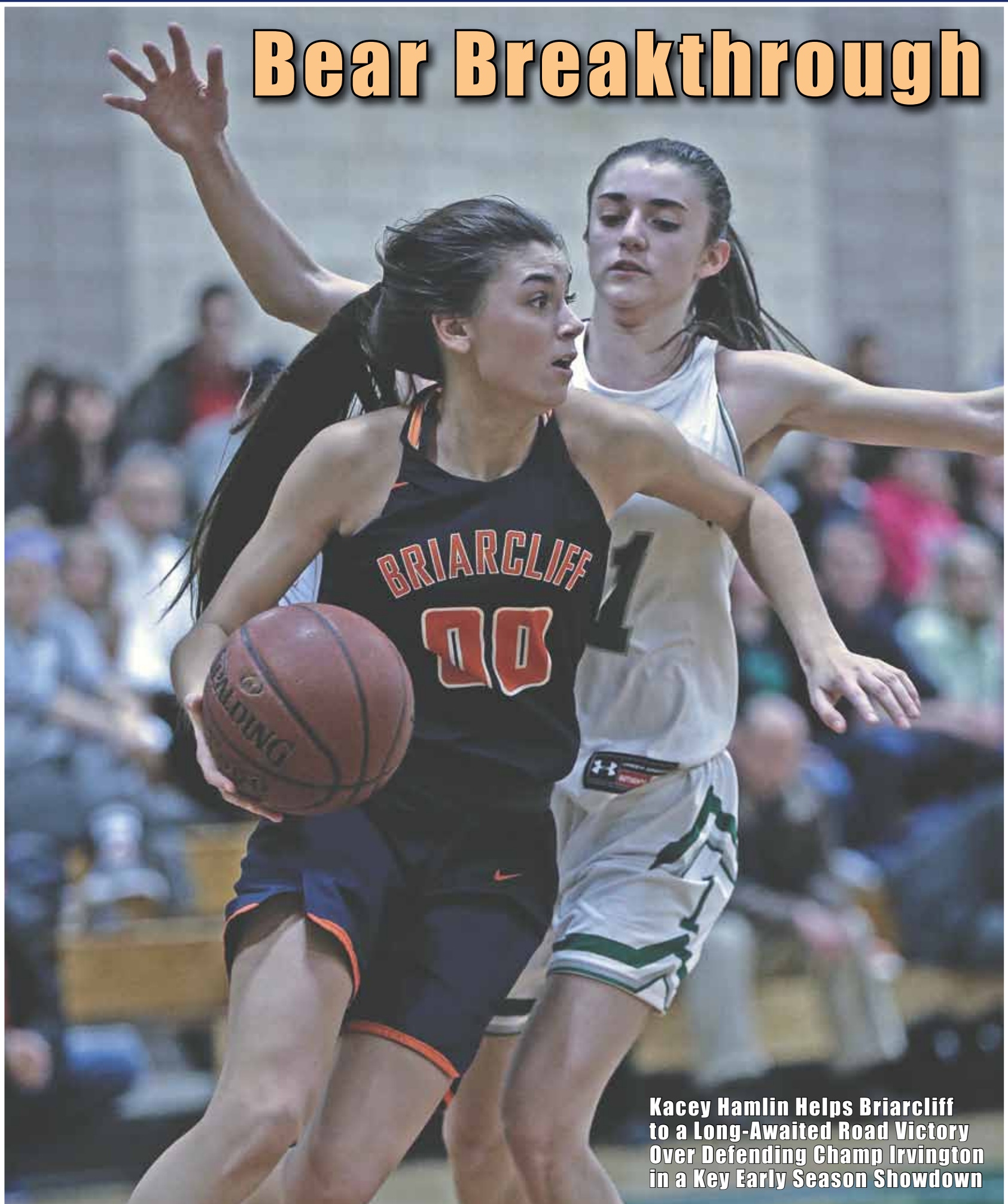


Bear Breakthrough



**Kacey Hamlin Helps Briarcliff
to a Long-Awaited Road Victory
Over Defending Champ Irvington
in a Key Early Season Showdown**

Crerend's 3-Pointers Lift Fox Lane Over the Indians

By Andy Jacobs

A year ago, back when he was just a sophomore, Will Crerend probably would have been watching the final minute of a tense and dramatic Fox Lane basketball game from a seat somewhere on the Foxes' bench.

But on Saturday evening, with the Foxes and neighboring rival John Jay locked in an up-for-grabs battle, Crerend was on the court during the pivotal last moments and providing the two biggest baskets of the night, both of them 3-pointers.

It was a 3-point shot by Crerend from the right wing with just two seconds remaining that broke the fifth tie of the game and lifted the Foxes to a thrilling 49-46 victory over the visiting Indians in the championship game of their inaugural Booster Club Tip-Off Tournament. Crerend finished with a game-high 15 points and earned the tourney's MVP honors.

"Last year, we had a lot of guards playing," said the soft-spoken Crerend, who has helped the Foxes to a 4-2 start to the 2018-19 season. "I didn't get a lot of minutes last year. This year, I'm vaulted into a starting spot. My confidence has definitely grown a lot throughout these first couple games and I feel like I'm right there with everybody else."

On the Foxes' final, fateful possession, with nine seconds remaining, Crerend received an inbounds pass from Josh Olsen just outside the lane and quickly dribbled away from the basket and out beyond the 3-point line. Once there, a little pump fake freed him for an instant and he launched a shot that rattled around the rim and dropped through for the game-winner.

"Overtime would've been tough," admitted Fox Lane head coach Mike Tomassi, whose team had been struggling

to hold off the Indians despite a 10-point lead with just five minutes remaining. "I'd still take us in overtime, but I didn't want to go to overtime. Their train was rolling full speed ahead. We were kind of trying to stop it. Glad Will made that shot."

The teams were tied at 11-11 after the opening quarter, but after Crerend connected on a 3-point shot from the right elbow early in the second period to give the Foxes a 15-14 edge, they never trailed again. His trey began a 9-0 spurt that opened up a seven-point lead. Two free throws by Crerend with four seconds remaining in the half gave the Foxes a 26-19 lead at the break.

Back-to-baskets by sophomore forward Oliver Shevick and point guard Jordan Alvarado at the start of the third quarter stretched the Foxes' advantage to 11 points. With just under two minutes left in the period, an old-fashioned 3-point play by John Rocco Trumpour gave Fox Lane its largest lead of the night, 34-22.

But the quarter ended with the Indians' Shane Martinsen and Mason DiFalco hitting 3-point shots to slice the Foxes' big lead in half. Shevick provided a top-of-the-key 3-pointer to start the final period and give Fox Lane a bit more breathing room. With exactly five minutes remaining, Olsen, who finished with 13 points, eight rebounds and five assists and was named to the all-tournament team, scored on a put-back that gave the Foxes a



The Foxes' John Rocco Trumpour is pressured by John Jay's Bryce Ford during Saturday night's tournament game.



Junior guard Trey DiCarlo of Fox Lane dribbles the ball in Saturday's game as John Jay's Charles Murphy applies backcourt pressure.

43-33 lead.

But the Foxes then went scoreless for more than four minutes while John Jay ran off 10 consecutive points, knotting the contest with 55 seconds to go as Charles Murphy made both ends of a 1-and-1 free-throw opportunity.

"We just have to execute a little better on the offensive end," said Tomassi, looking back on his team's nearly disastrous fourth-quarter scoring drought. "We get a little stagnant. You know, we're a young team playing-wise, even for the seniors. We have a lot of underclassmen playing and we just have to trust each other and trust the system."

With the score even at 43 apiece, Crerend turned into the Foxes' Mr. Clutch and finally ended the Indians' big run. He got a skip pass from Olsen and proceeded to swish a 3-pointer from the left wing with 37 seconds on the clock. But just 17 seconds later, the Indians' Martinsen tied the game again with a 3-point basket from the right corner, setting the stage for the last-second heroics from Crerend.

"We had a play drawn up," said Crerend, who had scored nearly half the Foxes' points in a big win over Uniondale one week earlier. "It was supposed to come to me in the corner, which it did. And then Olsen was supposed to cut to the hoop. They defended it well, face-guarded Josh. I really didn't have an angle to give it to him. I don't know. I just let it go and it went in."

"Will, he's the man," said Tomassi. "He plays hard, he's gritty. For what he lacks maybe in physical gifts and tools, he just makes up with heart. The kid doesn't stop. He made some big shots tonight and that's what real athletes do. Real athletes don't get nervous in the moment. They step up and rise to the occasion, and he did a fantastic job tonight doing that."



Fox Lane point guard Jordan Alvarado passes the ball in the first half of Saturday's 49-46 tournament win over the John Jay Indians.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Josh Olsen shoots the ball in Fox Lane's dramatic victory over visiting John Jay this past weekend.



Fox Lane sophomore forward Oliver Shevick takes the ball to the basket in the title game of the Booster Club Tip-Off Tournament.



Will Crerend's late-game shooting helped Fox Lane defeat John Jay on Saturday night.

Bears Make a Statement With a Win Over Irvington

By Andy Jacobs

The path to a Section One championship for the Briarcliff girls' basketball team has been blocked for quite some time by the Irvington Bulldogs, who most recently have ended the Bears' title aspirations in the Class B finals the past two years.

But last Wednesday afternoon, playing on the Bulldogs' elevated home floor, the Bears took a giant step toward finally putting an end to the decade-long Irvington dynasty. With Kacey Hamlin scoring 19 points and Alana Lombardi adding 18, they led Irvington start to finish and came away with a 52-43 statement victory over the four-time defending sectional champs.

"It's always nice to beat the section champ," said Briarcliff head coach Don Hamlin shortly after his Bears had improved to 5-0 this year. "It wasn't pretty, but I was happy for them because they kind of a little bit got a monkey off their back. They beat us in the section final last year, so that's significant. But it's a December 12th game, early in the season, and I would just anticipate both teams getting better."

Lombardi's lightning-quick layup mere seconds after the game's opening tip gave the Bears a lead they never relinquished. By the final minutes of the second quarter, the Briarcliff advantage had grown to 14 points and the Bulldogs never got closer than seven the rest of the way.

Late in the third quarter, the senior guard Hamlin hit on a runner in the lane and then soon added a pair of free throws to give the Bears their largest lead of the day, 37-21. But the period ended with the Bulldogs on an 8-0 run, assuring that the



The Bears' Alana Lombardi goes up for an easy two points in the first quarter of the 52-43 win over four-time defending champion Irvington.

fourth quarter would have some drama.

"They still have a little of 'they're playing Irvington in their heads,' so I don't think they ever really settled down and played their best," said coach Hamlin about his players. "I just felt like we needed to breathe a little bit. I think we got a little excited that we were up."

The Bears, still waiting for the return of star senior Maddie Plank, out due to an offseason knee injury, opened up an 11-5 edge on Hamlin's left-corner 3-pointer with 1:37 to go in the first quarter. Exactly a minute later, an inside bucket by Briarcliff sophomore center Jordan Smith closed the scoring for the period and gave the Bears a 13-8 lead.

An old-fashioned 3-point play by Smith to start the second quarter, followed by another jumper from Hamlin from beyond the arc, enabled the Bears to stretch their lead to 19-10. Midway through the quarter, a 7-0 Briarcliff spurt that began with a Lombardi 3-pointer and ended with a Smith put-back left Irvington, unbeaten at the start of the day, facing a 26-12 deficit.

Even though the Bears failed to score for six minutes starting late in the opening half, Irvington was only able to whittle five points off of their lead. A fast-break layup by Julia Barbalato, assisted by Julia Dalessandro, soon restored the 14-point Briarcliff cushion.

But after Hamlin's two foul shots extended the Bears' lead to 16 points, they went scoreless again the rest of the quarter, while the Bulldogs responded with four straight baskets to close within 37-29 heading to the final period. With three fouls on both Smith and Lombardi, the Bears had cause to be concerned.

Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, the fourth quarter began with back-to-back



Briarcliff guard Kacey Hamlin is surrounded by a trio of Irvington Bulldogs after crossing midcourt in the second half of last Wednesday's game.

baskets by Lombardi, who was the MVP of the Bears' annual Booster Club Tournament a few days earlier. After a 5-0 Irvington run narrowed the Briarcliff lead to 41-34, Lombardi answered with a 15-foot pullup jumper and then Barbalato added two free throws to open up an 11-point lead again with 4:31 remaining.

Irvington was still within 49-40 with just over two minutes to go and Smith had already fouled out before Hamlin delivered the clinching basket. Open on the left elbow, she got the ball and connected on a 3-pointer from well beyond the arc to seal the outcome with

1:36 left on the clock.

"That was a big 3, yeah," said coach Hamlin about the shot his daughter hit from just a few feet away from where he was watching. "That was the first time that I really felt, 'You know what, we're gonna win this game.' Honestly, every time they made a run, we got a big basket and pushed it back to double figures. In those moments, we were pretty clutch."

Whether or not the two teams wind up meeting in the sectional final for a third straight time, Hamlin is looking forward to soon having the multitasking Plank back on the court leading the Bears.

"We have to make sure when and if we get everybody back, we jell," he said. "And that's important. This team, as it's constituted right now, has done a nice job coming together. Obviously Maddie's gonna help us a lot. We've just gotta make sure that we continue to jell together. And the earlier she comes back, the more time we'll have to do that."



Julia Dalessandro of Briarcliff feeds the ball into the post in the first half of the Bears' win at Irvington.



Briarcliff sophomore center Jordan Smith moves past Irvington's Katie LeBuhn along the baseline during last Wednesday's game, won by the visiting Bears.



Briarcliff's Julia Barbalato gets set to pass the ball as Irvington's Miranda Farman tries to apply some pressure in the first half of last week's showdown.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

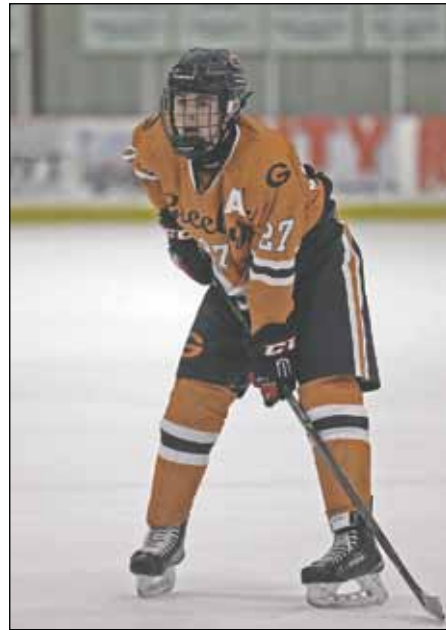


The Quakers' Liam Whitehouse sends a shot on goal in the 5-1 victory over Brewster/Yorktown at the Brewster Ice Arena.



Will Silberstein of Greeley watches his shot from the blue line head toward the goal in the third period of Saturday's win at the Brewster Ice Arena.

Unbeaten Quakers Cruise to a 5-1 Victory Over Brewster/Yorktown



Horace Greeley junior Evan Scott waits for the puck to drop during a faceoff in the win over Brewster/Yorktown.



Jake Potter controls the puck in Horace Greeley's victory on Saturday evening.



Horace Greeley goalie Ben Madden makes a save in the third period of Saturday night's win over Brewster/Yorktown.



The Quakers' Ryan Renzulli controls the puck in the corner during the second period of the 5-1 win over the combo team of Brewster and Yorktown on Saturday night.



Valhalla junior Marlin Wise sends up a shot in the lane over Irvington's Michael Brennen during last week's Viking win.

Vikings Defeat Irvington



John Lynch scores an easy fast-break basket in Valhalla's home win over Irvington last Wednesday evening.



The Vikings' Jordan Rush sails toward the basket as Irvington's James Rhodes tries to stop him in the second half of last Wednesday's game.



Valhalla junior point guard Sebastian Pacheco dribbles the ball up the floor vs. Irvington.



Valhalla's Marco Mazza fires a long jump shot in the second half of last week's game against visiting Irvington.

Bobcats Edge Greeley With a Fourth-Quarter Comeback

By Danny Lopriore

Maggie Walsh took a pass just to the right of the basket and quickly flipped in a layup with seconds remaining in the game, lifting visiting Byram Hills to a thrilling 44-43 victory over Horace Greeley last Tuesday.

The basket by Walsh, who scored a game-high 15 points, completed a furious comeback that saw the Bobcats use a pressing defense and timely long-range shooting to erase a 34-24 deficit going into the fourth quarter. Her layup came with three seconds remaining in the game.

Walsh gave the defense credit and attributed the winning basket to the passer, Sophia Villani, whose look inside found her teammate.

"We practice that play all the time, so I knew where the play was going. I got the ball right there (from Villani) where I was open," Walsh said. "I think we stole the momentum in the fourth quarter and made so many big plays and big shots. It was a good win, especially after being behind all game."



Maggie Walsh of Byram Hills drives past Greeley's Brianna Gadaleta on her way to scoring the game-winning basket late in last Tuesday's game.



Greeley's Safia Gecaj is surrounded by Byram Hills players, left to right, Sophia Villani, Maggie Walsh and Olivia Picca during the second half of last Tuesday's game.

The Bobcats opened the season with two wins and now have a lot of momentum as the calendar year comes to a close. Coach Tara Ryan was impressed with her team's ability to hang in despite being down most of the game.

"Greeley has great size and we tried the drive in, but didn't get much and were hesitant," Ryan said. "When we went outside, we forced some shots. We don't have a million things on offense, so we needed the pressure defense to get us back into the game."

The Quakers (2-2) scored first and opened a solid 12-5 lead using a strong half-court defense, good rebounding and strong inside scoring led by Safia Gecaj, who had four points and four rebounds in the first quarter. The home team extended its lead to 24-14 at halftime, limiting the Bobcats' outside shooting game.

Quakers coach Sarah Schum said her team was prepared well, but let the game slip away.

"We scout other teams well," Schum said. "We had a game plan and shocked them a little, knowing where they were going to be on offense. We did everything well until we lightened up a little and it cost us."

Behind by 10 points headed into the fourth quarter, the Bobcats finally found room to shoot on the perimeter. Beth



Greeley junior guard Jesse Harris shoots the ball in the fourth quarter of the Quakers' home game vs. Byram Hills.

Corelli and Gabrielle Ripka hit back-to-back 3s to slice the Quakers' lead to 34-30. The teams traded baskets until Jennifer Mui hit two free throws to give the Bobcats a 38-37 lead with three minutes left in the game. Mui finished with eight points and Ripka six for the winners.

"Once we get a few shots in, the ball starts rolling and we got that positive energy going," Ripka said. "I don't think anyone can stop that kind of offense if we make our shots. Our defense leads our offense and we got back in the game with a press and some steals. We try to be aggressive, call out where the ball is and that adds pressure. We haven't used the press like that this year. It worked well."

Brianna Gadaleta, who spent most of the game battling Walsh on the inside, led the Quakers with 14 points, including a long 3-point shot that cut the Bobcats' lead to 41-40 in the final minute of play.

Kat Genda added a 3-pointer to give Greeley a 43-42 edge with 44 seconds to play before Walsh hit the game winner.

Schum said the defensive lapses gave Byram Hills an opening.

"Their press didn't really change things,



Horace Greeley forward Michaela Santelia boxes out under the boards as teammate Jesse Harris and Maggie Walsh of Byram Hills look on in the second half of last Tuesday evening's game.

but we got away from our personal defensive game plan a little bit on two possessions that gave them six quick points," Schum said. Instead of putting on the gas and making a 10-point lead a 15-point lead, we stalled. We got a little freaked out, but give Byram credit. They were super aggressive in the fourth quarter and we let it get away."

Ryan, meanwhile, was relieved to get the big road win.

"Games like this turn on a lot of things, players sub in with a different view and make shots or we change a defense that can change things," she said. "Tonight, we were lucky enough to have things go our way. We did the things we've practiced doing and we can learn from how we didn't let up and played hard all the way to get the win."

Schum predicted the loss would motivate her team, which got nine points and 10 rebounds from Gecaj and eight points from Genda, including two 3-pointers.

"These are some of the hardest working girls in Section One and we coach them hard," Schum said. "I tell them we don't have the skills to not play defense and not box out and they buy into it. What we lack in skills, we make up in hard work. We'll bounce back, I guarantee that."



Byram Hills sophomore guard Olivia Picca is closely guarded by Greeley's Safia Gecaj during last week's game in Chappaqua.



Byram Hills point guard Jennifer Mui dribbles across midcourt as Horace Greeley's Jesse Harris defends in last week's game, won by the visiting Bobcats.



The Quakers' Brianna Gadaleta dives for a loose ball along the baseline late in the fourth quarter of last Tuesday's home game.



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The Bobcats' Sophie Maniscalco moves the ball up the right sideline.



Byram Hills cross country runner Nico Rios competes in the sectional championships at Bowdoin Park back in November.



Bobcat quarterback Jack Kenny runs with the football in the easy road win over Sleepy Hollow early in the season.



Alyssa Margolin steps forward to hit a slice backhand during one of her singles matches early in the season.



Soccer star Kallie Hoffman sets her sights on the ball and a good scoring chance during a Bobcat home game.

BYRAM HILLS FALL 2018



Sebastien Sampere races up the field with the ball in the Bobcats' tie against visiting Jericho.



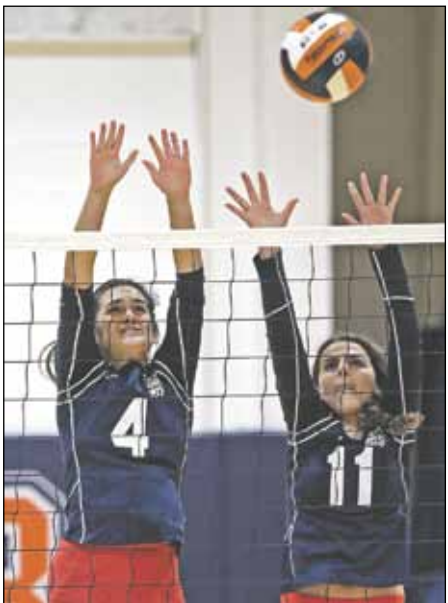
Shea Gordon heads toward the left sideline with the football after making a catch.



Michael Kalian gets set to pass the ball up the field during a Byram Hills home game.



Jennifer Mui heads toward the finish line in the Westchester County Championships at Croton Point Park.



Savannah Kirkwood (left) and Julie Monforte rise together trying to block the ball in the Bobcats' road match against Briarcliff.



The Bobcats' Izzy Sullivan turns on the speed as she pursues the ball in the middle of the field.



Victoria Vettoretti sends the ball up the field during a Bobcat home field hockey game late in the season.



Matt Weiler picks up big yardage as he carries the ball in the Bobcats' home win over Fox Lane.

Fox Lane and Pleasantville Win Dual-Meet Titles

By Tony Pinciario

So much for the notion that Fox Lane will be down this year without the graduated Matt Grippi and Johnny Santos, two sectional champs and state place finishers in 2018.

Fox Lane has proven, through the first two weeks of December, that the road to a Section 1 team title goes through the Foxes.

One week after winning the Mike Nardone (Ossining) Dual-Meet Tournament, Fox Lane stepped up and won the Section 1, Division I Dual-Meet Championship. And the Foxes did it with a thrilling semifinal win over third-seeded and host North Rockland.

The Foxes won the last three matches, including a Quincy Downes pin in the final bout, to overcome North Rockland 34-33. Fox Lane, seeded seventh, then beat No. 12 Mahopac 49-21 in the final. Mahopac reached the final with a 42-36 win over top-seeded Suffern in the other semifinal. It was Mahopac's first trip to the Section 1, Division I Dual-Meet final.

Fox Lane advances to the New York State Division I Dual-Meet Championship, Saturday, Jan. 26, at Onondaga Community College.

"The match was very intense, every point was fought for by both teams and both teams competed really hard," Fox Lane coach Anthony Rodrigues said.

Senior Amos Rivera and the team were confident Lucas Friedman, R.J. Gierum and Downes would seal the deal.

Friedman registered a major decision and Gierum a decision, making the score 33-28. In order for Fox Lane to win, Downes had to pin his opponent, and the veteran wrestler added the exclamation point.

"The match was very exciting and emotional," Amos Rivera said. "Everyone went out with the intention of winning, but, more importantly, scoring bonus points. It was a repeat of last year's final, so we knew North Rockland was determined to wrestle hard and beat us."

Fox Lane followed up its Dual-Meet title with a third-place finish at the Tony Carlucci Dual-Meet Tournament. The young Foxes are currently 14-1 and proving the program's tradition is still on display.

"The goal always remains the same no matter who is in the room," said Rivera, the 2018 Section 1, Division I



Pleasantville's Victor Perlleshi

120-pound runner-up. "Being number one is always what people look at, and although we lost some great wrestlers I'm very impressed with how everyone on the team is looking to not only make a name for themselves, but continue to come out and wrestle their heart out.

"Repeating as dual-meet champs feels amazing. It shows our program can still thrive even though we graduated some very good wrestlers," added Rivera. "To us, we consider this a 'coming-out party' in that it shows us that we are better than we think we are and that we can do extremely well this season."

Fox Lane finished 6-1 at the Carlucci, with the loss to Springfield (Ma.)

Victor Perlleshi and his Pleasantville teammates were inching closer and closer, annually, to beating Pearl River.

"They always would end up getting the upper hand on us," said the two-time Section 1, Division II champion and senior.

This time, Pleasantville grabbed the upper hand and the result was a 45-39 victory to win the Section 1, Division II Dual-Meet Tournament for the first time in program history.

It also allowed Pleasantville to exact some revenge after Pearl River beat the Panthers in the 2017 Division II Dual-Meet final.

Bernarducci cited 170-pounder Jon Albaum as providing an early momentum-changer. He also credited 106-pounder Quinn Egan with a pivotal win.

"Jon had a first-period pin after Jack Chesman had opened the match with a pin at 160," Bernarducci said. "We knew our lightweights had to come through and Quinn Egan got a huge victory over Matthew Shaw, who had pinned him twice last year."

Christian Perlleshi (99 pounds) and Julio Barco (120) provided Pleasantville with a lift.

Along with winning the dual-meet championship, Pleasantville has wrestled in the Mike Nardone and Tony Carlucci Dual-Meet Tournaments against high-caliber Division I teams. Pleasantville is currently 14-3.

The Panthers went 4-1 at the Nardone and 5-2 at the Carlucci. Two of those combined three losses were to Fox Lane and the other to Section 9 power Monroe-Woodbury.

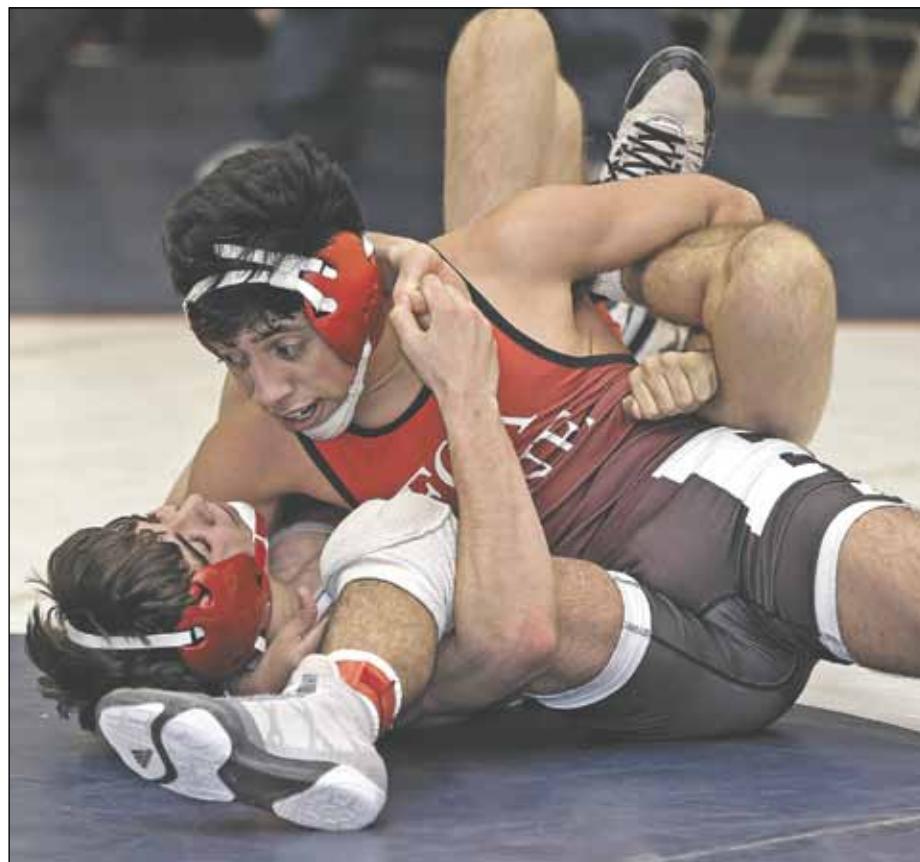
"Our team has wrestled in two very tough tournaments with many large-school powerhouses such as Fox Lane," Perlleshi said. "We've done pretty well at these tournaments and it really gives the guys on the team a taste of what top competition looks like. It's a big step in the dual-meet state championship.

"The team has also been making big jumps by having many guys step up such as Chris May, Eli Cuniffe and Jon Albaum."

Pleasantville advances to the New York State Division II Dual-Meet Championship, Saturday, Jan. 26, at Onondaga Community College.

"We were all working extremely hard leading up to this match to avoid another loss to them," Perlleshi said. "This is the first time Pleasantville won the dual-meet and most certainly not the last."

Veteran Pleasantville coach Bob



Fox Lane's Amos Rivera

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Where There's a Will, There's a Way

**Will Crerend's Two Clutch 3-Pointers
Lift Fox Lane to a Win Over John Jay
in Saturday Night's Thrilling Title Game
at the Foxes' Booster Club Tournament**

