

**Matt Groll Attracts a Crowd
as He Shoots the Basketball
in a Byram Hills Home Victory
Over Harrison Last Wednesday**

An Unsung Hero Helps Lift the Panthers Past Valhalla

By Andy Jacobs

In a game featuring two of the top guards in Section One, Pleasantville's Mike Manley and Valhalla's Kevin Kelly, it's not hard to overlook the contributions being made by some of their teammates.

Take the Panthers' Jeremy Stone, for instance.

Scoreless in the first half on Friday afternoon, the Panthers' senior forward erupted for 11 points in the third quarter as Pleasantville broke open what had been an even game at halftime and went on to a 60-46 victory at Kensico School. Kelly and Manley each finished with 28 points, but afterwards it was Stone who was the player Panther coach Chris Welsh wanted to talk about.

"The turning point in this game was Jeremy Stone coming out in the third quarter and attacking the basket," he said. "Aggressive and attacking the basket. This was a really balanced game. Yeah, Mike had his points. But we had Jeremy with 11 and we had somebody with eight, somebody with seven. So we had a lot of different contributions, and that's the key for us."

Kelly poured in 17 of his points before halftime and the Vikings, riding a four-game winning streak, overcame a six-point deficit after one quarter to draw even at 25-apiece at intermission. A bucket by Charlie McPhee with 5:35 left in the second quarter had given the Panthers a 23-15 advantage. But their only basket the rest of the half came nearly five minutes later on a Manley layup.

Meanwhile, Kelly, who had 10 of his points in the second quarter, scored on successive jumpers and teammate Ethan Bartlett followed with a basket just outside the lane that moved the Vikings to within a point. A leaner by Kelly with 36 seconds on the clock enabled Valhalla to walk out of the gym at halftime tied

with the Panthers.

"We knew this was gonna be a close game," said Welsh. "Every time we play Valhalla, it's a close game. So for it to be tied at halftime is not a surprise."

Valhalla coach Mike Auerbach didn't realize his star guard had accounted for more than two-thirds of his team's first-half offense, but he wasn't surprised.

"Yeah, Kevin, he's been really consistent for us," he said. "I mean, he played great in the first half, he kept us in it. He looked like he was the only one really getting any good looks, any clean looks to go down for us. As is the case, we need more than that, especially against a good team like Pleasantville."

When the teams returned to the court, it was an unlikely Panther who suddenly took charge of the contest. Just 30 seconds into the third quarter, Stone took the ball to the hoop, put it in off glass while getting fouled and then added the free throw. The Vikings' Ricky Thomas quickly answered with a 3-pointer that tied the game again. Two free throws by Bartlett gave Valhalla a 30-28 edge with 6:37 left in the period.

But a 3-point shot by Manley 45 seconds later gave the Panthers the lead back and they never trailed again. That's because Stone soon scored on consecutive scoop shots in the lane and later followed them with two free throws and a fast-break layup that opened up a 40-31 P'ville cushion. By the end of the third quarter, after a turnaround jumper in the lane by Quentin Lupo, the Panthers' lead had grown to 11 points.

"We encourage every single one of our players to attack the basket, to get to the rim," said Welsh. "And that was the difference in the game. Once we started attacking the rim, the tide turned in our favor."

Even though Stone never scored again after the third quarter, it hardly mattered. Manley provided 12 points in the final period, 10 of them coming in the first four minutes and highlighted by a pair of 3-pointers. His two free throws with 4:12 remaining stretched the Panthers' lead to 54-38. Pleasantville's biggest margin, 18 points, came with 2:08 left after another two foul shots by Manley.

"I thought Mike Manley played great in the second half," said the Vikings' Auerbach. "He's as good as anybody in the class. He's the type of kid who can take over a game. I thought we did well on him. He makes tough shots. I don't think we gave him a lot of easy looks."

The Vikings had defeated Croton 63-50 on the road a day earlier as Kelly, Bartlett and Orlando Clarke combined for 50 points, but Auerbach knew they would have a tough task trying to follow up with a win over Pleasantville too.

"We were just talking in the locker room about it," he said. "You know, try not to get too down, hang our heads type of thing because our league is so tough.



Quentin Lupo of Pleasantville rises over Valhalla's Orlando Clarke for a shot along the right baseline in Friday afternoon's game.

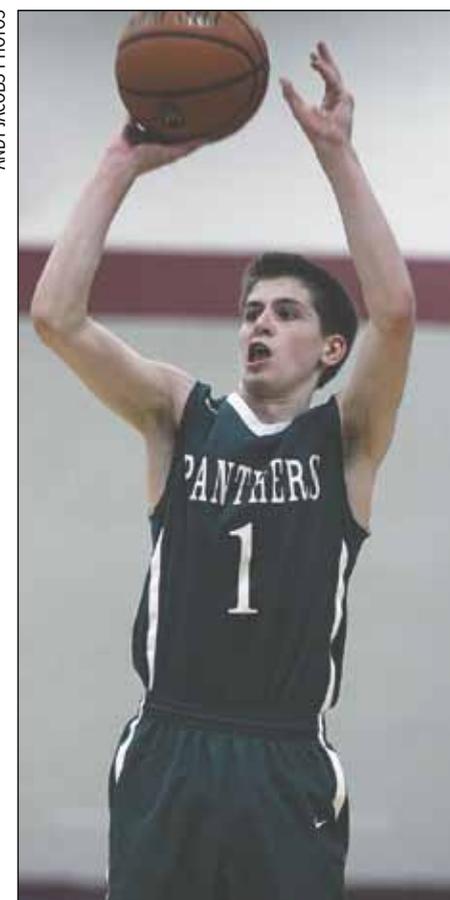
Like there's no off nights. It's hard when you've got to bring it every night. And our margin for being good and being bad is very thin."

Welsh, for his part, was relishing the kind of effort from his Panther team he had been waiting to see and looking forward to upcoming challenges against Briarcliff and Somers.

"Tonight might have been the best game we've played all season in terms of a complete game, in terms of the defensive end, in terms of execution," he said. "We



The Panthers' Jeremy Stone drives to the basket in the third quarter vs. host Valhalla.



Pleasantville guard Mike Manley launches a jump shot in the second half of Friday's game at Valhalla.

also have a little bit of a gauntlet here to end the season. We're gonna learn a lot about ourselves. This stage of the year, you don't stay the same. You get better or you get worse. Today, we certainly got better."



The Vikings' Ricky Thomas pushes the ball up the floor in the second quarter of Friday afternoon's game vs. Pleasantville.



Valhalla senior guard Kevin Kelly tries to slip past Pleasantville's Charlie McPhee in the first half of Friday's game.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Bobcats Dominate the Second Half to Rout Harrison

By Andy Jacobs

It hardly seemed to matter last Wednesday evening that the Byram Hills boys' basketball team was missing its starting point guard and the student cheering section that usually fills the bleachers opposite the Bobcats' bench was nowhere to be found.

Facing a Harrison Huskies squad still in search of its first conference win this season, the Bobcats used an 11-2 run at the start of the second half to break open a close game and went on to a lopsided 60-39 victory. Senior Matt Groll scored 21 points and grabbed 17 rebounds, while ninth grader Sam Goldman came off the bench to provide a trio of 3-point baskets, as Byram Hills improved to 16-1 with the sectional playoffs just around the corner.

"You know, we were a little bit out of sync," said Bobcats coach Ted Repa about playing without floor general Matt Milone. "But I thought we got really good contributions out of Sammy Goldman. He's a freshman and he hit three 3s. That's what he can do, and I think he's only gonna get better."

The second of Goldman's 3-pointers came in the midst of the big Byram Hills run at the beginning of the third quarter that turned a precarious 30-26 halftime lead into a 41-28 cushion. When the Huskies answered with a 9-3 spurt to move back within seven points, the Bobcats closed the period with a put-back bucket by Groll and then a conventional 3-point play by Willy Samsen to build their advantage to 49-37.

Harrison got a basket in the lane from Luke McCarthy early in the fourth quarter, but then was held scoreless by the Bobcats over the final six and a half minutes. Byram scored the game's final nine points, including Goldman's final trey of the night, from the left corner with just over five minutes left, and Repa was able to clear his bench with a couple of



The Bobcats' Matt Groll protects the ball just outside the lane in last Wednesday's win over Harrison.



Freshman guard Sam Goldman, who provided nine points off the bench, dribbles the ball up the floor in last Wednesday's Bobcat win.

minutes remaining.

"Yeah, we needed to step up our defensive intensity," said Repa about halftime adjustments. "They (the Huskies) played a pretty good first half. So I thought since we were a little bit out of sync without our usuals in there, we had to make a concerted effort on the defensive end."

The Bobcats had begun the evening with a 7-3 edge as Groll delivered three early baskets – a baseline drive for a reverse layup, a put-back on a third try



Bobcat sophomore Willy Samsen sends up a one-hander from the right baseline as a trio of Harrison players look on in the second half of last Wednesday's game.



Byram Hills junior Dylan Friedman awaits a rebound along with Harrison's Will Marriott in the second half of last Wednesday's game.

and a 15-foot turnaround jumper near the foul line.

"You know, Matt's a special talent and I think he can even get better," said Repa. "I think he's just starting to get his stride back from being sick."

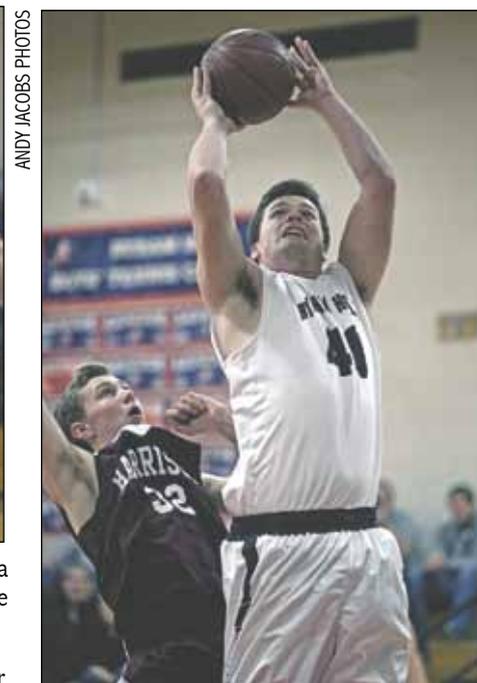
Despite the early heroics from Groll, a 3-point shot out of the right corner by Will Marriott, who led Harrison with 16 points, gave the Huskies their only lead of the contest, 8-7, with a minute and a half left in the first quarter. But a couple of baskets by Skylar Sinon, including a fast-break layup with 1.5 seconds to go after making a steal, helped the Bobcats take a four-point lead into the second quarter.

Less than 30 seconds into the second period, Goldman provided a quick hint of his shooting ability by connecting on a 3-pointer from the left corner. Samsen, who finished with 14 points, soon followed with another 3-point shot and the Bobcats' lead was suddenly up to eight points. Harrison, though, responded with a 12-5 burst over the next five minutes, moving to within 23-23 on a layup by Austin Evans.

Sinon, who scored 25 points in the Bobcats' 70-47 home win over Pelham two days later, made a couple of jump shots in the final moments of the first half that helped Byram maintain its lead into intermission. When the teams returned



Byram Hills coach Ted Repa pleads with the refs during the second half of the Bobcats' 60-39 victory over visiting Harrison.



Byram Hills forward Conor Ahern shoots the ball in the lane as Harrison's Will Marriott watches in last week's game, won by the host Bobcats.

for the second half, the Bobcats kept Harrison off the scoreboard for nearly four minutes and, despite the noticeable absence of their student cheering section, began to turn the game into a rout.

"I don't necessarily think it's tough," said Repa about playing in an unusually silent home gym. "You know our fans'll be there when we need 'em."



Byram Hills junior guard Skylar Sinon rises for a jump shot in the fourth quarter vs. the Huskies.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Foxes Cap a Big Week by Defeating Yorktown

By Andy Jacobs

Kris Matts didn't need any help remembering what happened the previous time his Fox Lane girls' basketball team had faced Yorktown this season, nearly three weeks ago.

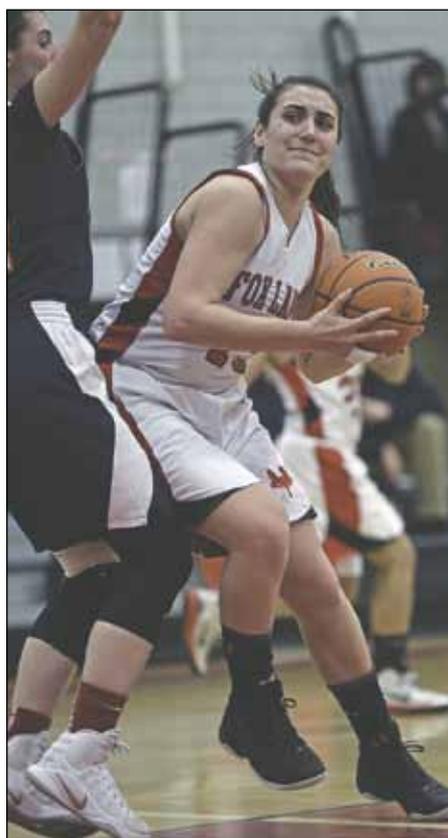
"The first game we played these guys, we lost by one and we missed 13 free throws," he was recalling on Friday evening, shortly after the teams' second meeting. "That is not a recipe for a good result."

Despite using nearly the same exact recipe again by missing six of eight foul shots in the fourth quarter, the Foxes somehow found a way to prevail this time, emerging with a huge 64-59 road victory over the Huskers. Maria Violante, saddled with foul trouble, still scored 24 points and hauled in 16 rebounds as Fox Lane capped a 3-0 week and avenged one of its three losses this season.

"She was out of the game in key moments, and without her we didn't step up," said Matts about his star junior forward. "And they (the Huskers) were able to keep it close because of that. She had four fouls at the end there, a very dangerous situation."

Matts, normally reluctant to criticize officials, couldn't hide his disgust with them after his team, thanks to a key 3-pointer by eighth-grader Natalie Pence with 30 seconds remaining, had escaped with the narrow win. He said some of the calls against Violante were "ridiculous" and added that "the officiating was terrible the entire game."

Still, the Foxes were able to go on an 11-3 run at the start of the second quarter after being tied 13-apiece after the first



The Foxes' Maria Violante works her way into the lane during last Wednesday's home win over Roy C. Ketcham.

eight minutes. A put-back bucket by Violante with 2:20 left in the half gave them a 29-20 advantage. When Yorktown closed within four points again, Pence connected on a 3-point shot with 32 seconds on the clock that gave Fox Lane a 32-25 halftime lead.

The Foxes opened up their largest lead of the night, 12 points, by scoring the first five points of the second half. Senior guard Katie Morales, who along with



Caitlin Lane tries to get to the basket in Fox Lane's 58-48 win over visiting Roy C. Ketcham last week.



Eighth-grader Natalie Pence sends up a one-hander in the lane during Fox Lane's win over RCK that snapped the Indians 14-game winning streak.



Senior guard Katie Morales pushes the ball past midcourt in Friday evening's Fox Lane win at Yorktown.

Lucy Crerend finished with 14 points, drove through the lane for a basket that left Yorktown trailing 37-25 with 6:10 remaining in the third quarter.

But the Huskers got six points from Mackenzie Merson during a 10-0 response that quickly whittled the Foxes' double-digit lead to just two points. A reverse layup by Alyssa Francese, who led Yorktown with 20 points, with 35 seconds to go in the third quarter left the Foxes leading 42-40 heading to the fourth.

A 3-pointer by Kathryn Severino moved the Huskers within 46-45, then a fast-break layup from Jesse Barer with six minutes left gave Yorktown its only lead of the second half. The Foxes responded with a 7-0 spurt as Morales made a 15-foot baseline jumper and Violante drained a right-corner 3-pointer out of a timeout, then followed it with a spin through the lane for another basket 30 seconds later.

Yorktown managed to close within two points twice down the stretch, but never regained the lead. On three different occasions in the game's final three minutes, the Foxes went to the line and missed a pair of free throws. All three times, they grabbed the rebound and scored on a put-back. Violante had two of those baskets, the second one giving Fox Lane a 61-57 edge with 1:06 on the clock.

"We can't rely on that," said Matts about the inability of Yorktown to secure a rebound three straight times. "We're missing free throws in big situations. We need to put those away. There's a reason they call 'em 'free throws.'"

A Yorktown basket with 52 seconds left trimmed the Foxes' lead to just two points, but Pence provided her second 3-pointer of the game, this time from the



Fox Lane's Lucy Crerend shoots from the left baseline in Friday's win over Yorktown.

left corner, just over 20 seconds later to seal the victory.

The big win over the Huskers was Fox Lane's second in 48 hours. On Wednesday, the Foxes put an end to Roy C. Ketcham's 14-game winning streak with a 58-48 triumph. Violante, returning to action after a recent ankle sprain that occurred in the last two minutes of a practice, had 20 points and 14 rebounds, while Crerend added 15 points and Caitlin Lane 10.

The game was tied at halftime, but the Foxes, now 13-3 this season, outscored the visiting Indians 33-23 in the second half. Fox Lane erupted for 18 points in the final quarter, getting eight of them from Violante.

"We played really well that game," said Matts. "You know, the girls are battle-hardened, battle-tested. They showed it in that game. The Ketcham win was huge because it vaulted us over them."

The victories against a red-hot RCK team and a dangerous Yorktown squad playing on its own home floor have Matts thinking his players are just about ready for what awaits them in the rapidly approaching postseason.

"It shows they've got the resolve to make a run in the playoffs," he said. "If you clean up the mental mistakes, they've got the toughness, they've got the desire and they've got the talent to make a deep run."

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Horace Greeley vs. Yorktown



The Quakers' Brianna Gadaleta drives the right baseline during last Thursday's home game.



Horace Greeley senior Ashley Rosenberg squeezes her way past a pair of Yorktown players during last week's home game.



ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Safia Gecaj of Greeley sets her sights on the rim as she moves into the paint vs. Yorktown.



Greeley's Julia Canner takes the ball to the basket in the second half vs. visiting Yorktown.

Byram Hills Celebrates Seven Athletes Signing Intent Letters

By Anna Young

Friends, family and members of the school community celebrated seven Byram Hills High School senior athletes who signed letters of intent on National Signing Day on Feb. 1.

The ceremony was held in the high school gymnasium and recognized the student-athletes as they joined in the celebratory tradition of signing letters to accept athletic scholarships to play on collegiate teams across the country starting next year.

"They are each well-rounded,

intelligent and hard-working young men and women who will undoubtedly represent Byram Hills to the greatest of their abilities," soccer coach Matt Allen said to about 200 people.

Regarded as one of the best soccer players in the country and graduating as the most decorated player in school history, Jack Beer plans to study business while competing at Georgetown University.

Emma Fruhling, a soccer goalie, will be heading to Ithaca College in the fall with designs on studying TV and radio.

Leah Calhoun finds a clear path to the basket in the second half of last Thursday's 56-36 loss to Yorktown.

As a multisport athlete, Matt Groll received attention for both soccer and basketball. Groll, who helped take his basketball team to two sectional titles, will go on to play basketball at Franklin & Marshall College.

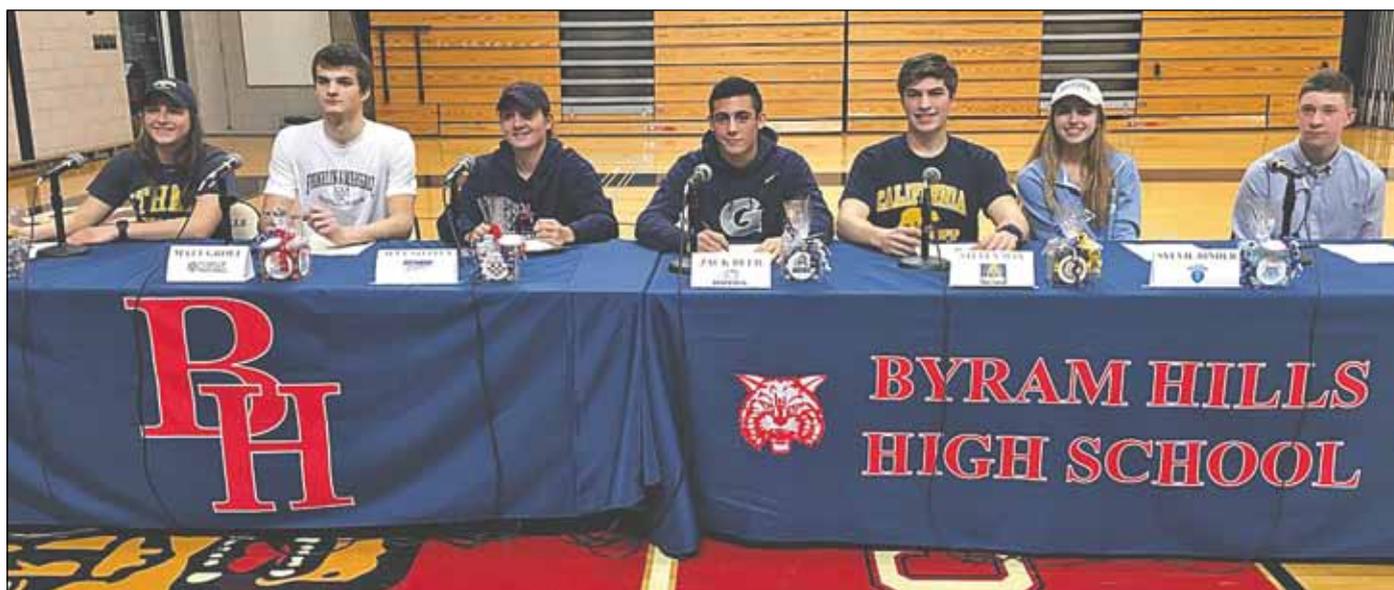
After learning how to play golf in eighth grade, Ally Steffen ranked fifth at sectionals going on to finish 22nd at states last year. With weather helping to influence her decision, Steffen hopes to study chemistry or business while attending the University of Richmond.

Rower Steven Max quickly elevated himself to lead rower where he's a member of the competitive Greenwich Crew Program. Dedicating himself to the sport since his sophomore year, he trains six days a week year-round. Max will be studying economics while joining the top men's rowing team in the country at University of California, Berkeley.

Soccer star David Noel overcame a knee injury that required surgery and caught the eye of recruiters. He will be attending Eastern Connecticut State University.

Sylvie Binder has spent much of her childhood traveling the world competing at the highest levels of youth fencing. Most recently, Binder took home a gold medal at the Fencing Cadet World Championships. Considered internationally as one of the best at her sport, Binder will attend Columbia University, which has been a haven for fencers.

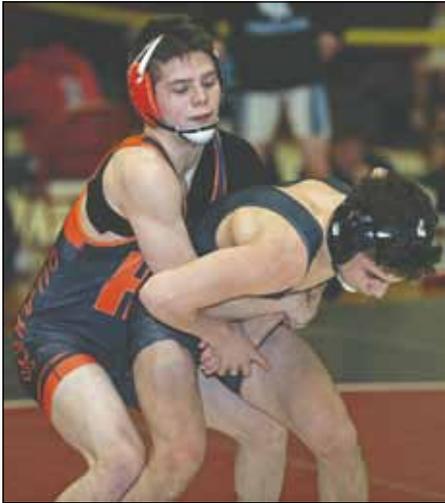
"I want to thank our parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters and other family members who really provide unconditional support and love on a daily basis to help the goals and dreams become a reality," Byram Hills Athletic Director Rob Castanga said. "It does take a family, there are a lot of people involved in helping those dreams come true."



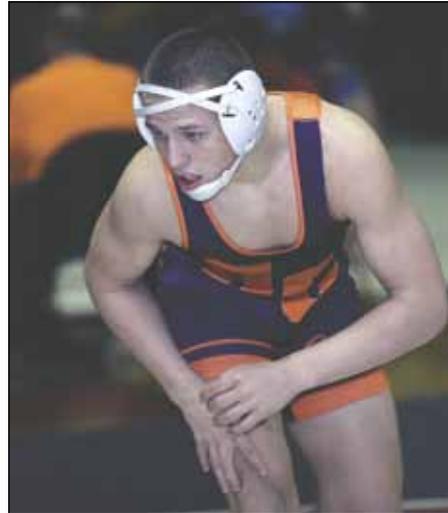
ANNA YOUNG PHOTO

Left to right, Emma Fruhling, Matt Groll, Ally Steffen, Jack Beer, Steven Max, Sylvie Binder and David Noel, the seven Byram Hills High School seniors who signed letters of intent to compete collegiately in their respective sports.

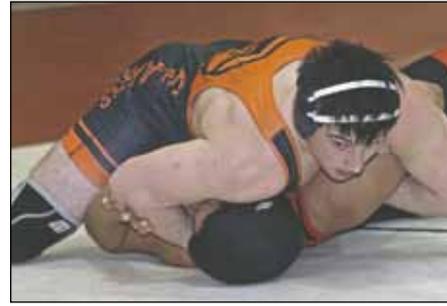
focus on
WRESTLING
Division III Qualifier
February 4, 2017
Roy C. Ketcham HS



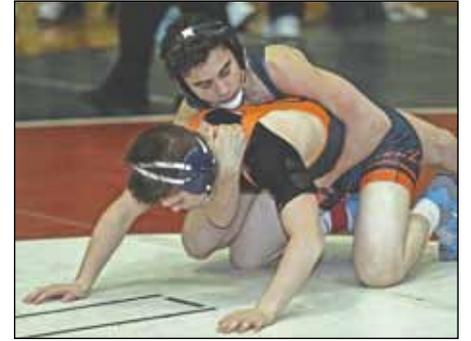
Greeley's Joe Sasso is on his way to the title over Luca Errico of Byram Hills at 132 pounds at the Division III Qualifier on Saturday.



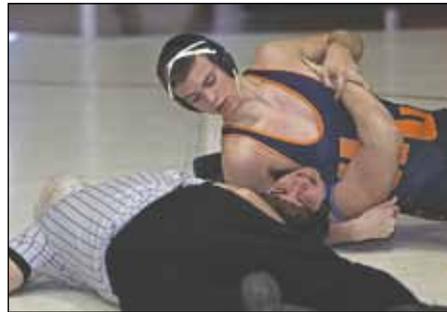
Horace Greeley's Jacob Ferreira looks for a takedown in his title match at 170 pounds. He won with a pin in the second period.



Stephen Nadler is about to pin Sleepy Hollow's Luis Espinal in the championship match at 220 pounds.



Luca Errico has the momentary upper hand in his championship match vs. Greeley's Joe Sasso at 132 pounds.



Greeley's Josh McMillan pins Stephen Dixon of John Jay (East Fishkill) to finish in third place at 182 pounds.



Alex Behar of Byram Hills won by a 3-2 decision over Otto Davidson of Clarkstown North in the title match at 145 pounds.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

GRAND PRIX
 GPNY.COM NEW YORK

SPINS
 BOWL

BIRTHDAY PARTIES CORPORATE EVENTS
 BAR / BAT MITZVAHS FUNDRAISERS

333 North Bedford Road | Mount Kisco, New York
 www.gpny.com | info@gpny.com | 914-241-3131

Like our SPORTS PHOTOS?

To purchase a digital file, email us at photos@theexaminernews.com. Just include the name of the student athlete featured in the picture or pictures you're interested in buying, the Tuesday publication date in which the image or images appeared and the page number or numbers. Photos are \$25 each.

focus on Ice Hockey

Byram Hills vs. Rivertown



The Bobcats' John Fontana brings the puck up the right wing during Saturday's game.



Robert Bastone of Byram Hills passes the puck in the second period of Saturday's game vs. the host Legends.



Byram Hills' Ben Mautner waits for the puck near the right point during a faceoff in the first period vs. Rivertown.



Nicholas Salandra gets ready to fire a shot on goal in the 7-0 Byram Hills rout over host Rivertown at Westchester Skating Academy.



The Bobcats' Ethan Behar moves the puck past the blue line in the first period of Saturday night's 7-0 victory over Rivertown.



Byram Hills' Willie Mann considers his options as he moves the puck up the ice in Saturday's victory over Rivertown, the Bobcats' 10th in a row.



The IceCats' Jack Simon tries to gain control of the puck in the 6-2 home loss to Pearl River on Saturday night.



Mt. Pleasant's Kyle Dearborn battles for control of the puck in Saturday's home game vs. Pearl River at Westchester Skating Academy.

Mt. Pleasant vs. Pearl River



Michael Donoghue of the Mt. Pleasant IceCats pursues the puck near center ice in Saturday's home game.



The IceCats' Joseph Raphael shoots the puck during Saturday evening's 6-2 loss to visiting Pearl River.



Mt. Pleasant goalie Spencer Rockmore keeps his eyes on the puck during the IceCats' home game on Saturday.

Streak Busters



Lucy Crerend Pushes the Ball Up the Court as Fox Lane Ends RCK's 14-Game Win Streak in a Key Matchup With the Playoffs Looming