

# Examiner Sports

## Dass How We Roll!



RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

## Somers RB Pulls up on Nisky, Scores 3 TDs; Tuskers Headed Back to Dome in Search of 2nd NYSPHSAA Class A Title

Somers senior RB/WR Ravi Dass Jr. sheds a would-be tackler en route to snagging three TD passes from senior QB Matt Fitzsimons in the Tuskers' 35-7 romp of Section 2 champion Niskayuna in Friday's NYSPHSAA Class A semifinal at Faller Field in Middletown where the state-ranked (No.1) Tuskers (12-0) advanced to play Section 4 champion Union-Endicott for the state championship at the JMA Wireless Dome (formerly the Carrier Dome) in Syracuse at 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3 when Somers seeks its second NYS title (2016)... see Somers Grid Notebook



# Fitzsimons/Dass Unstoppable Connection in Somers' NYS Semi Win

## Tusker Duo Strike for 3 TDs, Fitz Chucks 5, Somers Rolls to Dome in Search of 2nd NYS Title

By Ray Gallagher  
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays

MIDDLETOWN - The connection between Somers QB Matt Fitzsimons and RB Ravi Dass Jr. is reminiscent – and then some – of the dynamic 2016 hookup between Tusker QB Kevin Olifers and RB Matt Pires, which says all you need to know if you follow Somers football.

Fitzsimons found Dass Jr. for three of his five TD passes in the state-ranked (No.1) Tuskers' 35-7 thrashing of Section 2 champion Niskayuna (10-3) in the Class A state semifinals at Faller Field on the campus of Middletown High School Friday night.

Somers (11-0), the 2021 NYS runner-ups to Section 4's CBA, now has a chance to make amends for its only loss the last three seasons when the Tuskers head north to Syracuse and the JMA Wireless Dome (forever the Carrier Dome in our hearts) in search of the program's second NYSPHSAA title (2016). Somers will play sixth-ranked Section 4 champion Union-Endicott for the state championship at 3 p.m. Saturday.

Somers was a two-point conversion attempt away from winning it all last year when the Tuskers were stopped with 1:19 remaining in its loss to CBA and will now appear in its third NYSPHSAA Class A final since 2016.

"I very publicly said our goal was to win a section championship, but, behind closed doors, this group spoke about our goal, which was to get back to the dome," second-year coach Anthony DeMatteo said. "It just hasn't sat right with the way it ended last year and we wanted to take another shot at it, and now we're there."

"Obviously, the first half things didn't go our way," DeMatteo added. "We've been preaching how to deal with adversity and have a relentless style of being a competitor. We had a bunch of things that didn't go our

way but I knew our kids weren't going to quit. They answered the bell and finished them when they were able to."

The Tuskers are there thanks to the Fitzsimons-to-Dass connection, which struck for the first time on the opening possession and then two more times, to give the duo a school record 15 TD strikes on the season.

"We had hoped that would be the case this year," DeMatteo said. "I think Matt is tremendous and having a guy with Ravi's speed and doing the things we're doing will only enhance that and I'm sure I'll look back in the off-season and enjoy just how special this connection is."

Fitzsimons has now tossed for a school record 2,017 passing yards while hitting 128 of 177 attempts (72.3%). Fitz's 27 TD passes in 2022 are another school record, and he's added 10 TD runs for 37 total TDs, a school record for passing and rushing scores.

"I have some incredible talent around me," said Fitzsimons, who hit on 13 of 21 for 219 yards against Nisky. "Ravi's my man! He's got tremendous speed and he's always where I need him to be. He wasn't even the intended receiver on some of those but he's just always open, so. We faced some adversity in the first half but we didn't let it affect us."

Fitzsimons, who was denied a game-winning two-point conversion in the state finals last year, won't let last year's memories affect him at the dome this weekend.

"I still have nightmares about last year," Fitzsimons admitted. "I try not to think about it any more. Honestly, I think it's helped me grow as a player and made me so much better as a player and person. We're gonna come out flying early and get it done next week."

Somers RB Luke Savino's kickoff to start the game was hung up in the wind at the Niskayuna 20 where the Silver Warriors let it lie before Mac Sullivan pounced to



Somers TE Stefan Swee (5) sets edge for RB Luke Savino in Tuskers' 35-7 NYS Class A semifinal rout of Nisky Friday in Middletown.

recover the loose ball. The short field set up Fitzsimons, who found a streaking Dass (6 catches, 89 yards) four plays later for the game's first score and a 7-0 lead after the Savino PAT.

"We had a couple of bad penalties in the first half," said Savino (17 carries for 83 yards), who later snared a 30-yard TD catch to put the Tuskers up 14-7, despite numerous uncharacteristic mistakes, including two ineligible-man-downfield penalties, which throttled any shot at a first-half runaway, though it was Fitzsimons, who connected on three more touchdown passes in the second half, two of which went to Dass.

"We corrected those mistakes," Savino added, "and as we went into the second half we were locked in. We were shooting ourselves in the foot or we would have been up more by the half. We're on to the dome! Finish the unfinished."

The Somers defense, outside of one big play, nearly pitched a shutout and limited the Silver Warriors to just 52 yards over 17 plays

in the opening 24 minutes, the bulk of which came off a 59-yard TD rush by sophomore Isaiah Linyear.

Navy-bound Somers senior Jake Polito was a massive presence after sitting out the week before.

"It was traumatic not being out here last week. I had a speech with some of the guys. It was just like, 'Thank you, I said'" said Polito, who sat out the regional overtime win over Lourdes after suffering a dislocated shoulder. "I might need some therapy after the season, but they gave me a chance to come back and play at least one more game, and now two more games. It means the world to me. Props to Kevin Mullen, our trainer, he's the best. We were doing work all week."

State-ranked (No.11) Niskayuna Coach Brian Grastorf's outfit had accomplished more than any other team had in school history since the Section II playoffs began in 1978, including its first appearance in the

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Somers D-linemen Jake Polito (L, blatantly held), Nicky Crecco (R), among others, got consistent pressure in Tuskers' Class A semifinal playoff rout of Nisky.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS



Somers QB Matt Fitzsimons has a clean pocket thanks to blocks from Matt Klee and Jake Polito (70) in Tuskers' NYS Class A semifinal rout of Nisky.





Somers RB Nick Conti gets pylon for six points in Tuskers’ 35-7 NYS Class A playoff rout of Niskayuna Friday at Middletown.

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state tournament. His club had no answers for Somers.

“That is a good football team, and they made plays,” Grastorf said. We just couldn’t get anything going against them.”

Nobody could get much going in the first half. Somers had an uncharacteristically flawed first half, drawing penalties and shooting itself in the foot over and over.

“Despite the penalties we had we knew we have a bend but don’t break mentality,”



Somers DL Ryan Cole snuffs out yet another tackle for loss with sidekick George Forbes (52) in Tuskers’ 35-7 rout of Nisky in Friday’s NYSPHSAA Class A semi.



Somebody missed a block because no way in heck Navy-bound Jake Polito should shoot gaps like he did in Somers’ 35-7 NYS Class A semifinal rout of Nisky Friday.

Dass Jr. said. “We just need a great practice week before we head off to the state championship. Shout out to my QB, I couldn’t ask for a better quarterback. Fitz is always throwing me good balls. This is a great feeling going back to the dome again.”

Davis is in rare air, having won three sectional titles and another abbreviated title (2 football, 1 baseball, plus 1 abbreviated Covid spring football season). His Tusker legacy is one that will last a lifetime.

“I’m so grateful for that,” Dass Jr. added. “We’ve had great preparation from our

coaches.”

The Tuskers will head to Syracuse Friday with one collective goal in mind. The preparation began moments after the Nisky game.

“I don’t think I need to do anything different,” Coach D said. “It was dome or bust this year and we said that behind closed doors. We’re going to have a phenomenal practice week, we’re going to dial in and go up to Syracuse for a business trip. One goal and one goal only... to come home with a state championship.”



Somers DL Ryan Cole sacks QB in Tuskers’ 35-7 rout of Nisky in Friday’s NYSPHSAA Class A semi.



# Pleasantville's Coleman, Sdao Spark NYS Class B Semifinal Win

## State-Ranked No.3 Panthers Set up Rematch with No.1 Maine-Endwell for NYS Class B Title

By Ray Gallagher  
Examiner Sports Editor @Directrays  
& Andy Jacobs

Section 2 champion Ravena/Coeymans/Selkirk's plan going into Saturday's NYSPHSAA Class B semifinal was for anybody but All-NYS Pleasantville stud Daniel Picart to beat them, and while Ravena did a decent job of containing Picart, who finished with 26 carries for 95 yards and four catches for 27 yards, the Panthers found other ways to punch their ticket to Syracuse and a second-straight trip to the state finals after a nail-biting 14-6 win at Faller Field in Middletown.

State-ranked (No.3) Pleasantville will face top-ranked defending state champ Maine-Endwell (12-0) in the Class B state

final after the Spartans posted a demonstrative 61-20 semifinal win over Batavia Saturday.

Trailing, 6-0, against No.8 Ravena (10-3), Pleasantville took its first lead when Panther QB Aidan Picart spun a 29-yard TD pass into the waiting arms of junior RB Erik Coleman. The PAT by Joe Sokich gave the Panthers a 7-6 lead they would never relinquish with 9:08 left in the second quarter.

"I thought they were definitely better than last year, but then again I thought we were as well, and it showed," Pleasantville Coach Tony Becerra said. "Back and forth, tight game. Missed opportunities for both sides, and that's the kind of game you got. There was a little bit of a sigh of relief when they missed

the extra point. That gives you options. No way we were

in panic mode (falling behind 6-0). But it was good to answer (on our next

possession)."

Pleasantville sophomore Louis Sdao then went electric, snagging a butchered punt and taking it 55 yards for a score and a 14-6 lead at 7:02 of the second quarter. Sdao finished with 10 carries for 42 yards in an eventful first half.

The young fullback, Sdao, is coming into his own, not playing like a sophomore any longer.

He looks more and more like a seasoned veteran, and just in time as the Panthers will need another weapon at the dome

"He doesn't play like a sophomore," said Becerra, noting his heads-up play on the punt return. "His football IQ and the way he plays on both sides of the ball, he plays a lot older than he is.

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Pleasantville's Louis Sdao looks to the officials after reaching the end zone on a 55-yard punt return for the Panthers' second TD in Saturday's state semifinal game.



Pleasantville sophomore fullback Louis Sdao breaks through the line of scrimmage in the first half of Saturday's Class B state semifinal vs. Section 2's Ravena.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Pleasantville star Daniel Picart has a hop in his step as he carries the football during Saturday's 14-6 Class B victory over Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk in the state semifinals.





Pleasantville senior Owen Mooney (center) starts to celebrate with teammates Erik Coleman (left) and Ryan Horgan after the Panther defense sealed Saturday's 14-6 state semifinal victory in the final minute vs. Section 2 champ Ravena.



Pleasantville head coach Tony Becerra, flanked by captains Joe Reich (left) and Thomas Cahill, poses for pictures after directing his third Panther team to the state final up in Syracuse.

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We are yelling at them to get away (from the ball), but (Sdao) is such a heady kid and took it upon himself. Thankfully, he did.”

In the third quarter, Pleasantville shot itself in the foot a couple of times, including a bad snap on 4th and 3 deep in Ravena’s territory (its 35), with 2:00 left in the third, which was preceded by Ravena’s Anthony Sanchez INT with 7:05 left in the third. Pleasantville followed that up with a fourth down stop just 51 seconds into the fourth quarter. Panther Emmet McDermott recorded an interception in the final minute to preserve the win.

“I mean it’s great to know when I’m not having my best day my teammates can help me out,” Daniel Picart said. “And especially having Louis do such great things, and only as a sophomore, is good to see. Knowing that if I can’t get the ground game going I can go to receiver to spread them out, and our hogs creating gaps for Louis to run through, is amazing and shows that we aren’t one dimensional and running through one person, which is exciting.”

Panther QB Aidan Picart hit on a tidy 13-of-19 for 149 yards and a TD. Coleman gashed his way to 73 yards on just three carries while McDermott snagged five

passes for 51 yards and added an INT on defense. Pleasantville RB/WR Daniel Picart, the All-NYS junior, was held out of the end zone for the first time in many moons.

“We had a chance, a couple times at least, to build our lead,” Coach B said. “Yeah, it’s very frustrating. We definitely dodged a bullet and, even though it’s the last game coming up next week, we’re still at a point where we need to clean things up. It would’ve been nice if we got the field goal to get a little bit of a cushion, but in the same position we’re gonna trust Joe Sokich (soph kicker) again because he’s got the foot to do it.”

The coach is counting on the experience of playing at the dome last year to have an impact this weekend against Section 4 champ Maine-Endwell in a rematch of the 2021 NYSPHSAA Class B final at noon Sunday, Dec. 4, at the JMA Wireless Dome in Syracuse. In last year’s title game, the Spartans erased a 12-point deficit and scored 21-straight points during a 21-12 win.

“It was a brand new group that went up there last year,” Becerra said. “So this year we have some veterans who have been there and hopefully they’ll treat it more like a business trip than starry-eyed.”

*ANDY JACOBS contributed to this story*



Pleasantville junior quarterback Aidan Picart throws on the run in the second half of Saturday’s state semifinal. He completed 13 of his 19 passes in the 14-6 Panther win.

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# Girls Hoops Preview 2022-2023

By Tony Pinciario

Walter Panas had a memorable 2021-22 varsity girls' basketball season, but it was the Panthers' final game that left them wanting more. The Panthers reached the Section 1 Class A final where they met an experienced Tappan Zee team, who took advantage of the young Panthers in the first half.

"We were so nervous at the beginning of the game," said senior and captain Kelsey Cregan. "In that first half, we didn't play like we normally do."

As a result, Tappan Zee established a double-digit lead in the first 16 minutes en

route to the title.

"We now know what it takes to get there and we also know how we didn't want it to go," said Cregan of the sectional final result. "With the majority of our team returning, we've been working hard all offseason so that we can change the way our season ends."

Cregan headlines an experienced group of nine returnees from a 20-4 team. Cregan, an all-league and all-conference selection last year, is joined by classmates Julia Gallinger, Sarah Chiulli and Kara Mattson.

The remaining five are sophomores who all played significant time last year, highlighted



Panas sophomore Cadence Nicholas will blow minds this winter with her two-way play.



Brewster senior Madison Dakin will take on a much larger role in 2022-23.

by guards Cadence Nicholas (all-league and all-section last year) and Sofia Tavarez (all-league and all-conference last year). Jillian Cinquina, Kiara Williams and Katie Hofmann complete the super sophomores.

The returning core and prospective new varsity players began preparation for the 2022-23 season in earnest at the onset of summer.

"We started doing workouts in the weight room, ran and got into the gym at least two times a week," Cregan explained. "It was optional, but a lot of our team showed up and worked hard. And it continued into the fall."

The additional off-season work enabled the Panthers to be ahead of schedule when the first day of practice arrived.

"We didn't need to go over drills in the same amount of time as we did last year because of all the work we did in the offseason," Cregan said. "Also, with a lot of our team returning, we all have the knowledge from last year. We are helping the new players and this has allowed us to add new plays and expand our skill set."

"What I've seen through preseason is that everyone worked on their game, individually,

and everyone has improved so much from last year whether it was their skill set or confidence."

Panas Coach Matt Evangelista, in his 12th season, has made sure his team will be prepared to play every game. Evangelista has stacked the schedule with the elite of Section 1 across Class AA, Class A and Class B.

"I made our schedule tough to challenge ourselves," Evangelista said. "We are playing Scarsdale, Tappan Zee, Harrison, Ardsley, Pelham, Brewster, Putnam Valley (in the Slam Dunk Showcase) and Albertus Magnus. Our league games with Lakeland and Hen Hud are always challenging and entertaining."

"We want to build off of the success of last season. Our goal is to try to make the Final Four (County Center hopefully), see if we can be playing our best basketball and try to win the Section. Class A is very deep with a lot of quality teams."

Cregan and her teammates are up to the challenge.

"The fact that coach wanted to challenge us

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shows we are all on the same page,” Cregan said. “It will be more of an accomplishment to get to our final goal by playing and hopefully beating the good teams.”

Panas opens the season, 12/8, against Edgemont. The Panthers will then play in the Somers Tournament with Mahopac, Ossining and the Tuskers.

## BREWSTER BEARS

**Coach:** Mike Castaldo (11th year)

**2021-22 record:** 16-4.

**2021-22 Sectional result:** Lost to Pearl River in the first round.

**Graduated seniors from the 2021-22 team:** 3.

**Top returnees:** seniors Madison Dakin; Margo Cunningham, juniors Jordan Niles, Jr., Bri Franklin, Jr., Bre Washington, Sr.

**Key newcomers:** Kiara Rodriguez, Jr., Olivia Francis, So., Lauren Leon, 8th-grader.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** I'm really looking forward to see who is going to step up and lead us. We need to rebound and we need to defend with a purpose. The seniors really need to step up and lead us this year. We are a new team with a new identity. We are going to rely on the seniors, heavily.

**Noteworthy:** 2022 graduate Grace Galgano is the only Brewster girls' basketball player with 1,000 points and 1,000 rebounds. She is playing for Roberts Wesleyan and was recently named the East Coast Conference Rookie of the Week.

## BRIARCLIFF BEARS

**Coach:** Denise Hamlin (second year, 37th overall)

**2021-22 record:** 14-8

**2022 Section results:** Lost to Irvington in a Class B second-round game.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team, including starters:** Three.



Panas senior captain Kelsey Cregan figures to be a dominant paint presence in 2022-23.

**League favorite:** Westlake.

**Section favorite:** Putnam Valley, Irvington.

**Top returnees:** Cat Carrafiello, Sr., 5-7, SG (2021-22: All-Section, All-League); Caroline Barbalato, Sr., 5-3, PG (2021-22: All-Section, All-League); Adriana Scanga, Jr., 5-8, F; Nico Vargish, Jr., 5-8, F; Ava Makaron, So., 5-6, G; Fatimah Islam, Sr., 5-7, F.

**Key newcomers:** Riley Hite, Sr., 5-5, G; Ava Swidler, Sr., 5-3, G; Jayna Borelli, Jr., 5-6, G; Kristen Friedel, So., 5-5, G; Gemma Fante, Fr., 5-4, G; Lila Dumas, Fr., 5-5, F.

**Team strength:** Team chemistry.

**Question marks:** How to replace senior captain Dylan Zednik, who will miss the season because of a severe injury?

**Coach's outlook on the season:** My goal is to get the girls to play at their best, continue to grow together as a team and have fun.

**Noteworthy:** Briarcliff opens the season, 12/8, hosting its annual Briarcliff Boys and Girls Tournament. ... Prior to becoming the varsity coach, Hamlin was the Briarcliff JV coach for 20 years.

## BYRAM HILLS BOBCATS

**Coach:** Tara Ryan (sixth year, 10th overall)

**2021-22 record:** 11-9

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in the Class A Quarterfinal round.

**League favorite:** Ardsley, Byram Hills.

**Section favorite:** Putnam Valley, Hastings.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** 2.

**Top returning players:** Grace Corelli, Jr., G (2021-22 stats: 13.5 ppg, All Section Honorable Mention); Kelsey Vaquero, Sr., G; Carmen Parratta, Sr., F; Kiley Blackmar, Jr., G/F; Antonia DiVincenzo, So., G/F.

**Key newcomers:** Haley Sirkin, So.; Luciana Parratta, 8th-grade; Riley Morris, So.

**Team strengths:** Solid returning group, guard-heavy and ready to run.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** We have a great group of returning players. We will look to the new players for energy and consistent performances. Grace Corelli will have the ball in her hands once again and is ready to take on Class B.

**Noteworthy:** Ryan achieved her 100th win in sectionals last year. ... Byram Hills is a Class B school this year after playing Class A last year.

## FOX LANE FOXES

**Coach:** Kris Matts (12th year)

**2021-22 record:** 6-16

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in a Class AA second-round game.

**League favorite:** White Plains.

**Section favorite:** Pelham.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Eight.

**Top returning players:** Lauren Antolino, Jr., 5-6, G; Maddie Broghammer, Sr., 5-3, G; Riley New, Fr., 5-4, G; Morgan Clinton, Fr., 5-8, F; Lily Moore, Jr., 5-6, G; Hannah Getman, Sr., 5-4, G; Nell Silverman, Sr., 5-5, G/F; Tess DiCarlo, Sr., 5-10, C.

**Key newcomers:** Cora Moore, Fr., 5-7, G; Ava Shuster, So., 5-9, F; Kamiryn Boniello, Fr., 5-6, F.



Panas sophomore Sophia Tavaréz is about to light Section 1 on fire this winter.

**Team strengths:** Our youth brings with it a fearlessness, an energy, and an enthusiasm that permeates the entire program.

**Question marks:** After graduating eight seniors, including four starters, it will be interesting to see how long it takes last year's role players to step into more prevalent roles, and how long it will take new talent to learn the system.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** Being that we are in a hybrid league, we don't truly get the advantage of dropping into class A this season. So, we really want to build on last year's success by not only making the playoffs, but advancing further in them.

**Noteworthy:** Fox Lane opens the season against Ramapo. ... Fox Lane and archrival Horace Greeley are back in the same league. ... Fox Lane will have a showcase game against John Jay Cross River.

## HEN HUD SAILORS

**Coach:** Ken Sherman (14th season)

**2021-22 record:** 8-14

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost to Mahopac in a Class A Quarterfinal game.

**Graduated seniors from the 2021-22 team:** Three.

**Top returnees:** Maddy Porter, Sr., F; Kaitlyn Raguso, So., F (2021-22: 15 ppg, 9 rpg, All-League, All-Section); Alexa Robinson, Jr., G; Hailey Pearson, Jr., F; Kayla

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Tresgallo, Jr., F; Kayla McCarthy, So., PG Marin Quigley, So., G/F.

**Key newcomers:** Carmen Marino, So., F; Elyse Smith, Fr., G; Kate Stratton, Fr., F.

**Team strengths:** We are going to look to push the ball up the floor and get some easy looks at the basket. Having our leading scorer back from last season (Kaitlyn Raguso) is a huge plus and having many returning players with varsity experience is a huge asset. We will look to Kayla McCarthy to run our offense with limited turnovers and look for an added punch from Robinson, Pearson, and Porter.

**Question mark:** Our major question mark is can we limit our turnovers we had from last season? As a team we just had way too many. We are a team that hustles and plays very good defense, so if we can limit the number of possessions our opponents have against us I will like our chances.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** Our first goal is to have more wins than last season and possibly win our first couple of tournaments we are in early in the season.

**Noteworthy:** Former Hen Hud standout Caitlin Weimar, a leader on Hen Hud's 2020 Section 1 Class A title team, is a starter for Boston University. ... Hen Hud opens the season, 12/1, in the Sleepy Hollow Holiday Tournament.

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## HALDANE BLUE DEVILS

**Coach:** Ed Crowe (first year)

**2021-22 record:** 9-12

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in a Class C semifinal.

**League favorite:** Putnam Valley.

**Section favorite:** Open.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Five.

**Top returning players:** Mairead O'Hara, Sr., F; Betsy Cates, Sr., C; Amanda Johanson, Sr., G/F; Camilla McDaniel, Jr., G.

**Key newcomers:** Chloe Rowe, Sr., G/F; Marisa Peters, Fr., G.

**Team strengths:** Competitiveness, and the amount of effort they show on a daily basis.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** The goal for us is to get better everyday. The hope is to play competitive basketball and be in the mix for a sectional championship.

**Noteworthy:** Haldane's season-opener is against Brewster, 11/30... Haldane will play Section 9's Beacon. The Bulldogs were a Section 1 school for many years.

## HORACE GREELEY QUAKERS

**Coach:** Sarah Schum (sixth year)

**2021-22 record:** 4-16

**2022 Sectional results:** Loss – Class A out-bracket game.

**League favorite:** White Plains.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Five.

**Top returnees:** Emma Rose, Sr., 5-8, G (four-year starter); Bella Schulman, Jr., 5-8, G; Ava Gusba, Jr., 5-8, F; Allie Mosca, So., 5-7, G; Claire Reynolds, So., 5-7, G; Carolina Negrin, So., 5-11, F.

**Key newcomers:** Meredith Feiner, Jr., 5-10, F; Georgia Sacks, So., 5-5, G.

**Team strengths:** Athleticism and good perimeter shooters.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** We are excited about this season. We have a nice mix of veterans and newcomers. We have a bunch of overall athletes mixed in with girls that really put a lot of time, effort and energy into basketball 12 months out of the year. As long as we do not get in our own way it could be a really great season.

**Noteworthy:** Horace Greeley opens the season, 12/1, in the Lakeland Tournament.



Mahopac senior swing Lauren Beberman should fill hoops with buckets for new-look Indians in winter of 2023.

RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

# Girls Hoops Notebook



Lakeland's Sarah Devane and Panas' Julia Gallinger will be prominent Class A force in Section 1 this season.

... The Quakers are back in a league with archrival Fox Lane. ... Schum was a starter and captain on Lakeland's 2007 undefeated State Class A champion team along with Pearl River Varsity assistant girls' basketball coach Amy Voelkel, and Rosemarie Fazio. Voelkel and Fazio would also win a 2006 Class A state field hockey title.

## LAKELAND HORNETS

**Coach:** Miranda Mangan (ninth year)

**2021-22 record:** 18-4 (Shared the league title with Panas).

**Sectional result:** Lost in the quarterfinal round to Mahopac.

**League favorite:** Panas.

**Section favorite:** Tappan Zee (2022 Section 1 Class A champion) or Panas (2022 Section 1 Class A runner-up).

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Three.

**Top returnees:** Nichole Ljuljic, Jr., 5-5, PG (2021-22: All-League); Ava Lugo, Jr.,

5-8, G (2021-22: All-Conference); Grace Hahn, Jr., 5-10, F; Kellie Sullivan, Jr., 5-6, G; Sarah Devane, So., 5-10, G/F; Amanda Franco, So., 5-4, G.

**Key newcomers:** Celeste Pagliaroli, Sr., 5-5, G; Yennifer Concepcion, Sr., 5-5, F; Emily Hahn, Fr., 5-7, G; Riley Waters, 8th-grader, 5-5; G.

**Team strengths:** We return a core group of experienced players that saw a lot of action last season. All of the returning players need to take on a new role and step up both offensively and defensively for us to be successful. We will find our strengths and style of play as the season progresses.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** I hope that we have a cohesive unit that can withstand a tough schedule and compete in every game. Everyone has to be all in. Every time we step on the court we need to push each other to make sure we are better than we were the day before. We want to be playing our best basketball at the end of the

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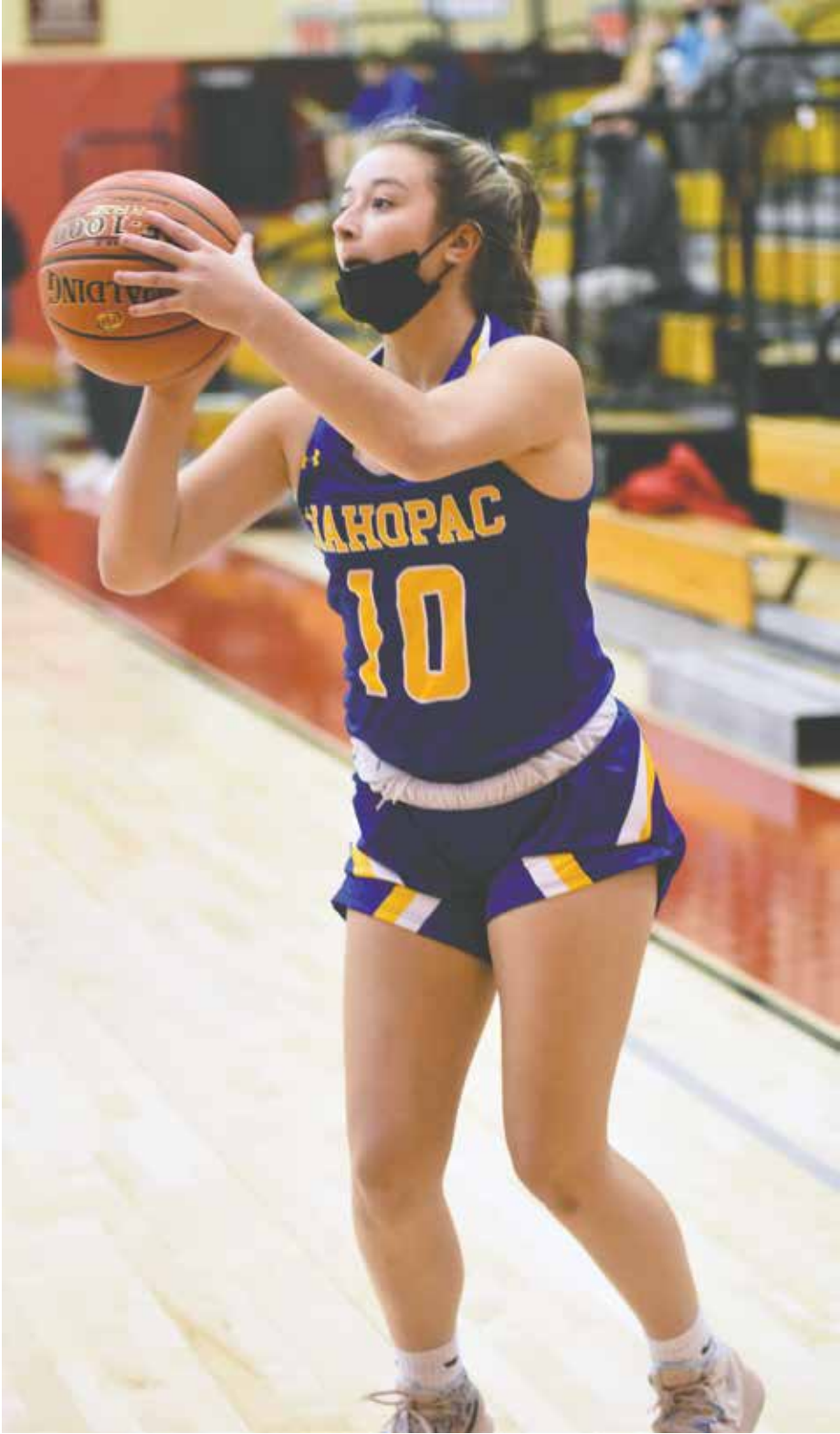
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season.  
**Noteworthy:** Lakeland opens the season hosting its Relay For Life Tournament, 12/1 and 12/3. Lakeland plays Croton and Horace Greeley faces Clarkstown North, Thursday, 4:30 and 6:30, respectively. The consolation game is at 10 a.m. and the title game, noon, Saturday. ... Tyler Hormazabal, a 2022 graduate, is playing at Rochester Institute of Technology. ... Pagliaroli was an all-section and all-state selection in field hockey.

MAHOPAC INDIANS

**Coach:** Mairead Hynes (first year)  
**2021-22 record:** 16-4  
**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in Class A semifinal.  
**League favorite:** R.C. Ketcham.  
**Section favorite:** Tappan Zee (2022

Section 1 Class A champion).  
**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Three.  
**Top returnees:** Lauren Beberman, Sr., G/F; Jess Sterben, Sr., F; Gianna Rispoli, Sr., G; Piper Klamer, Sr., G/F; Christina Rush, Sr., G.  
**Key newcomers:** Julianna Mangione, Jr., G; Caily Salon, So., F; Mady Ford, Fr., G; Niamh Kelleher, Fr.; G; Fiona Kelleher, Fr., G.  
**Team strengths:** Athleticism, shooting.  
**Coach's outlook on the season:** I want to have my team continue to improve throughout the season. We want to build a cohesive team with our eight returnees and five newcomers. I'm excited to take over the program and continue to grow a committed and competitive environment.  
**Noteworthy:** Mahopac and archival



Mahopac senior G Kristina Rush is among the best three-point shooters in the region.



Perhaps the top player in Section 1 in 2022-23, Putnam Valley's Rhode Island-bound senior Eva DeChent has unfinished business to settle.

Carmel reside in the same league this year and will play twice.

OSSINING PRIDE

**Coach:** Dan Ricci (32nd year)  
**2021-22 record:** 15-7  
**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in Class AA final to Our Lady of Lourdes.  
**League favorite:** White Plains.  
**Section favorite:** Albertus Magnus.  
**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Four.  
**Top returnees:** Angelica Rios, Sr., 5-8, G/F; Claire Schnecker, Sr., 5-7, G.  
**Team strengths:** Work ethic.  
**Question marks:** Go-to scorer.  
**Coach's goals and outlook on the season:** We hope to improve every day and be competitive in every game. We have a young team with only three seniors who will need to provide good senior leadership for us to have a successful season.

YORKTOWN CORNHUSKERS

**Coach:** Kristi Dini (first year at Yorktown, 10th overall)  
**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Six.  
**Top returnees:** K.J. Judge; Olivia Lucas.  
**Key newcomers:** Nicole Boccia, Sr.; Martina Prybylski, Sr.; Blera Gashi.  
**Team strengths:** The work ethic is off the charts so that's always a strength. In just two weeks our defense is really coming together so that will be huge for us.  
**Coach's outlook on the season:** The team is very new. We graduated six seniors and lost two big-time contributors to ACL injuries this fall. All of our newcomers are phenomenal athletes who have impressed us in practice so we're really excited about them all and still figuring out rotations and roles. Our goal, win or lose, is to always be the most-prepared team on the court, to bring energy and have fun. It's a really

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Putnam Valley junior G Nai Torres will take on a significant role for the 2023 NYS Class B title hopeful Tigers.

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amazing group of kids. They want it, they want to work hard, they do bring great energy, and I'm really excited to continue to work with them, to grow with them, and go to battle with them.

**Noteworthy:** Prior to Yorktown, Dini coached at Somers and her alma mater, Putnam Valley. Dini guided Putnam Valley to its first Section 1 girls' basketball title in 2020. In March 2021 (the Covid year), Putnam Valley defeated Panas in the Northern Westchester/Putnam Small-School championship game.

## PLEASANTVILLE PANTHERS

**Coach:** Kelly Guarino (first year)

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in the Class B Quarterfinal Round.

**League favorite:** Briarcliff.

**Section favorite:** Putnam Valley.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Four.

**Top returning players:** Meghan Raefski, So., 5-4, G (2021-22 stats: 12 ppg, All-League); Kayla Collins, Sr., 5-10, F.

**Team strengths:** Offensive rebounding.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** The goal is to be a hard-working, gritty team. We want to continue to change the culture every day and prioritize the importance of team basketball.

**Noteworthy:** Guarino was a four-year varsity player at Albertus Magnus High School and coach Pat Buckley. Guarino played at New Jersey Institute of Technology and was an assistant coach to Buckley for three years. ... Guarino takes Pleasantville to her alma mater, Albertus Magnus, 12/28.



Byram Hills senior Grace Corelli will provide a solid two-way presence for Bobcats in 2022-23.

## PUTNAM VALLEY TIGERS

**Coach:** Don Hamlin (second year, 28th varsity overall)

**2021-22 record:** 23-7.

**2022 Sectional results:** Won Section 1 Class B title. Lost in a state semifinal.

**League favorite:** Putnam Valley.

**Section favorite:** Ardsley, Byram Hills, Briarcliff, Irvington, Westlake and Putnam Valley.

**Graduated seniors from the 2021-22 team:** Three.

**Top returnees:** Eva Dechent, Sr., 5-11, PG (2021-22: All-League, All-Section, leading scorer in school history); Nai Torres, Jr., 5-8, G (2021-22: All-League, All-Section); Brianna Foody, Jr., 5-7 guard (2021-22: All-League); Ava Harman, Jr., 5-7, F; Jona Kobashi, So., 6-0, F.

**Key newcomers:** Simone Gabriel, Sr., 6-0, C; Maggie Caputo, So., 5-6, F; Sophie Randazzo, So., 5-4, G; Ella Wendol, 8th-grade, 5-7, G.

**Team strengths:** Size and experience.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** When you work hard, good things will happen. Our goal is as always, be the best team and

teammates we can possibly be.

**Noteworthy:** DeChent signed with the University of Rhode Island.

## SOMERS TUSKERS

**Coach:** Kevin Mallon (first year)

**2021-22 record:** 8-14

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost to Harrison in a Class A first-round game.

**Graduated seniors from the 2021-22 team:** Four.

**League Favorite:** John Jay Cross River.

**Section Favorite:** Panas.

**Top returnees:** Ava Giudice, Sr., 5-4, PG; Alexa Warycha, Sr., 6-0, C; Lauren McCartin, Sr., 5-7 F; Maddie Lyle, Sr., 5-4, SG; Aleksiana Rukaj, Sr., 5-10, C; Bailey Atkinson, Sr., 5-6, SG; Lindsay McCullough, Jr., 5-6, SG; Sydney Ingraham, So., 5-6, PG.

**Team strengths:** Athleticism and speed.

**Noteworthy:** Mallon was former coach, now Somers' Athletic Director Marc Hattem's assistant coach for four years. ... Somers opens the season, 12/8, against Hen Hud in the Briarcliff Tournament. ... Somers will host its own tournament with a field of Panas, Mahopac and Ossining.

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# Sports

## Girls Hoops Notebook

### From Foosball to World Cup Business is Booming on USA Pitches



By Ray Gallagher  
Examiner Sports  
Editor @Directrays

My state-of-the-art foosball table has sat in our basement for the better part of the last 15 years, dusty and rusty, waiting for the rods to be rolled, if even by the most disorderly "spinner," something frowned upon nearly as much as faking injuries by the diving prima donna in real soccer, er, uh futbol.

I could play foosball on a near-professional level – by SUNY Oneonta standards – for the better part of the '80s and could still kick butt when called upon to this day (given a day or two

to practice). Problem is, nobody gave a rat's bum or gave the table a second look until this past weekend when my son's gang of wannabe hooligans (JK!) gathered around – and could not get off – the table after the United States pulled a scoreless draw with England in Friday's World Cup at Qatar #PropsToUSA.

All five of these 12-to-14-year-olds admitted to anxiously watching that World Cup game, something they hadn't done before.

Soccer, as we call it in the states, will have a tough time matching American football – the National Football League – in popularity in the United States. The

## Direct Rays

NFL is the current king, dyed-in-the-wool wounds and all. There's nothing taking down the king in the foreseeable future, unless the league becomes overly political.

Yet, somehow, the beleaguered FIFA and USA men's soccer program has presently galvanized the U.S., almost like our nation's women's program has for the past two decades. While the U.S. ladies have long been the best in the world, unfortunately it'll likely take a prominent showing from both groups, men and women, before the great game captures the entire country's imagination.

That said, the belly screams in

my basement Saturday night and the clamoring for my Irish-brogued play-by-play commentary, and their want to better understand the game of soccer can only further the cause and help spur the notion that soccer can and will eventually challenge for a space among the Big 4 – NFL, MLB, NBA, NHL. Maybe even forge a Big 5, and once that happens, soccer will storm the states.

You heard it here first, maybe second, but it will eventually happen and Section 1 schools and coaches like perennial powers Somers, Byram Hills, Yorktown, Lakeland, reigning state champ Haldane, Briarcliff, Ossining, White Plains and many of those in Dutchess County will say about the great game of soccer: "We told you so!" #HereHere!

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#### VALHALLA VIKINGS

**Coach:** Dave Berry (first year)

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** Five.

**Top returnees:** Sinead Sproul, Sr., C; Cydney Waterman, Jr., F; Sanai Wilson, Jr., G; Paige Williams, Jr., G; Giulia Rutigliano, So., G.

**Key newcomers:** Tvisha Sivaramakrishnan, Jr.; Violet Mattoni, So., Isabella Mattoni, So.

**Team strengths:** Speed and skill.

**Question marks:** Size.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** We are looking for growth and progress from our underclassmen, who are taking up lead roles, and will provide a big boost off the bench from sophomore twins, Violet and Isabella Mattoni. We hope to push the tempo, defend with urgency and see how far it takes us.

**Noteworthy:** Valhalla tips off the season, 12/1, in the Irvington Tournament. ... Sinead Sproul is the team's only senior.

#### WESTLAKE WILDCATS

**Coach:** Sean P. Mayer (22nd year)

**2021-22 record:** 17-6 (League Champs).

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in the Class B semifinals to Irvington.

**Graduated seniors from the 2021-22 team:** One.

**Top returnees:** Allie Castellone (2021-22: All-Conference, All-League, 15.5 ppg); Toni Ann Mastracchio, PG (2021-22: All-League, three-year starter); Sami Oswald, SG (three-year starter); Riley Giaccone, F.

**Key newcomers:** Maggie Platkin, So., G/F; Brooke Pfeiffer, Fr., G/F.

**Team strengths:** Experience. We have a number of players back from last season who are experienced varsity players. We also have players coming up to the varsity level for the first time who will add talent to our team. We have several players who can play multiple positions and handle the basketball.

**Question marks:** One area we will need to continue to work on is rebounding and our inside game. Julie Lyden was a big presence in the post, especially rebounding. We are going to have to figure out ways to develop post points and rebound both on defense and offense. Our tallest player is 5-7.

**Coach's outlook on the season:** We want to push the tempo

for easy baskets and play hard pressure defense which hopefully will translate into transition points. They are a great group of young adults and we are looking forward to a great season. Class B has several talented basketball teams and we need to continue to improve throughout the season to compete during sectionals.

**Noteworthy:** Allie Castellone has a chance to score 1,000 points which would be only the second player in school history to reach that milestone, joining Natalie Alfieri. ... Julie Lyden, an All-Conference and All-League selection last year, is a freshman and playing basketball at Saint Michael's (Vermont). ... Mayer is closing in on 200 wins.

#### WHITE PLAINS TIGERS

**Coach:** Benji Carter (sixth year at White Plains, 15th varsity year overall)

**2021-22 record:** 14-6

**2022 Sectional results:** Lost in a Class AA second-round game to Albertus Magnus.

**League favorite:** White Plains.

**Sectional favorite:** R.C. Ketcham (2022 Section 1 Class AA champions), Albertus Magnus (2022 Section 1 Class AA runner-up), Ursuline, White Plains.

**Graduated seniors from 2021-22 team:** None.

**Top returnees:** Aliya McIver, Sr., 5-7, PG (2021-22 stats: 15.3 ppg, 4.5 apg, 5.6 rpg, 4.8 spg, All-Conference and Runner-up League MVP); Ineivi Plata, Jr., 5-3, PG (2021-22 stats: 15.9 ppg, 3.4 apg, 3.7 spg, All-League Honorable Mention); Capri DeMara, Sr., 5-6, SG; Sequoia Layne, Jr., 6-1, F; Anneliese Reggio, Sr., 5-6, G; India Newman, Jr., 5-7, SG; Isabella McGuire, Jr., 5-7, F; Isabella Cummings, Jr., 5-10, F; Cairenn Sergi, Sr., 5-6, G.



Fearless Somers senior G Ava Giudice has three years of varsity experience to help guide 2023 Tuskers.

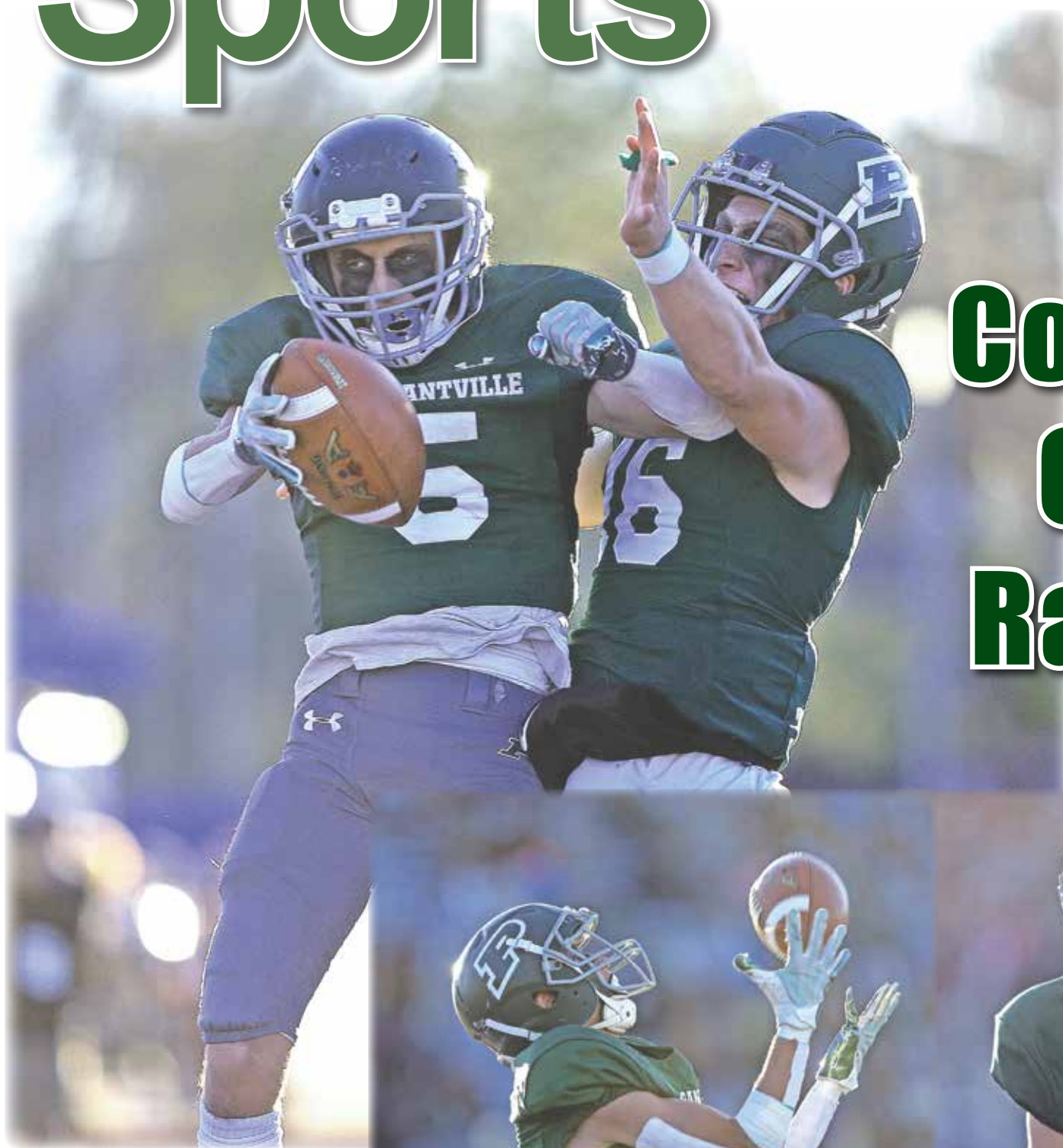
RAY GALLAGHER PHOTOS

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live your most  
intelligent local life





# Examiner Sports



## Coleman Grills Ravena!

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



## Pleasantville Junior Snags Key TD Pass from Picart, Panthers Defeat Ravena, 14-6, in NYS Class B Semi, Headed Back to Dome

Pleasantville juniors Erik Coleman (left) and quarterback Aidan Picart do some celebrating in the end zone after connecting on a 29-yard touchdown pass (inset shots) in the Panthers' 14-6 NYSPHSAA Class B semifinal win over Section 2 champ Ravena Saturday at Faller Field in Middletown where the state-ranked (No.3) Panthers punched their ticket to a second-straight trip to Syracuse for Sunday's state title berth against top-ranked Section 4 champion Maine-Endwell, the reigning state champs... See P'Ville Grid Notebook