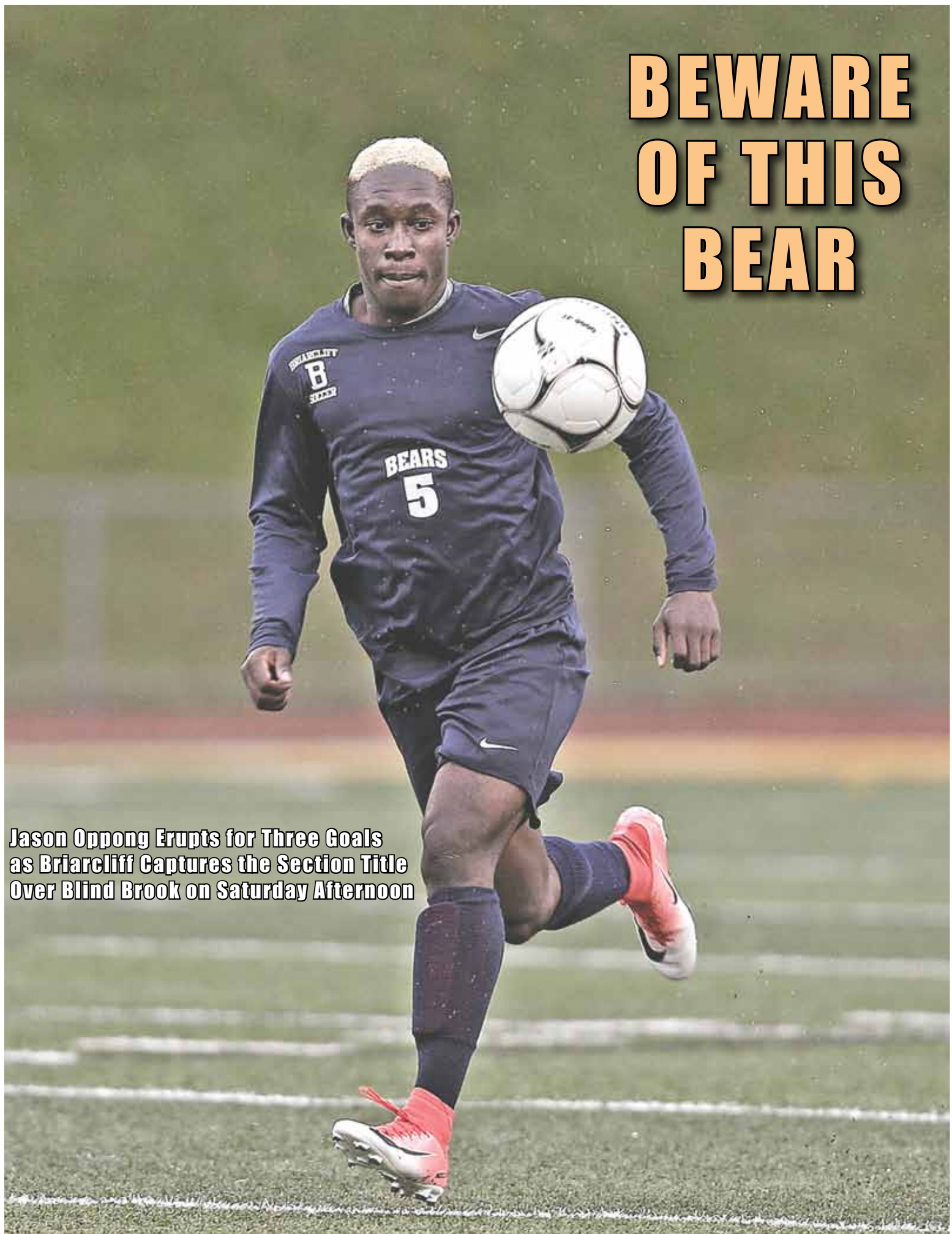


**BEWARE
OF THIS
BEAR**

**Jason Oppong Erupts for Three Goals
as Briarcliff Captures the Section Title
Over Blind Brook on Saturday Afternoon**



Panthers' Reign Ends With a Semifinal Loss to Putnam Valley

By Sean Browne

It was a perfect storm of mental mistakes, an injury to quarterback Jack Howe and a stout Putnam Valley run game that derailed the Pleasantville Panthers' chances of repeating as section and state champions, as they fell to Putnam Valley on Friday evening in the Section 1, Class B semifinal playoff game.

"Our injuries and our mistakes were a lot to overcome, said Pleasantville head coach Tony Becerra after the Panther season had come to a disappointing end with a 36-25 home defeat to the unheralded Tigers at Parkway Field. "Not to take anything away from Putnam Valley. They were solid, so all the credit to them."

The second-seeded Panthers did start the game on a good note, making the first big play of the night. Halfway through the first quarter, Howe, being chased by multiple Tiger linemen, completed a long pass to Danny Minerva, setting up the Panthers at the Tiger 30-yard line. They would settle for a field goal, a 32-yarder by Howe with just under two minutes left in the period.

But the Panthers wouldn't hold their 3-0 lead for long. With Putnam Valley having the ball at the Panther 38-yard line and facing a fourth-and-five situation, the Tigers decided to go for it. An offside call against the Panthers gave the Tigers a big first down and set the stage for running back John Listwan's first of four touchdowns, a one-yard run that gave Putnam Valley its first lead of the night.

The Panthers would soon retaliate, though, as Howe connected with receiver Brendan O'Neill for a 30-yard touchdown pass. With the point-after kick by Howe, Pleasantville took a 10-6 lead. But Listwan



Pleasantville senior Brendan O'Neill turns upfield after catching a pass in Friday night's game against Putnam Valley.

would match Howe's arm with his legs, and on the next possession he took the ball 40 yards to the end zone, giving Putnam Valley a 12-10 lead it would never relinquish the rest of the way.

A Panther turnover deep in their own territory led to another Tiger touchdown, this one on a short run by Darnel Shillingford that increased the Putnam Valley advantage to 18-10. The Tigers had a chance to really stretch their lead after a Howe pass toward the left sideline was picked off, but the Panther defense rose to the occasion and kept Put Valley from adding any more points.

With the ball just before halftime, Howe helped get the Panthers right back by completing a 60-yard pass to



Jared Wilens of Pleasantville tries to break free from Putnam Valley's Garrett Leitmann as he carries the football in the Class B semifinals at Parkway Field.

running back Patrick Doherty. And with time expiring, Howe found Doherty in the left side of the end zone for 21-yard touchdown pass, bringing the chaotic half to a close with the Panthers trailing by just 18-17.

As the third quarter began, The Tigers continued to do what was working for them in the first half — giving the football to Listwan and letting him chew up yards on the ground. His touchdown romp from midfield enabled the Tigers to extend their lead to 24-17.

But perhaps the biggest play of the game came on the next Panther possession. With the ball at midfield, Howe scrambled out of the pocket and took off but a big hit by a Tiger defender sent him to the sideline where he was diagnosed with a concussion. After the play, the Panthers would get flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct and were forced to punt the ball.

But Pleasantville would stop the Tigers on the following possession and all eyes were suddenly on Panther freshman quarterback Michael LaCapria, who took over for the senior star, Howe. On third and five, LaCapria was set to hand off to running back Chris May, but the ball got bobbled on the transaction and was recovered by the Tigers as the P'ville turnovers continued to mount.

LaCapria would get the ball back again a bit later, but after two incompletions it was starting to become clear that the injury to Howe was too much to overcome for a Panther team that had already lost two vital offensive players for the season in recent weeks.



Panther quarterback Jack Howe throws a pass to Jared Wilens in the second quarter of Friday's Class B semifinal playoff game.



Pleasantville senior fullback Jaden Kamer carries the football in the first quarter of Friday night's Section 1, Class B semifinal game vs. visiting Putnam Valley.

The Tigers would take over and quickly drive down the field. Shillingford capped off the drive with another score, giving Putnam Valley, which had already upset Nanuet in the quarterfinals, a 30-17 lead.

As time was beginning to wind down in Pleasantville, it was desperation time for the Panthers. But there would be no miracle as a LaCapria pass deep down the field was picked off by defensive back Joseph Ciofi. On the following play, Listwan, who wound up with nearly 300 yards on the ground, would run 73 yards to the end zone, sealing the game for the Tigers and putting an end to the Panthers' one-year reign as state champions.



ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



The Panthers' Patrick Doherty runs with the ball following a pass reception near midfield in the 36-25 playoff loss to Putnam Valley.



The Panthers stand together during pregame introductions at Parkway Field on Friday night. Their reign atop Class B in New York State came to an end with their sectional semifinal loss to Putnam Valley.

Pleasantville's Justin Perlman is greeted in the end zone by teammate Brendan O'Neill after catching a second-quarter touchdown pass. But a Panther penalty nullified the play.

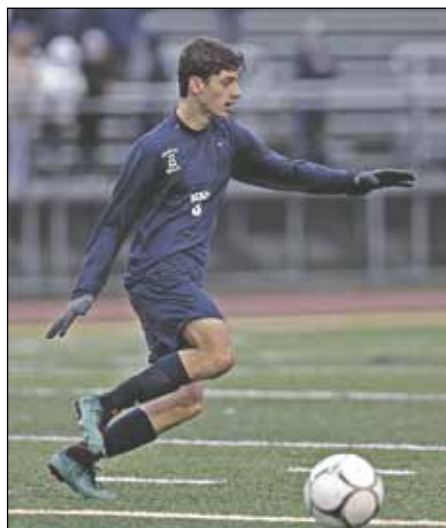
Section One, Class B Soccer Championship Briarcliff vs. Blind Brook Saturday, October 27, 2018 Lakeland High School



Briarcliff's Alex Cabeca rises above the crowd as he tries to score off a Bear corner kick during the 3-2 victory over Blind Brook.



Briarcliff senior Colby Cho battles for possession of the ball with Blind Brook's Zach Kornblum in the Class B championship game, won by the Bears 3-2.



James Varriano gets into position to boot the approaching ball during second-half action in Saturday's Class B final vs. Blind Brook.



Briarcliff goalkeeper Andrew Kanofsky keeps his eyes on the ball in front of the net during Saturday afternoon's championship game.



The Bears' Jason Oppong, who finished with a hat trick, provides more second-half thrills for the Briarcliff student section watching in the nearby bleachers.



The Bears' Matt Sturman heads the ball in the second half against the Blind Brook Trojans.



Fernando Munoz of Briarcliff gets set to send a shot on goal during the Bears' win over Blind Brook in the Section 1, Class B final.



Briarcliff junior Chris Li looks for open teammates as he controls the ball early in the second half of the sectional final.



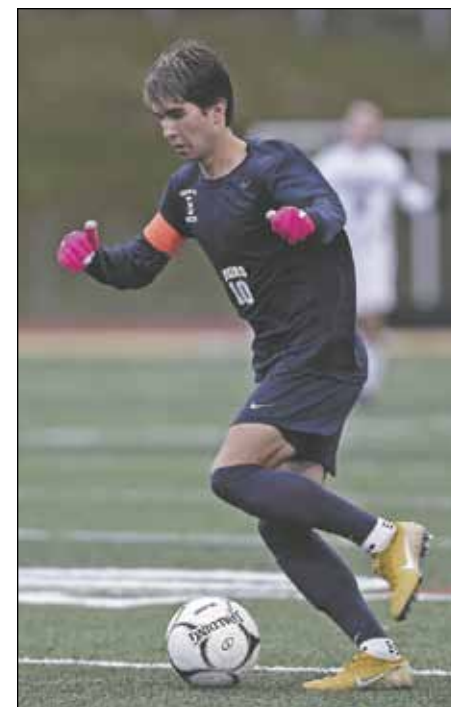
The Bears' Jason Oppong and Colby Cho start to celebrate after Oppong's third goal of the game, which turned out to be decisive in the Class B final.



Briarcliff players, left to right, Alex Cabeca, goalie Andrew Kanovsky and Colby Cho hold the championship plaque after the Bears won the school's first-ever boys' soccer sectional title on Saturday.



Briarcliff's Jason Oppong heads the ball past Blind Brook goalie Michael Abrutyn for his third goal of the game in Saturday's Class B sectional final.



Briarcliff's Aex Cabeca controls the ball in the second half of the Class B final at Lakeland High School.



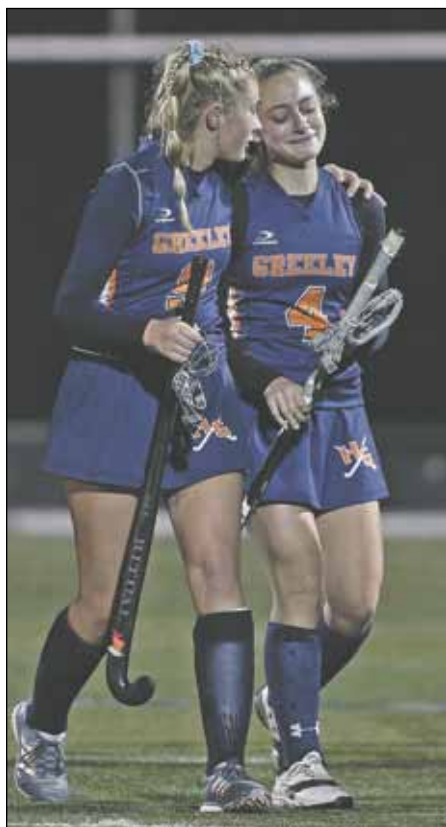
The Quakers' Caroline Flannery (left) and Olivia Barlow await a pass during a penalty corner in the second half of Saturday night's title game.



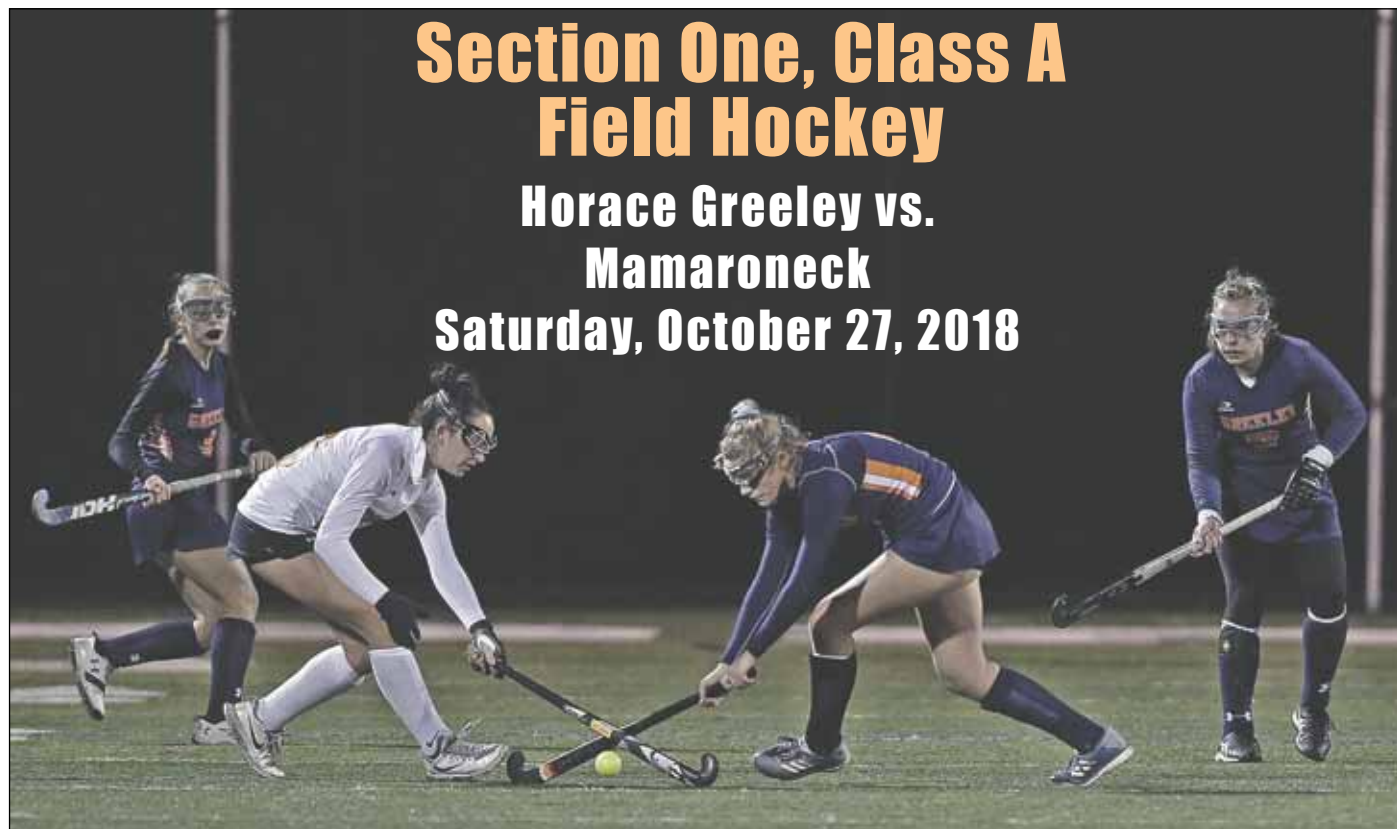
Horace Greeley junior Sophia Rutman moves the ball up the field late in Saturday night's championship game against the Mamaroneck Tigers.



Greeley sophomore Natalie Laskowski watches the ball leave her stick in the second half of Saturday night's title game, won by Mamaroneck 2-0.



Greeley sophomores Lily Schoonmaker (left) and Grace Arrese dejectedly walk off the field following the Quakers' 2-0 loss to Mamaroneck.



Greeley's Lily Schoonmaker battles for possession of the ball with teammates Grace Arrese and Natalie Laskowski looking on during Saturday's Class A sectional championship game.



Lily Schoonmaker tries to stop a Mamaroneck pass up the field in the Class A title game.



The Quakers' Grace Arrese gets set to fire a shot toward the goal in the second half of the sectional final.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Sophia Rutman gets set to send the ball up the field as the Quakers battle for the sectional title.



It was another disappointing ending for Emma Silverman and the rest of the Quakers, who lost to Mamaroneck in the sectional final for the second straight year.



Olivia Barlow of Greeley is pressured as she moves the ball along the right sideline at Brewster High School.



Horace Greeley head coach Sukhwinder Singh Sandhu watches his team battle for the sectional championship on Saturday evening.



Pleasantville's Mary Grace O'Neill (9) and Lyndsey Minerva battle for the ball in front of the Bronxville goal midway through the second half. Minerva wound up scoring on the play to cut the Broncos' two-goal lead in half.



Mary Grace O'Neill of Pleasantville traps the ball in the second half of the Class B championship game against the Bronxville Broncos.



A dejected Lyndsey Minerva slowly walks off the field following Pleasantville's 3-1 loss to Bronxville in the Section 1, Class B championship game up at Arlington High School.



Pleasantville goalie Lila Donohue chases the ball in front of the net early in the second half of the sectional championship game.



Pleasantville sophomore midfielder Amber Nanaj kicks the ball down the field in the second half of Sunday's Class B championship game against Bronxville at Arlington High School.



The Panthers' Katie Moses tries to break free for a scoring opportunity in Sunday's Class B title game.



Carolyn Lee races to her left to gain control of the ball in the second half of Sunday's title game.



Pleasantville junior Allison Portera passes the ball across the field in the sectional final.



The Panthers' Grace Capko dribbles up the field in the sectional title game.



The Panthers' Lyndsey Minerva finds herself in a midfield battle for the ball during Sunday's Class B championship game.



Junior Avery Manna gets control of the ball in Pleasantville's 3-1 loss to Bronxville on Sunday.



Pleasantville sophomore Arielle Wilson is poised to receive a pass on a penalty corner in last Tuesday's playoff game against Pawling.

SPORTS SCENE



Horace Greeley players celebrate after scoring a second-half goal in their 4-1 road victory against Clarkstown North in the Class A semifinals.



Briarcliff's Kaitlyn Ryan moves the ball up the left sideline in last Tuesday's sectional quarterfinal against Irvington.



Lauren Drillock of Pleasantville chases after the ball in the first half of Thursday's playoff win over the Croton-Harmon Tigers.



Sophie Ruhl of Pleasantville moves the ball up the field in the Panthers' 1-0 overtime playoff loss to eventual sectional champ Pawling.



Pleasantville's Isabelle Kapoor passes the ball during last Thursday's Class B sectional semifinal vs. visiting Croton.



Greeley sophomore Emma Terjesen hits the ball up the field during the Quakers' semifinal playoff win at Clarkstown North last Thursday afternoon.



Pleasantville's Allison Portera gets a step on the Croton defense and is on her way to scoring a goal in the Panthers' Class B semifinal victory last Thursday afternoon.



Maya Celaj takes the ball past midfield in Briarcliff's 2-0 victory over Irvington in the Class B quarterfinals last week.



Briarcliff freshman Samantha Franks chases after the ball in the first half of the Bears' quarterfinal playoff win over visiting Irvington.



Pleasantville's Victoria Craig runs past Pawling's Kiera Tucci and arrives in front of the goal during the Panthers' 1-0 overtime loss to the Tigers in the Class B sectionals.



Delaney Cotter of Pleasantville and Ava Panzer of Pawling set their sights on the ball in the second half of last Tuesday's sectional playoff game.

Ardsley's Defense Smothers Westlake in the Semifinals

By Danny Lopriore

Jalen Leonard-Osbourne scored twice to lead the Ardsley offense, but it was the Panthers' defense that rose to the occasion to stop Westlake's ground game on a damp, drizzly Saturday night for a 28-6 victory in the Section 1, Class B semifinals at Edgemont High School.

The unbeaten and top-seeded Panthers (8-0), who lost to Westlake in last year's semifinals, rolled into next week's championship game where they will meet fifth-seeded Putnam Valley on Friday, November 2 at 4:30 p.m. at Mahopac High School.

Panthers quarterback Frankie Belarge, who completed 9 of 10 passes for 128 yards, kept the offense focused despite some early struggles to move the ball and a rash of holding penalties.

"We're always staying humble, taking one game at a time, respecting the opponent and not looking too far ahead," Belarge said. "I think that's why we have

done so well so far this season. We had a great team in 2014 and we want to exceed their expectations, get the section title and achieve all of our goals."

Westlake stunned the crowd and Ardsley by opening the game with an on-sides kickoff and recovering the ball at the Panthers' 34-yard line to set up for an early score. But the Wildcats could not capitalize on their great field position. The Ardsley defense held and kept up the pressure throughout the game, shutting out the Wildcats until the final minute.

"We wanted to set the tone early and any time you get on the board first you get momentum for the rest of the game," Westlake quarterback Jason Ausiello said. "We just couldn't get going and both teams played good defense. It's hard to tell what was happening on the line. They were pushing hard on their side, trying to stop our running game. Our defense held them in the first half, too."

Leonard-Osbourne had the lone

touchdown in a tightly-played first half as both defenses gave up yards grudgingly. The fleet-footed running back rushed the ball 13 times for 74 yards and had two big runs negated by holding penalties. He scored from six yards out with nine seconds remaining in the first quarter and the extra point gave Ardsley a 7-0 lead that held up through the rest of the first half.

"All week, our scout team offense gave the defense the best look it could and we knew their playbook inside and out," Belarge said. "Our defense made no mistakes the past three days in practice. We felt really confident. Our line had a little trouble in the first half, but we made adjustments, talked about it at halftime and came out on top. Getting (Osbourne) going was important."

After intermission, the Panthers got their offense in gear. Osbourne scored from the 10-yard line to make it 14-0 with 6:20 left in the third quarter and

Ardsley added scores by Belarge and Brett Locciasano to stretch its lead to 27-0 midway through the fourth.

Westlake's lone score came on a touchdown pass from Ausiello to Dylan Ahearn with just 1:01 remaining in the game.

Ardsley defeated Putnam Valley 48-14 earlier this season with Belarge throwing three touchdown passes, making the top seed the favorite to win next week.

Westlake's Vincent Spaziante, who helped the Wildcats defeat defending state champion Pleasantville two weeks ago in the team's regular-season finale, was disappointed in the outcome, but proud of his team.

"No one works harder than this team," Spaziante said. "We played together as a family this year. We improved and stayed together. This was a really tough team to beat. We didn't let down at all. We're proud of our guys."



Pleasantville's Aidan Lynch finished eighth in a field of 245 runners on Friday afternoon.



Kaylei Raefski was the first Pleasantville runner to finish in Friday's race.



Devin Franks of Briarcliff, just an eighth-grader, was 37th in a field of 195 runners.

CROSS COUNTRY Westchester County Championships



Jennifer Mui of Byram Hills and Charlotte Sendek of Briarcliff run side by side as they near the finish line during Friday afternoon's Westchester County Championships at Croton Point Park.



Briarcliff sophomore Bryant Seok is surrounded by a pair of Irvington runners as he nears the finish line at Croton Point Park.



A group of Fox Lane runners are bunched together at the start of Friday's Westchester County Championships at Croton Point Park.



Horace Greeley's Max Notarnicola, who finished in fifth place, heads toward the finish line with teammate Joe O'Brien right behind him at Friday's county championships.

Quest for the Title



**Mary Grace O'Neill and the Panthers
are Stopped by the Bronxville Broncos
in Sunday's Class B Championship Game**