccer
Cohen, Javorsky Lead Bobcats to Triumph of Westlake

By Andy Jacobs

A lot has changed since the Byram Hills and Westlake football teams met nearly five months ago in the Section 1, Class B championship game. But one thing remained the same when the teams resumed their rivalry on Saturday afternoon — the outcome.

With senior quarterback Jared Cohen throwing for two touchdowns and rushing for two others and junior running back Gavin Javorsky accumulating nearly 200 yards on the ground in a breakout performance, the Bobcats rolled to a convincing 41-7 rout of the host Wildcats, who found themselves trailing by three touchdowns at halftime and never recovered after that.

“It feels great,” said new Byram Hills head coach Simon Berk shortly after earning his first victory at the Bobcats’ helm. “We lost a tough, physical game last week against Ardsley, so to be able to come out and force our will on the ground, especially, I think set the tone for these kids. It let ’em know they could have a good day.”

That good day began with the Bobcats marching 71 yards in a 16-play opening drive that used up over seven minutes. Cohen put Byram on the board with a one-yard run and it was picked off by George Gjelaj. The Bobcats took over at their own 45 and soon outraced everyone down the left sideline for an electrifying 55-yard touchdown. The PAT was no good, but with 10:15 to go in the half there was no good, but with 10:15 to go in the half.

“Yeah, momentum is real at all levels, especially in high school sports,” said Berk. “You let a home team, especially one with a lot of pride, think they can continue to compete and things can go south pretty quickly.”

The Wildcats got the ball to start the second half and advanced the ball down to the Byram 29-yard line, but on third-and-11, quarterback Anthony Arrichiello, who had run for three TDs in the season-opening win over Putnam Valley, had his passed tipped and it was picked off by George Gjelaj. The Bobcats took over at their own 45 and soon ended any doubt about the outcome.

Their nine-play drive ended when Cohen returned from a one-play absence on third-and-22 and promptly tossed a high-arching pass to a wide-open Sean Siegel in the right corner of the end zone for another 31-yard touchdown. With Weiler’s kick, Byram’s lead grew to 27-0 with 4:20 remaining in the third quarter.

Westlake did manage to answer with its only points of the day on the next possession, getting a 55-yard run down the right sideline from Arrichiello to the Bobcats’ 11, followed by a 16-yard touchdown run from Glen Ahern. Josh Gelman’s PAT narrowed the Wildcat deficit to 27-7 with 33 seconds left in the third quarter.

The Bobcats added their fifth touchdown of the day just over three minutes into the final quarter as Cohen capped a seven-play, 44-yard drive with an eight-yard run. They struck again moments later when another Arrichiello pass was tipped and intercepted by junior defensive back Colin McManus, who ran 15 yards along the right sideline for another Byram touchdown, much to the delight of his giddy teammates.

“Our job is just to get better every day, get better every day,” said Berk, who took over a team with virtually no returning starters after the memorable undefeated spring season. “There’s a bunch of juniors who didn’t play a great deal last year and even the seniors didn’t see a lot of time. It was such a senior-laden team last spring that a lot of guys came in pretty raw.”

Westlake head coach Jon Castellano certainly knows the feeling. He, too, is faced with the daunting task of starting over with new faces all over the field.

“We’re so young,” he said. “As I told everybody, we graduated 16 seniors who held down 21 starting positions. There’s one returner on defense, that’s it. We’re playing with three sophomores, we’re playing with juniors that are up from the JV, varsity that didn’t play last year. It’s no excuse. We knew this going in. I knew it when I started camp. Our job is just to get better every day, get better every day.”

Castellano is optimistic about what’s ahead for these Wildcats as they gain experience, but he also knows other games similar to Saturday’s await his team.

“When you’ve been in this business as long as I have, you just know what you have and how long it’s gonna take to develop it,” he said. “And we’re a long way away. So we’ll take our lumps. But I think we’re gonna be pretty good going into the future.”
Greeley Stays Unbeaten in Win Over Goshen Gladiators

By Andy Jacobs

Horace Greeley football fans haven’t had much to cheer about in recent years, but on Friday night they packed the home bleachers under the lights and refused to let a pesky light rain dampen their enthusiasm.

That’s because the Quakers, new members of the Independent League, are suddenly playing winning football. Just months after enduring a winless spring season, Greeley cruised to its third straight victory to start the 2021 campaign, defeating the Goshen Gladiators 21-7 in a contest that seemed all but decided by halftime.

“We’re still learning how to win. We’re not used to it,” said Quakers head coach Joe Kearns shortly after his team’s latest triumph, this one on Senior Night that was highlighted by 12th-grade quarterback Ryan Wohl’s two touchdown runs in the opening half. Another senior, running back Boden Bounds, added a third rushing TD as Greeley built a 21-0 halftime lead and never looked back.

Wohl scored on runs of eight yards midway through the first quarter and 25 yards early in the second, but it was his surprising and spectacular punt early in the game that seemed to set the tone for the evening. With the Quakers facing fourth-and-10 at their own 42-yard line on the first possession of the game, and seemingly intent on trying for an improbable first down, Wohl took the snap from center but then quickly booted the football away.

A bungled handoff sent the wet ball to the Gladiators’ 1-yard line with a minute to go on downs. The Quakers proceeded to maintain their three-touchdown lead at 5:49 remaining in the half. The Quakers’ two-point conversion attempt failed, so they had to settle for an 8-0 lead with 6:09 left in the opening quarter.

Goshen managed to cross midfield late in the quarter, but eventually turned the ball over on downs. The Quakers proceeded to go 54 yards on 10 plays, scoring again on Wohl’s 25-yard burst up the middle on a fourth down with five yards to go. One play earlier, he had connected on a key 10-yard pass to junior CJ Hessert. The point-after kick by Nate Tucker gave Greeley a 15-0 lead with 9:48 to go before halftime.

Asked about the versatility of Wohl, who had completed passes to three different receivers on the Quakers’ first touchdown drive, Kearns said, “He’s unbelievable. He’s a dual threat, and he’s a really smart kid. And he’s actually one of the nicest kids in the school. Everybody likes him because he knows how to treat people.”

The Gladiators responded by advancing the ball all the way down to the Greeley 23-yard line, but then the soggy conditions contributed to more adversity for Goshen. A bobbled handoff sent the wet ball to the turf where it was recovered by the Quakers’ Ashton Samkoff at the Quaker 26. Bounds ran for 12 yards on first down, then Wohl bolted down the right sideline for 54 yards on a third-and-six play.

Bounds immediately followed by running right and lunging across the goal line for a four-yard touchdown. Tucker added the PAT and Greeley’s lead ballooned to 21-0 with 5:49 remaining in the half. The Quakers maintained their three-touchdown lead at halftime because a big Goshen threat stalled at the Greeley 10-yard line with a minute to go in the second quarter.

Though the Quakers never scored again the rest of the night, it hardly mattered. Goshen was kept off the scoreboard until a Greeley fumble early in the fourth quarter set up a 17-yard touchdown run by Michael Flores that turned out to be too little and late.

“As long as we win the game, I don’t care about the shutout,” said Kearns, who pointed out that his players had something to do with the Gladiators’ problems hanging onto the football.

“The fumbles definitely played a role,” he said. “But we also teach that. We rip for the ball. We’re trying to do that every week and this week we were able to get some takeaways, which was nice.”

Next for the surging Quakers is a Saturday evening game at Peekskill’s Torpy Field where they will try for a fourth consecutive win. Is Kearns surprised by what his players have done so far?

“I don’t know what to expect, ever,” he answered. “I’m happy to be 3 and 0, but I’m not satisfied. We’re not playing clean football yet, so we have more work to do.”
Jasmine Powell of Fox Lane makes contact on a forehand return during the second-singles match last week at Greeley.

Pleasantville freshman Erik Nanaj looks for an open teammate as he controls the ball in the second half of the win over North Salem.

Fox Lane’s Ally Waldman follows through on a backhand in her match at first singles last Tuesday afternoon at Greeley.

Sarah Lippin of Greeley watches as her forehand volley clears the net in an easy win at third singles last Tuesday afternoon against Fox Lane.

Greeley’s Ella Fink smacks a backhand return in her 6-4, 3-6, 10-5 victory at first singles last Tuesday against Fox Lane.

Pleasantville junior Luke LaMagna races up the field with the ball in the second half of the Panthers’ 4-0 win over North Salem.

Pleasantville senior Rainer Duchmanh takes the ball right down the middle of the field in the second half of the 4-0 Panther win over North Salem last week.

Westlake sophomore Dylan Pray considers his options during the 8-0 victory over the Pawling Tigers on Wednesday afternoon.

S-4

Sports

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

SPORTS SCENE
Martin Sunjic of Westlake prepares to boot the ball in the first half of the easy home victory over Pawling last week.

Ryan Jee Kang of Pleasantville gets set to pass to a teammate in last Wednesday afternoon’s home game.

Westlake senior forward Alex Guaman moves the ball near midfield in last Tuesday afternoon’s game vs. Pawling.

Horace Greeley second-singles player Coco Baek lines up a backhand during a straight-sets win over visiting Fox Lane last week.

Westlake standout Gianluca Ruggiero controls the ball in the first half of the Wildcats’ 8-0 rout of visiting Pawling last Wednesday.

Weston Coleman of Pleasantville prepares to settle the ball during last Wednesday’s victory over visiting North Salem.

Fox Lane third-singles player Sadie Vandercar returns a shot in her match against Greeley’s Sarah Lippin last Tuesday afternoon.

Ryan Jee Kang of Pleasantville gets set to pass to a teammate in last Wednesday afternoon’s home game.

Westlake senior forward Alex Guaman moves the ball near midfield in last Tuesday afternoon’s game vs. Pawling.

Westlake senior Isaiah Ortiz kicks the ball toward the center of the field in last Tuesday afternoon’s home win.

Ari Livne of Pleasantville pursues the ball during the Panthers’ home win over North Salem last Wednesday.
A first-half downpour created a slugfest at White Plains High School on Friday night, where the Tigers overcame the Roy C. Ketcham Indians 40-12 in a bitterly fought contest that was much more competitive than the final score indicated.

Facing a tough defense and surprisingly stubborn offense that sought to grind the Tigers down through attrition, White Plains remained within a score of being overtaken for the majority of the game, only running away with the contest in the fourth quarter when the Tigers were able to score three touchdowns.

“We played a full four-quarter team game,” said Tigers head coach Mike Lindberg. “I feel everyone contributed. Guys were asked to step up and they did. I’m proud of our kids and really proud of our second group. They struggled last week and this week they really got in and did a good job.”

The Tigers got off to a sluggish start, with an offense that couldn’t quite get the ball moving and a defense that gave up a 68-yard touchdown run on Ketcham’s second possession, and fell behind 6-0 in the first quarter.

Quarterback Jay Biondi then kicked the offense into gear, connecting with Danny Lasalle on a key touchdown toward the end of the first quarter to give the Tigers the go-ahead score. The chemistry between Biondi and Lasalle has been stellar so far this year; in week one, the duo connected for 92-yards and two touchdowns.

Seeing the offense score seemed to ignite the Tigers’ defense, which was able to extend the White Plains lead on a 52-yard pick-six by Isaiah Graham.

Ketcham responded with a 25-yard touchdown pass on a fourth and long, but their Indians’ celebration was cut short when Biondi and Lasalle once again connected in the end zone with 30 seconds left in the quarter, putting the Tigers up 21-12 going into halftime.

After both teams went scoreless throughout the third, the Tigers poured it on in the game’s final quarter by scoring three touchdowns, two of which were secured by Nicolas Spista, who also ran for 64 yards while filling in for the team’s lead back, Eli Pierre.

“You know a win like that really wakes me up,” said Spista. “We struggled a bit at first, but we came out, overcame that adversity. We just pushed through everything. “I was on the line and got some great blocks, plus we had success all week at practice and that translated into the game. We had great coaching and everybody out here gave 100 percent on every down.”

Biondi is also proving to be a dual-threat on the field. In addition to passing for 62-yards and two touchdowns, he ran for 188 yards on 15 attempts.

The Tigers improved to 2-0 on the season after trouncing Ossining High School last week 34-6. On Saturday, the Tigers will travel to Port Chester to take on the winless Rams.

Nicolas Spista of White Plains ran for 64 yards and a pair of touchdowns in Friday night’s win over Ketcham.

White Plains’ Danny Lasalle grabs a touchdown pass in the corner of the end zone during the first half vs. visiting RCK.

White Plains’ Alivia Alexander moves the ball up the field in the first half of last Tuesday’s 4-1 loss to Scarsdale in the title game of the 2021 Somers Tournament.

Sophia Emmert surveys the field as she controls the ball in last week’s game vs. Scarsdale.

Joely O’Rourke of White Plains gets set to send the ball up the field during first-half action in the title game of the Somers Tournament last Tuesday.

White Plains senior Sherlin Garcia searches for an open teammate in the Tigers’ tournament loss to Scarsdale last Tuesday evening.

It was a disappointing finish to the Somers Tournament for the Tigers’ Greta Brooks (left) and Stella Gould as Scarsdale won the title game 4-1.
Yorktown Defeats Hen Hud, 6-2, Takes Tourney Title, Popovic MVP

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

In the opening round of the Yorktown Tournament both HEN HUD and YORKTOWN needed extra time to advance to the finals, but when the two met in Saturday’s title tilt, it was the host Huskers who took control midway through the first half to post a 6-2 title-clinching win.

Peter Tinaj (2 G, 1A) and tourney MVP George Popovic (1G, 2A) paced the Huskers, who also saw Nick Varela (2A), Derek Belloff-Davis (1G), Ryan Tomeny (1G) and Chris Coppola (1G) contribute to the attack, which was slow to start but hot to finish, according to first-year Coach Zoran Milejevic. Husker Mason Murphy and Sailor Tyler Robinson (1G) were named all-tournament.

It was Robinson’s hat trick that led to the Sailors’ 4-3 win over RCK. The Sailors (2-3) also saw Charley Corrado score once and set up another.

The Huskers (3-0-1) saw senior stud Popovic score an unassisted goal before setting up Belloff-Davis with the equalizer, which eventually led to PKs. Husker snipers were slow to start but hot to finish, according to first-year Coach Zoran Milejevic. Husker Mason Murphy and Sailor Tyler Robinson (1G) were named all-tournament.

The level of soccer in this area has absolutely exploded,” Hourahan exclaimed! “Three Class A teams are in the state final four, a first. In Class AA, Brewster is also a finalist. The depth within Class A is unreal and with the possibility of a new school, Yorktown, in town, the future is bright.”

Yorktown then whipped Briarcliff for a Class A title, and with it, an automatic entry into the state final four. “We applied a lot of pressure in Brewster’s attacking third and had numerous shots throughout the match,” Peekskill Coach Jonathan Lasilo said as his team improved to 3-1. “Brewster showed hard work and determination, especially both of Brewster goalkeepers, who came up big at times with massive saves.”

Yorktown’s Derek Belloff-Davis (21) and Hen Hud’s Mateo Castro battle for possession in Huskers’ 6-2 tourney title win over Sailors Saturday.

PEEKSKILLS Alex Sapatanga got the only goal of the opening half on a penalty kick three minutes in before the Red Devils erupted for five unanswered in the second half of a 6-0 win over BREWSTER. Zion Arevalo and Dewin Choco made it 3-0 with 24 minutes to play before Johnny Morocho went all play-maker to set up the last three goals in a four-minute span. Sapatanga picked up the hat trick and Kevin Mendez had another. Red Devil G Angel Menjivar had four saves and a clean sheet. Louis Likens and Anthony Ruggiero made eight saves apiece for the Bears.

“We'll see if we can keep this level of play up,” Carmel Coach Vasily Shevelchinsky said. “We applied a lot of pressure in Brearster’s attacking third and had numerous shots throughout the match.”

Yorktown’s Harry Griff (8) gains step on Hen Hud’s David Hernandez in Huskers’ 6-2 tourney title win over Sailors Saturday.

Yorktown has a tough upcoming slate with MAHOPAC, Danny Hughes (1A) and Joel Jaime also scored for the Panthers (2-3) in their first win of the season while the Indians (0-3-1), who got a goal from Colin Waring, are still searching.

Panas followed that win up with another blowout win, taking out Brewster, 8-2, behind another four goals from Arraiano, who got an assist from his kid brother, Jake. Alex Guevara (2A), Jackson DiLorenzo (1G) and Steve Quirdumbay (1G) all found the back of the net while goalie J.P. Frucito notched six saves.

If you wondered why we listed PANAS senior Kyle Arriano in our soccer previews as one of those players with star power on the horizon, the answer came in his four-goal performance in the Panthers’ 6-1 win over MAHOPAC. Danny Hughes (1A) and Joel Jaime also scored for the Panthers (2-3) in their first win of the season while the Indians (0-3-1), who got a goal from Colin Waring, are still searching.

Panas followed that win up with another...
Blowouts Galore in Week 2: Carmel, ’Pac, Somers, ’Town Cash In

**CLASS AA**

Somers WR Trey Mancuso hauls in pass in front of Brewster DB Bryce Washington in Tuskers’ 30-6 win over host Bears Friday.

Somers junior HB Ravi Dass Jr. picks up block from FB Derek Marcus in Tuskers’ 30-6 win over host Brewster Friday.

Brewster RB Jack Jordan gets a chunk of yards in Bears’ 30-6 loss to visiting Somers Friday.

**CLASS A**

By Ray Gallagher
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

Week 2 on the Northern Westchester/ Putnam side of Section 1 witnessed a ton of gridiron blowouts, including Class A’s Somers over Brewster, 30-6; Mahopac 35-6 over Lourdes; Yorktown’s 41-0 win over Panas and Lakeland’s 41-0 setback to John Jay CR. Class AA’s Carmel whipped Spring Valley, 49-0. In Class B, Hen Hud took it to Putnam Valley, 34-14, so no matter where you went up north, you were likely to find a one-sided affair last Friday.

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**CLASS A**

Somers vs. Brewster was an intriguing matchup, given the fact that Brewster made short work of Yorktown the week before, but the host Bears had a couple of costly mistakes early, which led to short fields for the Tuskers, which led to quick scores and a hole Brewster could not dig out from.

“You have to play smart, error free ball when you play against the best teams in the section like Somers, and we just didn’t do that,” Brewster Coach Ed Mulvihill said. “Their kicking game is a weapon and we made some mental errors that hurt us: Starting field position inside of our 10 three times. Hard to mount a drive of 90-plus yards against anyone, much less Somers. They are a complete team and will be in the hunt for a championship in the end. We have some work to do and some injuries to overcome, but our kids are motivated and the coaching staff loves to be around them. It’s a long season and we will work hard at getting better each week.”

Somers’ opening kickoff by junior K Luke Savino went along the right sideline and was batted out of bounds by the Bears, who began their first drive from the seven yard line and went three and out. Somers took that short field, and went 44 yards in nine plays, capping the drive with a five-yard pass to Matt Kapica from QB Matt Fitzsimmons (8 of 15 passes for 99 yards).

Savino missed the PAT but made up four via ground.

Ram QB Kevin Dall hit on both his pass attempts to WR Andrew Fiore (90 yards receiving), each of which found paydirt. Thomas Keating rushed nine times for 108 yards and a score while Josh Massi rushed seven times for 65 yards and a score. Keating also took a pick six to the house. Dylan Shields added four carries for 54 yards, and Jake Elner and Jeremy Smith both added a rushing score for the Rams, who will host New Rochelle Friday (7 p.m.).

**CLASS A**

Somers QB Matt Fitzsimons finds WR TJ Olifiers despite Brewster’s Jack Goliniello’s pressure in 30-6 Tusker win.

Somers FB Derek Marcus added 29 yards on six totes, breaking 75-yard TD jaunt. Somers FB Derek Marcus added 29 yards on six totes, plus a short score.

The Somers O-line was jacked to see the short fields.

“Watching our defense and special teams go to work made us tenacious,” junior C Anthony Carino said. “We love to see our teammates give us great opportunities to put the ball in the end zone. It was very rewarding watching our running backs go...

continued on next page
Mahopac senior RB Steven Perrone eludes would-be tackler on TD run for 80 yards and three TD’s while going 8 for 14 passing for 165 yards and a score. Yorktown RB Dillon Carter needed just five carries for 114 rushing yards and a score. Yorktown’s defense was led by Vincent Cappelli (10 tackles) and Vito DeBellis (7 tackles, 1 sack).

“It was huge to rebound and see the guys play the way they are capable of playing and get things going,” Yorktown boss Panetelis Ypsilantis said. “Just like life, the game of football is a series of ups and downs and you find out a lot about a person’s character when they are down. I thought there was a lot to learn from the loss week one and the players attacked this week with tremendous zeal. How hard the players worked in practice and the growth they displayed had a direct impact on how they performed in the game. Preparation was the key and we had laser focus and energy all week. They did a great job playing within the scheme and complementing each others’ play with strong team defense and offensive execution. Defensively, Vin Cappelli was stout and flying around all game. Vito DeBellis had an excellent game and made some huge plays. Our secondary, led by Jack Carlin, did a great our. Preparing the players in the room and because of the growth they displayed had a direct impact on how they performed in the game. Preparation was the key and we had laser focus and energy all week. They did a great job playing within the scheme and complementing each other’s play with strong team defense and offensive execution. Defensively, Vin Cappelli was stout and flying around all game. Vito DeBellis had an excellent game and made some huge plays. Our secondary, led by Jack Carlin, did a great job covering and in run support. In terms of our success offensively, Justin Meyreles and Dillon Carter have tremendous speed that you can’t coach.”

Mahopac junior RB Joey Koch had a big night in win over Lourdes, including a 46-yard TD jaunt.

CLASS B

HEN HUD improved to 1-1 behind RB Anthony Panaterri, who rushed for three scores, including a 52-yard jaunt as the Sailors raced out to a 34-0 lead before settling for a 34-14 win over PUTNAM VALLEY. Sailor QB Chris McGuire fired a 39-yard TD strike to WR Rocco Cappicotti and Dan Martinez added a 20-yard TD run. QB Anthony Esposito scored for the undemanding Tigers (0-2).

Examiner Area Super 7 Section 1 Grid Poll

No.1 CARMEL -- Coach Cayea’s Class AA Rams (2-0) cannot allow the New Ro’ mystique to creep into their heads and affect their game-plan and the swagger they have shown to date in Friday’s game of the week. Respect the cr@p out of the Huguenots but do not fear them.

No.2 SOMERS -- Coach DeMatteo’s Class A Tuskers (2-0) are going to have a tough road to hoe in the league they are in, but don’t be shocked if they survive and face Rye for all the Class A marbles at Arlington in late early Nov.

No.3 WHITE PLAINS - Coach Lindberg’s Class AA Tigers (2-0) showed out in their rout of RCK behind QB Jay Biondi (15 carries for 188 yards and two TD passes to Danny LaSalle). Nick Spista added eight carries for 64 yards and two touchdowns for a Tigers team that is more than just a blip on the radar and won’t be seriously tested until Week 5 against Arlington. Don’t be shocked if the Tigers roll out to a 6-0/5-1-type start before they see John Jay EF in Week 6.

No.4 MAHOPAC -- Coach Dominick DeMatteo’s Class A Indians (1-1) are starting to look like a Final 4 outfit should they stay healthy and continue this trajectory after routing Lourdes.

No.5 BYRAM HILLS -- Coach Berk’s reigning Class B champion Bobcats (1-1) turned Gavin Javorsk (232 yards of offense, including 17 carries for 188 yards and two touchdowns rushing) into a workhorse, and the kid balled out in bashing of Westlake.

No.6 PLEASANTVILLE -- Coach Becerra’s Class B Panthers (2-0) unleashed RB Kieran Cotter, who rushed for three touchdowns, in rout of Pearl River.

No.7 BREWSTER -- Coach Mulvihill’s Class A Bears (1-1) are better than they showed in loss to Somers, but still have head-to-head on Yorktown.

HM YORKTOWN -- Coach Pantelis Ypsilantis’ Class A Huskers (1-1) don’t have their typical size up front this year, but the bounce-back win over Panas was typical Yorktown.

-- Ray Gallagher
Carmel Looking to Build on 2020 Campaign, off to 2-1 Start

By Tony Pinciaro

CARMEL co-captains Kasey Lewis and Nikki McGough and their teammates are planning to build on the success the team had in 2020.

Last year, the Rams played for the Northern Westchester/Putnam Large-School field hockey title. Despite the loss to Horace Greeley, Carmel came away excited and psyched for 2021.

“Last year, we were proud to finish as runner-up,” said Lewis, a three-year varsity starter. “Last year was definitely tough, considering the pandemic, but because of amazing girls we started something big off for Carmel Field Hockey and look forward to continuing that this season.”

The Rams did just that, opening 2021 with a pair of victories -- over league foe Arlington (1-0) and Horace Greeley (2-1). Despite a loss to Lakeland, Carmel has established itself as a contender for the Section 1 Class A title and was the state runner-up.

Horace Greeley won the 2019 Section 1 title and was the state runner-up. Mahopac’s Gabby Gonzalez is chased by Somers’ Julia Vecchiarelli. Somers’ Julia Vecchiarelli looks to clear ball against pressure from Mahopac’s Gabby Gonzalez in Indians’ 2-0 loss to Indians.

“Our success last year helped us prepare for this season in that it had us motivated to work hard and build on what we accomplished last year,” McGough said. “Coming into preseason we were excited and felt good even though we had lost some key players that graduated.”

“We have a variety of girls this year, some from last season and some new girls including two sophomores,” Lewis said. “Preseason this year was definitely different then past years, especially because this is the most normal season we’ve had in a while. But I think we handled it very well, each girl working for one another creating a bond within the program both at JV and Varsity levels. Nikki and I both are so proud importantly that we could finish,” said Lewis of the win over Arlington. “With such strong, talented players like Laila Rosenquest on the offense along with Claire Bumgarner, Ashley and Nikki McGough and Gracie Sonneram playing up, we have a good chance to keep this success.”

Lewis and McGough attribute much of their success and the team’s success to veteran coach Aislinn Breslin.

“Coach Breslin has made a big effort to improve her coaching skills during the offseason,” McGough said. “She worked with Nexus and brought back tons of new drills for us to work on and better our skills. Coach Breslin has an upbeat attitude. She makes practice and games fun for all of us.”

Carmel did not have to wait long to face Greeley again. And following its win over Arlington, the Rams had confidence going against Greeley.

“It told us that we have the skill to compete against such great teams but most importantly that we could finish,” said Lewis of the win over Arlington. “With such strong, talented players like Laila Rosenquest on the offense along with Claire Bumgarner, Ashley and Nikki McGough and Gracie Sonneram playing up, we have a good chance to keep this success.”

Horace Greeley had a busy and perfect 3-0 as the young Quakers shut out Clarkstown North and Fox Lane, 4-0, and over Mahopac, 2-1.

“We have a young team and we still have a lot to work on,” Horace Greeley coach Sukhwinder Sandhu said. “Hopefully, we can improve and step up even more in the next few weeks.”

Cat Salamida had two goals and an assist against Clarkstown North. Stephanie Novick added a goal and an assist. Aidan Lane scored a goal and Hannah Mortman collected an assist. Fiona Hayes made one save.

Salamida scored Greeley’s goals against Mahopac with Mia Brown and Nina Byrne assisting. Hayes came up big in the cage with 16 saves.

Ava Jennings had Mahopac’s goal and Madison Orsini stopped five shots.

Salamida continued her torrid scoring week with two scores and an assist against Fox Lane. Emma Schwartz and Byrne also had goals while Brown, Mortman and Lane registered assists. Hayes did not make a save for her second shutout in three games.

Panas opened its week by giving first-year coach Leah DiSisto her initial varsity win in a 3-1 victory over Croton. Hayley Madden put Panas on the board and Kylie Edwards followed with two scores.

Mackenzie Schmidt assisted on Edwards’ second goal and Kate Aastrab rang up eight saves.

Aastrab made 12 saves in a 2-0 loss to Pleasantville as Caitlin Ruhmann, Maeve McCourtney assisted, and Cynthia O’Brien scored. Isabelle Baxter had two saves.

Brewster received two goals from Morgan Brace and one goal and one assist from Eva Cucinell in a 3-1 win over Panas.

Sophia Sanchez and Emily Monaco also had assists.

Schmidt converted a penalty stroke for Panas and Astrab was outstanding in goal with 19 saves.

Katie Astrab scored twice and added an assist as Putnam Valley registered its first win of the season – 4-2 over Valhalla.

Julia Carlin opened the scoring for the Tigers, assisted by Shayla Lussier. Harman scored her goals, including one on a stroke, and she assisted on Allie Granieri’s score. Kyle Reccupio made three saves.

Valhalla goals were scored by Ava De Natale and Gianna DiGilio. Kat Wolfman had an assist.

Putnam Valley dropped a 5-2 verdict to undefeated Albertus Magnus as Sara Lussier and Carlin had the goals Ava Buerkle and Granieri collected assists.

Lakeland shook off any rust it might have had after not playing in a week and improved to 4-0 with an 8-1 win over Carmel.

Emily Yazzetti and Jaden Ray each had a hat trick. Gabby Santini added two goals and Mia Smith and Yazzetti each posted two assists.

Lauren McCartin had a hat trick and Brianna Coolican added two goals in Somers’ 7-1 win over Hen Hud.

Paige Johannsen scored for Hen Hud, assisted by Caitlin PignATARO, and goalie Emily Hunt made 20 saves. The Tuskers were also knocked off by Mahopac, 2-0, in the consolation round of the Somers tournament.

Field Hockey coaches are encouraged to contact Tony Pinciaro at TFinch23@optonline.net to be included in our Field Hockey Notebook. If your team’s not included, you know why.
If you haven’t noticed, there’s been a trickle-down effect to all the wicked divisiveness within our country these days. Even our kids are feeling it.

Folks everywhere, it seems, are just hating on one another, and the in-fighting is out of control. As I stated in last week’s Direct Rays, sports have always been our unifying getaway from all the political strife this country stuffs down our throats nowadays, but things went awry across portions of Section 1 and Section 9 last Friday when, under the cover of darkness, a 16-year-old boy was stabbed to death after an Arlington High School football game. An 18-year-old former Arlington student – Nestor Ortiz-Ocampo – is sitting in a Dutchess County jail cell, charged with manslaughter after the stabbing during a large-scale, post-game brawl. Police have identified the victim as Quraan Smith, a junior at Arlington.

Police were also called to a melee at Dietz Stadium in Kingston on Friday night after the Tigers defeated visiting Saugerties, and police were also summoned to a dust-up just up the road at Hyde Park after Roosevelt fell to visiting Beacon following their football game. Other than that, we had about 30-something other Section 1 varsity football games with simple minor incidents. But the fact remains: A kid died Friday night at a high school football game in Dutchess County.

That’s a stain we can’t remove, a stain that will likely have section and state administrators convening this week. It’s a blemish that might forge a change to the high school football landscape as we know it. After dark, bad things, oftentimes, go down. School ends just before 3 p.m. and the workday for many ends between 4 and 5 p.m. most days. You give people three hours to tune up before a Friday night game and many will take advantage. Personalities change, like it or not.

These 7 p.m. Friday starts are on the clock this week. Like so many other revered rituals in our once-civil society, we might have thrown the baby out with the bath water when it comes to Friday night lights. When funding police and security for high school football games becomes an issue, taxpayers, school boards and administrators get on the same page in a hurry. When the safety of their students and the deficit in their budgets are at hand, school districts are forced to take drastic measures, which, oftentimes, are unpopular.

We can all admit: There’s nothing better for school morale than a Friday night football game, but we are supposed to put our kids first no matter what the circumstances, and the recent incidents at places like Arlington are not only bad for morale but devastating to families. I’m not calling for the end of Friday night games just yet, but society might be forcing its own hand given the lay of the land these days.

There are some high-energy rivalry evening games scheduled for this weekend, including the Yonkers Force vs. the Yonkers Brave, Dobbs Ferry vs. Hastings, Pleasantville vs. Briarcliff and everywhere else where emotions can run high. Let’s leave the machismo at home and be on our best behavior – or be prepared to reap the seeds we sow.
Somers WR Michael Bookall rises high to snare this sensational catch over Brewster DB Alex Rienzi in the Tuskers’ 30-6 win over host Brewster last Friday when Somers (2-0) took sole possession of first place in League A-North... see Grid Notebook