

ExaminerSports

Pleasantville Girls Advance on Capko's Overtime Goal

By Danny Lopriore

Grace Capko played the lead role in a Hollywood movie scenario on Friday afternoon when she scored the game-winning goal with 1:14 remaining in overtime, lifting the Pleasantville girls' lacrosse team to a thrilling 16-15 victory over visiting North Salem in the quarterfinals of the Section 1, Class D playoffs.

Capko, who had her game-used stick taken from her by officials in the final moments of regulation time after it did not pass an inspection, used teammate Lauren Drillock's stick to score her sixth and game-winning goal in the overtime. There were a cast of Panthers who also played major parts in the win.

The third-seeded Panthers needed Capko's heroics after squandering a 13-3 lead as sixth-seeded North Salem scored the last eight goals in regulation time to tie the score at 15-15 and send the game into overtime.

"I guess Coach (Jaime Williams) called a stick check on No. 15 (Grace Curran) to slow their momentum, so their coach asked to check mine," said Capko, whose stick was okayed by officials in the pregame check. "I didn't think there was anything wrong with it, but they took it. I was upset, but everyone said don't let it get in your head. So I shook it off. I knew I had to stay focused and keep playing."

Capko, one of the smallest players on the field, made big play after big play, hawking Tiger players on defense and picking up loose balls until she finally had the ball on Drillock's borrowed stick in front of the Tigers' goal and sent it home to start a wild celebration.

"I waited until Kathryn (Finnegan) had the ball, then rolled back and it was there," Capko said. "I didn't want to shoot and miss because they would get the ball back. I waited and got close enough to be sure. It was amazing to see everyone celebrating."

Panther goalie Jessica Mullane's 10th save of the game was a game-saver when



Freshman Grace Capko scored six goals, including the game-winner in overtime, as Pleasantville defeated North Salem 16-15 in the Class D playoffs on Friday.

she stopped a shot early in the sudden-death overtime to set up Capko's game-winner.

"It was tough once they started getting so many chances in front of me, but the thing that goes through my mind is to see shots and never take my eye off the ball," said Mullane, who had a good idea what to expect on Curran's potential game-winning shot. "I knew where she liked to shoot and just kept my eye on the ball and got it. If it went by, it was because I missed it. But I didn't."

Paige Long was a force throughout the game, winning a number of draws to start the offense and playing a big role in helping to fill the gap left by Drillock's absence.



The Panthers' Jenna McAllister moves the ball across the field in the first half of Friday's sectional playoff game against North Salem.

"When you lose a player like Lauren, it's a big deal," Long said. "Coach told us to never let up and look ahead. We weren't comfortable without Lauren and they got going when they scored two, three goals. Me getting the draws was important and I am always aware of that. We're so happy to show we are a good team and overcame this."

Drillock, who scored three goals and assisted on two others, helped Pleasantville build its big lead before she was disqualified on penalties early in the second half. Without one of their key players, the Panthers lost their momentum, while the Tigers, led by Curran, overcame the big deficit. Curran took over midway through the second half and scored six of her eight



Pleasantville's Grace Hammond races toward the cage in the first half of the sectional quarterfinal game against visiting North Salem.

goals, including goals 14 and 15 to tie the score.

Jenna McAllister and Finnegan each scored twice for the Panthers, who moved on to play in the Class D semifinals.

Lydia Werlau had three goals and an assist, Amy and Jane Fetteroff each scored twice, Kelly McCarty had a goal and Jessica Reiner made eight saves in goal for the Tigers.

Mullane and Capko stressed that the Panthers wanted to push through the playoff run and make a statement for the girls' program.

"We need to finish what we started," Mullane said. "We came from not always being the best. People talk about our boys' team, but we want to prove to our town and the section and the state that we have a powerhouse too."

"A huge part of this win is that we can show our ability to do great things and we were predicted to lose here," Capko said. "Even though we're the three seed, we're encouraged about our chances and we wanted to show we can be the best."



Pleasantville sophomore Lauren Drillock sets her sights on the cage in Friday afternoon's home playoff victory over the North Salem Tigers.



Kathryn Finnegan of Pleasantville heads for the cage during the Panthers' 16-15 overtime win Friday in the Section 1, Class D quarterfinals.



Paige Long sets up the Pleasantville offense vs. visiting North Salem.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Top-Seeded Huskers Oust Fox Lane in the Semifinals

By Danny Lopriore

Ciara Frawley scored four times in the first half as the Yorktown girls' lacrosse team opened a six-goal lead and ran away with a 13-4 victory over visiting Fox Lane in a Section 1, Class B semifinal Monday.

The top-seeded Huskers advanced to the Class B final, while No. 4 seed Fox Lane had its season come to an end.

The Foxes stayed close early and trailed just 3-2 after senior attack Giana New scored her first goal of the game at the 15:04 mark of the first half. New added another goal in the second half and senior teammate Callie Wortman scored a goal in each half for the Foxes.

"We played hard all the way and had a great overtime win (in the quarterfinal), but we thought we had a chance to win the section," New said. "It's always small things with us and it takes experience to make those plays, like getting to loose balls. That is what the game is about. Everyone gave a big effort. We had a great last few years."

The Foxes reached the semifinal round with a thrilling 7-6 victory in four overtime sessions over No. 5 Tappan Zee on Friday when Alix Riley scored the game-winning goal on an assist from Natalie Bazyk. New scored four of the seven goals for Fox Lane and Bazyk and Jada Singleton each had a goal.

"We played pretty good defense most of the way and the younger players stepped up today," Wortman said. "It was our goal to win a Section. I thought we had a chance two years ago and came close again this year. It's disappointing, but we gave it our best."

Frawley took over with Yorktown clinging to the 3-2 lead. She scored twice as the Huskers ran off five straight goals to take an 8-2 halftime lead.

"I try to take opportunities to score when I get them and once you break that glass ceiling it opens up, but it's our defense



Fox Lane's Gianna New goes on attack from behind the cage during Monday afternoon's Class B semifinal game at Yorktown.

that is the key to our team," Frawley said. "We have other girls who can score and our goalie (Sophia Altimari) is back there, so we know she is going to make stops back there."

Altimari, who made six saves, said the defense in front of her was the key to her success.

"Our communication was very good and having everyone know where the ball is helps a lot," Altimari said. "I depend on that from our defense."

Ellen O'Callaghan helped the Yorktown



Tess Krensky passes the ball up the field during Fox Lane's sectional playoff game at Yorktown.



Fox Lane's Jada Singleton searches for an open teammate as she moves toward the cage in the Foxes' season-ending playoff loss to the top-seeded Huskers.

offense, scoring three goals and assisting on another. Caroline Garti and Sophia Spallone each added two goals for the Huskers.

"We know Ciara can take over the



The Foxes' Natalie Bazyk races up the field with the ball in the Section 1, Class B semifinal vs. host Yorktown on Monday afternoon.

game and score goals," O'Callaghan said. "She knows when to take a shot and when not to. When our offense is in a pit, she's able to keep momentum going. I think we are just playing well in every aspect."



Isabel Abt of Fox Lane scoops up a ground ball in the first half of Monday's sectional semifinal at top-seeded Yorktown.



Goalie Caroline Harrington and Megan Moky provide the last line of defense for Fox Lane in Monday afternoon's Class B sectional game.



Alix Riley of Fox Lane controls the ball behind the cage in the first half of Monday's sectional semifinal.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Quakers' Season Ends With an Outbracket Loss to Mahopac

By Andy Jacobs

After a disappointing regular season, the Horace Greeley baseball team went on the road Thursday afternoon with a chance of earning some playoff redemption.

Unfortunately for the Quakers, their postseason didn't last very long and turned out to be similar to their first 20 games. Mahopac right-hander Billy Moeller limited them to five hits over six innings, while striking out 10 batters, as the 15th-seeded host Indians defeated 18th-seeded Greeley 4-1 in a Section 1, Class AA outbracket game at Mahopac Falls Elementary School.

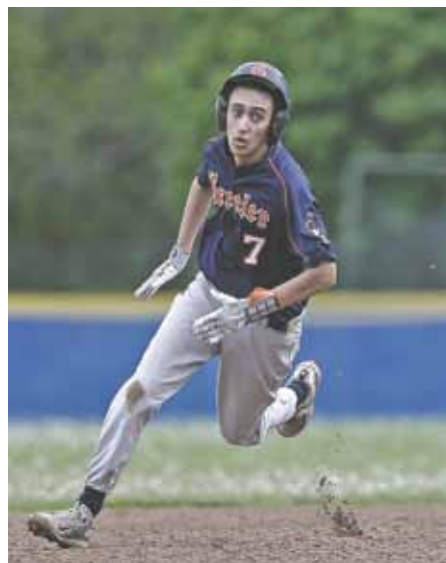
Frustration arrived quickly for the Quakers, who stranded a pair of runners in scoring position with only one out in the top of the first inning and then played from behind the whole game. In addition to all the strikeouts, they wound up hitting into three double plays.

"That was big," said Quakers head coach Anthony Marino about his team's inability to push across a run in the opening inning. "You always want to score the first run of the game and just put pressure on the other team. So it was big by them to get us out. It's always a big mental boost for the other team."

The Indians got another boost in the bottom of the first when leadoff hitter Mike Musantry lined Greeley starter Eli Thaler's first pitch of the day to the right-center-field gap for a double. One out later, after stealing third base, Musantry scored the game's first run on Tom Krasniqi's single up the middle.

Mahopac's Moeller collected his third and fourth strikeouts in the top of the second, then the Indians added to their lead in the bottom of the inning even though Thaler retired the first two batters. Connor Stepkoski reached on a slow roller down the third-base line and went to second on the errant, late throw to first base. He moved to third on a wild pitch and later scored after Steven Daly, who had walked, got caught in a rundown that lasted long enough for a dash toward home.

"We had him picked," said Marino about the Indians' Daly. "That's what's frustrating, knowing that we had that out. It should've been the third out of the inning and we just didn't execute the



The Quakers' Jake Berwin races toward third base in Thursday's Class AA outbracket game at Mahopac.

rundown properly. So we could've been out of that inning."

Trailing by two runs, the Quakers threatened in the top of the third inning. Jake Berwin led off with a single, then raced to third as Jacob Small slapped a single into right field. Small stole second, putting two runners in scoring position with no outs. But Alek Kevorkian lined to second base and Small was caught too far off the base for a double play. Nate Jbara's infield hit toward short then brought in Berwin with Greeley's only run of the game.

Thaler struck out the side in the fourth inning, but Moeller did the same to the Quakers in the top of the fifth. In the bottom of the inning, Mahopac reached Thaler for four hits, including an RBI double down the right-field line by the lefty-swinging Kyle Brandstetter and a run-scoring bloop single into left by another lefty, Anthony Caminiti. The inning ended with Jbara, the Quakers' catcher, picking off Dylan Brehm at second base, but Greeley was now facing a 4-1 deficit.

"You're keeping it to a one-run game and all of a sudden, it's more," said Marino. "And then you realize you haven't done much offensively for the whole game. It does make it difficult. But this one felt close because we had opportunities. We



Horace Greeley senior Eli Thaler delivers a pitch to the plate during Thursday's 4-1 loss to host Mahopac in a Class AA outbracket game.

just couldn't cash in."

There were opportunities in both the sixth and seventh innings for the Quakers. In the sixth, Jbara led off with a line single to right. But Greg Murray followed by grounding into a 6-4-3 double play and then Tyler Rosenberg flied out to left to end the inning. In the seventh, facing new Mahopac pitcher Anthony Volpicella, leadoff hitter Matt Lohrs blooped a single over short. Then Volpicella got a strikeout and induced pinch-hitter Adam Neuberger to hit into a game-ending 4-6-3 double play.

"Yeah, two times," said Marino about the late-game double plays turned by the Indians. "You hit the ball hard, so they have more time to do it. It was almost like tailor-made. They didn't even have to move. It was uncanny, unfortunately for us. But that's the game. They made the big plays when they had to."

The outbracket loss by the Quakers was probably not too disappointing to White Plains, seeded second in the sectional playoffs and waiting next in the opening round. They would have had to face Greeley ace Brandon Neeck, who was held back Thursday against 7-13 Mahopac for a chance to break open the tournament bracket with a pitching gem against the Tigers.

"Well, I told the kids from the beginning he's not pitching in this game," said Marino. "Eli Thaler is a very competent pitcher, a very good high school pitcher, and he's gonna pitch in college."

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Greeley shortstop Greg Murray sets his sights on a pop fly in the Quakers' season-ending game last Thursday.

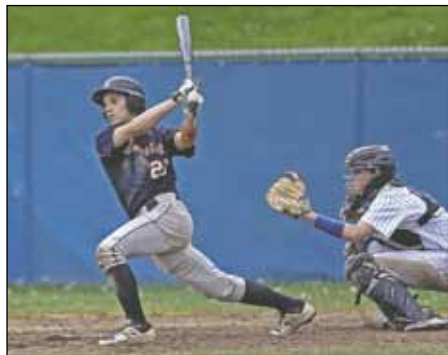
I felt very confident in him, and having Brandon ready for a White Plains if we made it. I have no second thoughts about that. Whether people agree, whatever."

Even though their season is over now, there still figures to be quite a bit of excitement for the Quakers with Neeck, the standout southpaw, expected to hear his name called during the MLB Draft in a couple of weeks.

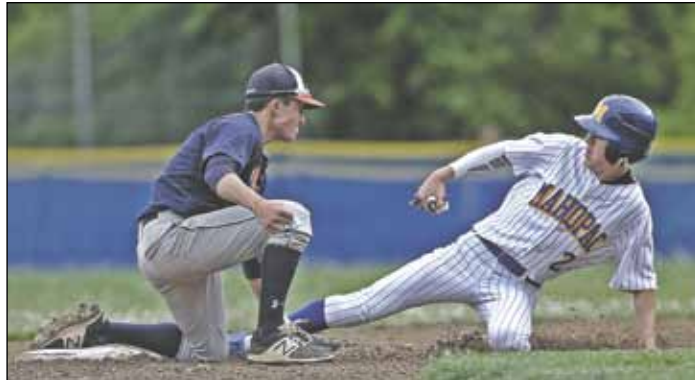
"Where he winds up, we'll find out in June," said Marino, who has been in frequent contact with seven of the MLB scouts. "We go back and forth. I give them anecdotal stories about his commitment, about his work ethic. And they seem to love him. It's exciting, not only for him and his family, but for his teammates and us, as coaches. It's everybody's dream, coaches and players alike."

The anticipation surrounding Neeck's immediate future will provide some solace for the Quakers after their 5-15 season, followed by a quick exit in the playoffs.

"It's frustrating because no matter what you have, you always want more," said Marino. "But at the same time, we have to be realistic. We want to set our goals realistically. This was not a 20-win team. But I don't believe we're a five-win team either. I think we should've been better than that."



Jacob Small of Horace Greeley swings the bat during the Class AA outbracket game on the diamond at Mahopac Falls Elementary School.



Horace Greeley's Greg Murray puts the tag on Mahopac's Tom Krasniqi at second base in plenty of time during last Thursday's outbracket playoff game.



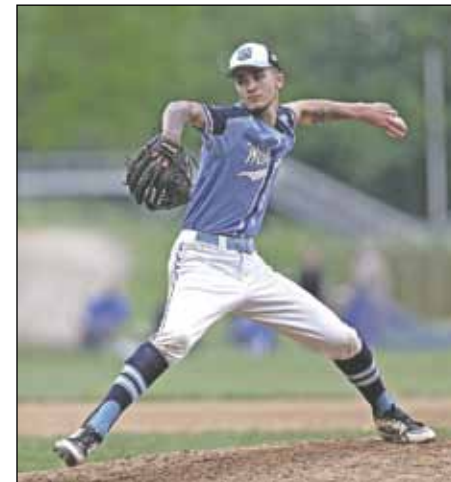
Greeley junior Nate Jbara scampers back to the bag after sliding past second base on a steal attempt in the third inning of Thursday's outbracket game vs. host Mahopac.



Westlake junior Vincent Spaziente bats in the sixth inning of Friday's come-from-behind playoff win over Croton.



Antonia Perino of Westlake gets set to connect on a pitch during the Wildcats' 9-0 playoff win over visiting North Salem.



Westlake southpaw Joe Mazzariello fires a pitch during Friday afternoon's extra-inning playoff win over visiting Croton-Harmon.



Daniella Mulvey of Westlake blasts a pitch toward center field in the Wildcats' playoff victory over North Salem.

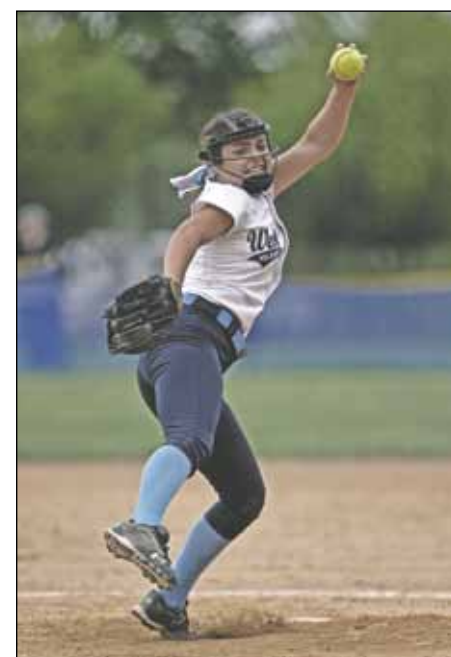
SPORTS SCENE



Shortstop Jamie Perfito throws out a North Salem runner in Westlake's 9-0 sectional win on Friday afternoon.



Westlake third baseman Tom Carpenter is about to fire the ball to first after fielding a grounder in the Wildcats' extra-inning playoff win over Croton.



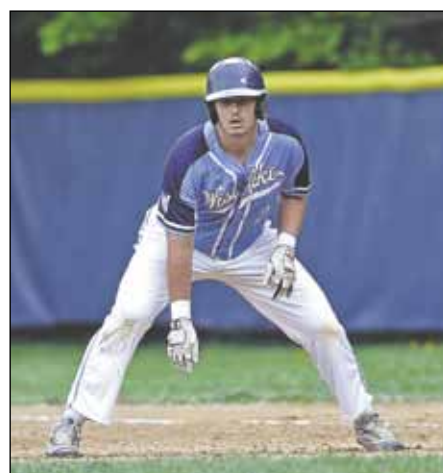
Westlake's Allison Brunetto delivers a pitch on her way to shutting out visiting North Salem in the Class B sectional playoffs on Friday afternoon.



Westlake second baseman Laine Peterson waits for a chance in the infield during Friday's home playoff game.



Westlake pitcher Tommy Iazzetta throws out a Croton batter at first base after fielding a bunt in Friday's Class B quarterfinal playoff game.



Sal Nardone of Westlake takes a lead off of first base in last week's Class B quarterfinal playoff game.

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Grace Scavone of Byram Hills runs past Hen Hud's Maddy Gough in the second half of Monday's sectional playoff game.



Horace Greeley catcher Nate Ibara sprawls on the dirt in front of the plate to field a late throw as Mahopac's Connor Stepkoski slides home with a run in Thursday's Class AA outbracket game.



Jacob Small of Horace Greeley runs toward second base during last Thursday's outbracket game against the Mahopac Indians.



Byram Hills' Lilly Ceisler chases after a loose ball during the Bobcats' 15-10 playoff loss to Hen Hud on Monday.



Byram Hills' Lindsey Grotta is determined to get to the cage during the Bobcats' 15-10 loss to Hen Hud in the sectional semifinals.



Taylor Duffy of Byram Hills races up the field with the ball in the second half of Monday's Class C semifinal playoff game.



It was the end of the road for Andrew Hildenbrand and his Greeley teammates as their season ended last Thursday with a 4-1 outbracket loss to Mahopac.



Kallie Hoffman of Byram Hills scored four goals in Monday's Class C semifinal, but it wasn't quite enough as the top-seeded Bobcats lost to Hendrick Hudson.



Horace Greeley standout pitcher Brandon Neeck (center) walks off the field Thursday afternoon with his dejected teammates following a loss to host Mahopac in a Class AA outbracket playoff game.



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