

ExaminerSports

Westlake Cruises Past Blind Brook in Playoff Opener

By Andrew Vitelli

A cold, rainy afternoon and a “home game” played on the road didn’t slow down Westlake on Saturday, as the Wildcats cruised to a 35-8 win over Blind Brook in the first round of the Section One playoffs.

The Wildcats, the No. 2 seed in Class B, were forced to play the game at seventh-seeded Blind Brook (4-4) because of unplayable field conditions at Westlake.

“You’re always a little nervous when you’re the home team, but you have to go on the road and play,” Wildcats coach John Castellano said after victory, the 200th of his career. “We needed to get out to an early start, and we did. And once we got out to an early start, I was comfortable.”

The Wildcats (7-1) scored touchdowns on three of their first four drives, jumping out to a 21-0 halftime lead. On the opening drive, Westlake quarterback Rob DiNota kept the ball on a fourth-and-one play and ran 23 yards down the sideline for the first score of the game.

“We didn’t really need to pass,” DiNota said. “It was a cold day, and we just ran over the top on them all day.”

DiNota added a second Westlake touchdown on the Wildcats’ next drive, finishing a 62-yard march with an eight-



Westlake quarterback Rob DiNota scored a pair of touchdowns as the Wildcats easily advanced to the Class B semifinals.

yard touchdown run. The extra-point try was blocked, so the Wildcats had to settle for a 13-0 lead. Westlake scored again with just under three minutes left in the

half, this time on a 17-yard Joseph Ferri run. A two-point conversion stretched the Wildcats’ advantage to 21-0.

The Wildcats increased their lead to 28-0 on a seven-yard touchdown run by Andrew DeBiase with around three minutes left in the third quarter. The Trojans finally got on the scoreboard on their first drive of the fourth quarter with quarterback Daniel Oppizzi hitting Jacob Wynn for a six-yard touchdown pass. Westlake responded with another scoring drive that was capped by DeBiase’s second touchdown of the day, on a four-yard run.

Castellano, in his second year as Westlake’s coach after coaching Nyack for 25 years, was honored after the game by Westlake players and students for his milestone win. Cheerleaders unveiled a banner reading “Congratulations Coach Cas” while players gave their coach a Gatorade shower.

“This community is phenomenal,” Castellano said. “They understand. They just love football and they show it every Saturday. The kids work hard. It’s just a great football town.”

Castellano is looking for his second sectional championship in two years with Westlake.

“He’s up until three in the morning watching film every night, and he knows exactly what teams are doing before they even do it,” DiNota said. “It was amazing to be a part of [his 200th win].”

With the victory, Westlake will host Valhalla (6-2) in the Class B semifinals this Saturday at 1:30. The Vikings eked out a one-point, last-second win over Nanuet in their quarterfinal. Westlake



Coach John Castellano earned the 200th victory of his career with the win over Blind Brook.

fans and players were closely monitoring that game, with updates coming in from the stands after the Wildcats’ win. The Vikings played Westlake once during the regular season, with the Wildcats overcoming a 17-0 halftime deficit to win 21-17.

Vikings Defeat Nanuet in the Class B Playoffs

Valhalla junior Michael Ferrara scored a pair of first-half touchdowns and the Vikings used a last-second two-point conversion to edge host Nanuet 22-21 in Saturday’s first-round Class B playoff game. Quarterback Ralph Gonzalez connected on a nine-yard touchdown pass to Kevin Williams to cap an 80-yard drive with time running out that moved the Vikings to within a point. He then threw to Evan Parker for the game-winning two-point conversion that sends sixth-seeded Valhalla into Saturday’s semifinal showdown with second-seeded Westlake.



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GIRLS' SOCCER

2016 Sectional Playoffs



ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Jamie Rosh of Byram Hills races toward the ball during the Bobcats' overtime win over Beacon on Saturday.



Valhalla's Juliana Corradi controls the ball near midfield during Saturday's home playoff game vs. Briarcliff.



Valhalla's Melissa Giglio and Briarcliff's Jackie Contento fight for the ball during Saturday afternoon's game.



Briarcliff's Elizabeth Kreppel heads the ball away in front of Valhalla's Emily Strupinsky in the second half of Saturday's game.



Julia Duffy of Briarcliff tries to move past Valhalla's Sierra Lockhart in the second half of Saturday's game, won by the Bears in an overtime shootout.



Valhalla goalie Sofia Mazza protects the ball as Briarcliff's Amelia Leahy arrives a second too late in Saturday's playoff matchup. The Vikings overcame a 3-1 deficit, but Briarcliff prevailed in the overtime shootout.



Byram Hills' Victoria Ganeles boots the ball away in Saturday night's playoff win over Beacon.



Sophia Febbo of Byram Hills battles for control of the ball in the first half of the Bobcats' playoff game vs. Beacon that was decided in a shootout after 110 minutes of action produced a 1-1 tie.



Byram Hills' Kallie Hoffman blasts a shot toward the goal in Saturday's playoff win over the Beacon Bulldogs, under the lights at Our Lady of Lourdes High School.



Ali Brocato of Byram Hills moves the ball up the field in Saturday evening's playoff game vs. Beacon.



Pleasantville's Jonathon Kyriakidis scores one of his three goals in the Panthers' 5-1 opening-round Class B win over Albertus Magnus on Thursday.



Horace Greeley's Jonathan Gerstein controls the ball in the first half of last Thursday's home playoff game vs. North Rockland.



Jack Cohen of Greeley settles the ball during the Quakers' Class AA playoff victory over visiting North Rockland.



Briarcliff senior midfielder Eric Koenig pursues the ball during last Thursday's home playoff game with Edgemont.

BOYS' SOCCER

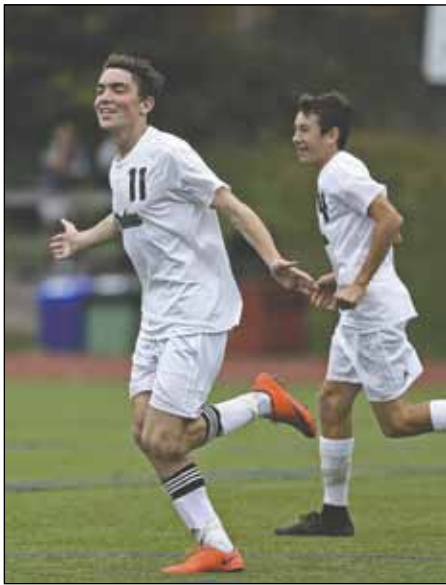
2016 Sectional Playoffs



A Pleasantville defensive wall of, left to right, Jeremy Stone, Humza Mumtaz, Marc Kyriakidis and Nolan McAndrew, along with Liam Perrine, try to prevent an Albertus Magnus kick from reaching the net.



Greeley players, left to right, Matt Lafortezza, Daniel Cannon, William Seidman, Ryan Sullivan and Max Furman, celebrate a goal in last Thursday's opening-round win over North Rockland.



Liam Perrine of Pleasantville celebrates after scoring a second-half goal in the Panthers' victory over the visiting Falcons.



Matt Cohen of Briarcliff sets his sights on the ball in the second half of last week's opening-round playoff game vs. the Edgemont Panthers.



Briarcliff's Omar Saleh tries to maneuver past Edgemont's Stefano Rozental (10) and Pater Tzelios in Thursday's game, won by the visiting Panthers in overtime.



Fox Lane's Jackie Sheerin controls the ball in the second half of last week's home game vs. the Greeley Quakers.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Natalie Bazyk of Fox Lane finds some room to run as she takes the ball up the field between Horace Greeley's Kathryn Graham (left) and Nikki Potter in a showdown between teams that were both unbeaten in league play before last Wednesday.



Horace Greeley's Kathryn Graham races upfield with the ball during last week's game at Fox Lane's Memorial Stadium.

SPORTS SCENE



Valhalla's Sam Morillo tries to smack the ball past the outstretched hands of Westlake's Allie Iannucci in last Wednesday's volleyball match.



Nikki Potter of Greeley tries to maintain control of the ball as she's greeted by a pair of Fox Lane players in last Wednesday's game.



Valhalla's Karoline Nascimento bumps the ball as teammate Jillian Ramalho looks on in last Wednesday's match vs. the visiting Wildcats.



Bridgit Connors of Fox Lane moves the ball up the field as Greeley's Lauren Rosh gives chase during last Wednesday's showdown for the league title. Connors had a goal in the Foxes' 2-1 win.



Linda Rossi of Valhalla hits the deck trying to retrieve the ball during the Vikings' home match vs. Westlake last Wednesday evening.



Greeley's Jessica Rosendorf prepares to pass the ball along the right sideline as Fox Lane's Kayla Gallagher defends.

SPORTS SCENE



Saroja Rao of Briarcliff is on her way to a first-place finish during last Tuesday's league championship cross country meet at Croton Point Park.



Alexis Moskowitz of Pleasantville chases the ball during last week's game at Valhalla High School.



Callie Sullivan of Pleasantville chases after the ball near midfield in last week's road game vs. Valhalla.



Jean-Christophe Yahia of Pleasantville runs in last week's league championship meet at Croton Point Park.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Jackie Gonzalez of Valhalla prepares to send a free hit up the field in front of Pleasantville's Callie Sullivan during last Tuesday's game.



Briarcliff's Ryan Gallagher has a small lead on Pleasantville's Jean-Christophe Yahia a mile into last Tuesday's league championship meet at Croton Point Park. Gallagher finished first, while Yahia settled for second place.



Valhalla's Isabella Riguzzi gets set to pass the ball as Pleasantville's Caroline Kovatch chases in last Tuesday night's game.



Bella Ruane of Valhalla races after the ball in the second half of last week's home game vs. Pleasantville.



Pleasantville's Mia Dillon and Valhalla's Jackie Gonzalez watch as the ball drops to the turf in last Tuesday's game, won by the host Vikings.

Briarcliff's Baseline Basher

Impressive Freshman Rebecca Lim Wins the Section One Singles Title



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