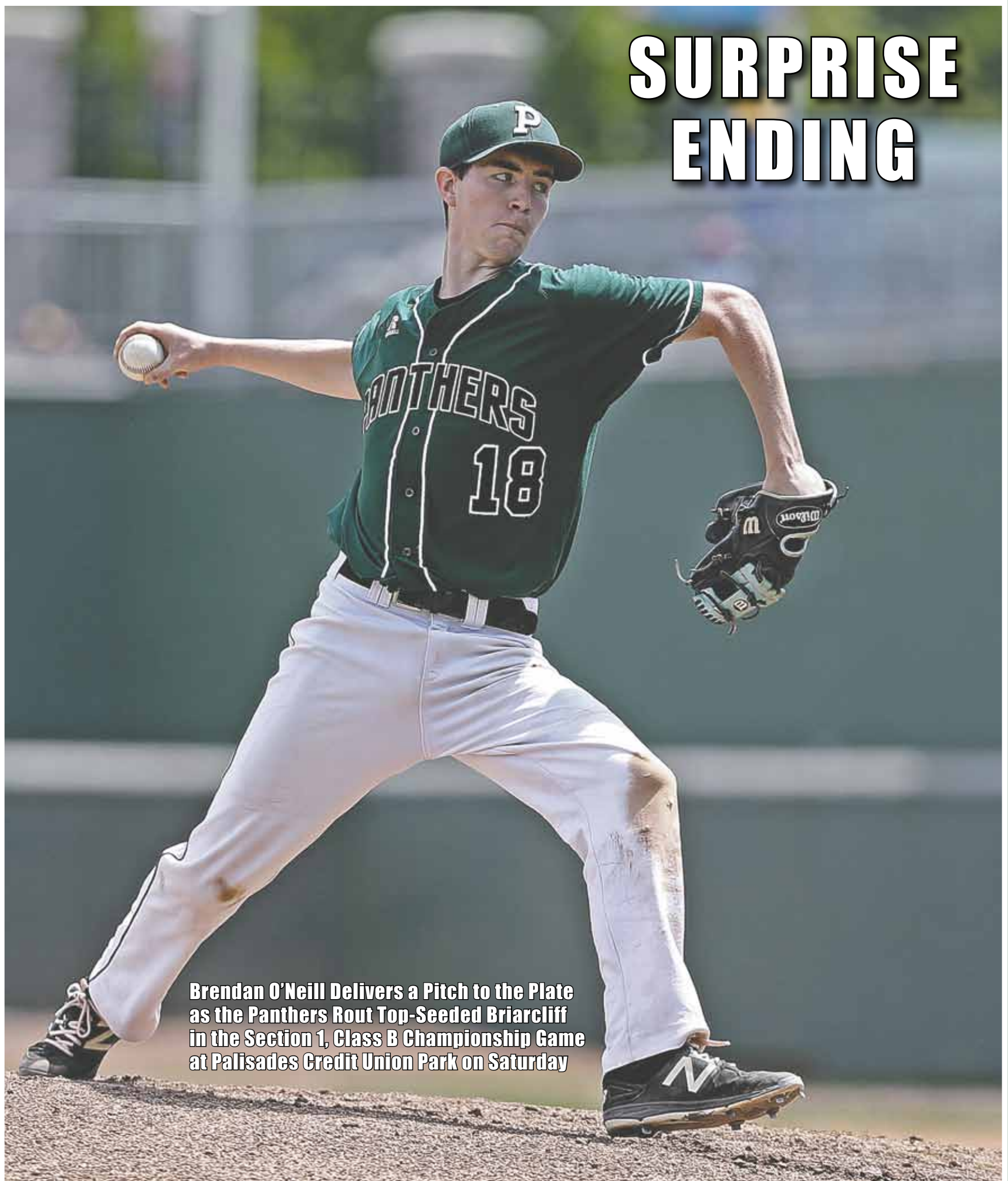


SURPRISE ENDING



**Brendan O'Neill Delivers a Pitch to the Plate
as the Panthers Rout Top-Seeded Briarcliff
in the Section 1, Class B Championship Game
at Palisades Credit Union Park on Saturday**

Panthers Use a Big Inning to Defeat Briarcliff in the Class B Final

By Andy Jacobs

A dream season for the Briarcliff baseball team was spoiled on Saturday by a nightmare of an inning.

The Panthers of Pleasantville broke open a close game by erupting for 10 runs in the top of the sixth inning and were soon celebrating a surprising 12-1 trouncing of the top-seeded Bears in the Section 1, Class B championship game at Palisades Credit Union Park. Junior right-hander Brendan O'Neill limited the potent Briarcliff lineup to a mere six hits as the second-seeded Panthers avenged two losses to the Bears midway through the regular season.

"This is great," said delighted Panthers head coach Dan Iorio moments after his team had received its championship hardware. "We went in here from the start knowing that we can win today's game. We had complete confidence coming off two great wins. And we just showed today now we are the best team in Class B."

The Bears began to self-destruct in the game's opening inning, helping Pleasantville plate two early runs that left their archrival playing from behind the rest of the way. Nick Salzarulo and Michael Matica drove in the runs that gave O'Neill, named the game's MVP, all the support he would need.

"Our leadoff guy (O'Neill) got on and we played a little small ball there," said Iorio. "Applied pressure, and that's our game. That's what we've been doing all season."

O'Neill ran into a bit of trouble in the bottom of the second inning as Mike Hardy hit a one-out single and John Gross walked with two outs. But Jason Oppong was retired on a comebacker and the Bears would have to wait a lot longer to get on the scoreboard.

Salzarulo, who has now won a sectional title in three different sports, led off the Panther fourth with a single to right and then stole second base. But he was stranded there as Briarcliff starter Quinten Cooleen collected a pair of strikeouts and retired Justin Perlman on a grounder to third.



Matt Satriale of Pleasantville slides home with one of the Panthers' 10 runs in the sixth inning of the Class B final, while disappointed Briarcliff pitcher Matt Juvelier can only watch.



Briarcliff starting pitcher Quinten Cooleen fires to the plate in the Class B championship game at Palisades Credit Union Park.

In the bottom of the inning, it appeared the Bears were ready to cut into the Pleasantville lead. Leadoff batter Spencer McCann was hit by a pitch and Hardy followed by ripping a single into center field. Danny Huegel's sacrifice bunt moved both runners up a base and, one out later, Oppong was hit by a pitch to load the bases. But Jack Ryan, first-pitch swinging, grounded to short to end the threat.

The Bears did finally manage to slice the Pleasantville lead in half an inning later. Joe Scanga led off the fifth with a line single to center. Noah Campo, who had three hits in his Briarcliff farewell, then drilled a single to left. Luca Lombardi moved both runners up by bouncing out to first. Scanga then scored on a sac fly as McCann lofted a pitch from O'Neill down the line that right-fielder Salzarulo caught in foul territory.

Campo also tagged up and advanced on McCann's fly ball, but he was stranded there as Hardy popped out to shortstop. Now trailing by just a run, the Bears had to like their chances over the next couple of innings. But what they didn't see coming was a 35-minute Panther top of the sixth in which 15 batters came to the plate and coach John Schrader was forced



Panther second baseman Massimo Stinziani throws to first for the final out of Saturday's 12-1 victory over Briarcliff in the Class B title game.



Pleasantville center fielder Nick Satriale settles under a long fly ball off the bat of Briarcliff's Jack Ryan in the Section 1, Class B championship game.



Pleasantville's Danny Melillo just barely beats the throw to first baseman Noah Campo after his bunt in the Panthers' 10-run sixth inning on Saturday.

to make two pitching changes.

"The floodgates opened," said Schrader. "We weren't able to shut it down and they capitalized."

The first six Pleasantville batters all reached base in the sixth inning, driving Cooleen from the game. O'Neill led off with a single, then Danny Melillo reached on a bunt hit. Salzarulo smacked an RBI single to right field and Matica was plunked by a pitch, loading the bases. Nick Satriale lined a two-run single to right-center field, stretching the Panther lead to 5-1.

After Perlman was hit by a pitch to again load the bases, Schrader summoned the lefty, Matt Juvelier, to replace Cooleen. He got one out, but then a wild pitch scored another run. Guy Barzilai hit a fielder's choice grounder to first, but the throw



Briarcliff's Noah Campo, who had three hits in his last game in a Bear uniform, takes a lead at first base in Saturday's sectional final.



Mike Hardy of Briarcliff swings the bat during the Bears' season-ending loss to Pleasantville in the Class B title game Saturday.

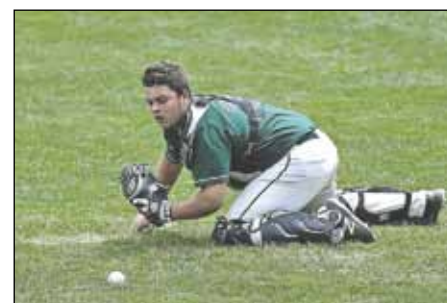


The Panthers' Nick Salzarulo runs to third base in the fourth inning of Saturday's Class B title game.

home was too late to get Satriale. An infield hit to deep short by Danny Keon brought in the sixth run of the inning.

O'Neill's second hit of the inning loaded the bases once more. Melillo followed with a run-scoring single to right field, driving Juvelier from the game. The third Briarcliff pitcher, Ryan Nieto, fared no better. He walked in a run, then yielded a long fly to left by Matica that landed over

continued on next page



Pleasantville catcher Michael Matica sets his sights on a bunt in front of the plate during the Class B championship game against Briarcliff.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

continued from previous page

the head of McCann for another two runs.

As the Bears came to bat in the bottom of the sixth, they were suddenly trailing by 11 runs and just three outs away from their season coming to a mercy-rule ending. O'Neill wasted little time putting the Bears out of their misery, retiring Huegel on a pop-up to short, Gross on a grounder to short and finally Oppong on a bouncer to second that started a Pleasantville post-game celebration.

"We've been playing our best baseball the last couple of games," said Iorio. "So we were extremely confident, especially coming in here, a neutral site. Brendan O'Neill, I mean he's been phenomenal all season and he just proved right there to everyone that he is the best player in Class B. And he is."

For the Bears, who had handed a then 8-0 Pleasantville team two straight losses a month earlier, Saturday's debacle was a bitter pill to swallow.

"When another team beats you, another pitcher pitches as well as he did, you have to tip your cap," said Schrader. "And tomorrow's another day. A long season, a long grind. Everybody put everything into it. When you get beat, there's no excuses. And Pleasantville played better than us today and they did the job and I wish them nothing but the best of luck moving forward."

Moving forward for the Panthers starts



Luca Lombardi of Briarcliff awaits a pitch as he bats in the Class B championship game at Palisades Credit Union Park.

with a regional game in the state playoffs against Section 9 champion Marlboro on Thursday afternoon at Cantine Field in Saugerties.

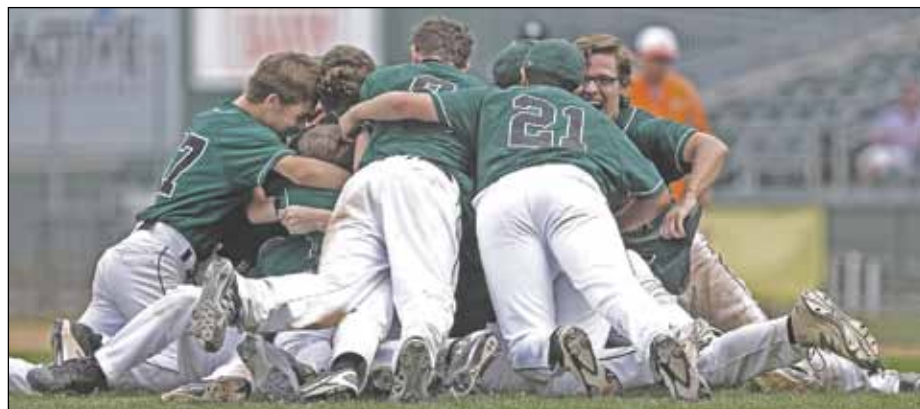
"I guess in the back of our mind we didn't forget that we lost those two games during the season," said Iorio. "So we wanted to prove ourselves today. It's great. It's awesome. It hasn't set in just yet. I'm sure it'll start registering a little bit more tonight, but I'm proud of the guys."



Briarcliff senior shortstop Jack Ryan tries to make a throw to first from his knees in the disastrous sixth inning for the Bears.



Pleasantville's Nick Salzarulo holds the Panthers' team trophy after they beat rival Briarcliff for the Class B baseball title.



The victorious Pleasantville Panthers celebrate after defeating Briarcliff 12-1 in the sectional final on Saturday.



Byram Hills center fielder Daniel DiSano scampers back to haul in a long fly ball in Saturday's Class A final vs. Lakeland.

SECTIONAL SCRAPBOOK



Westlake's Antonia Perino sheds tears of joy, to the amusement of teammate Kelly Pierce, moments after the Wildcats won their first-ever sectional softball title on Saturday.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



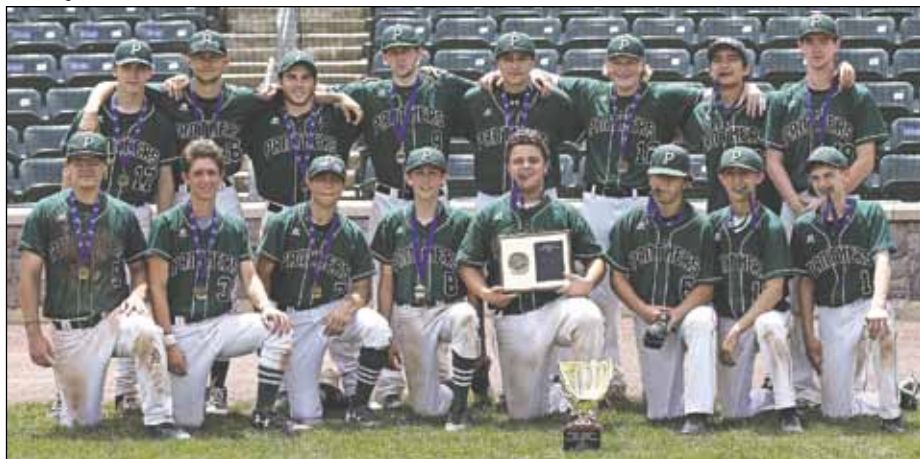
The scoreboard tells the story as dejected Byram Hills players Brandon Fonte (kneeling) and Will Bernstein endure the postgame awards ceremony after the Bobcats lost to Lakeland 3-2 in the Class A title game.



Catcher Garrett Boekel and the Bobcats fell just shy of winning the sectional championship on Saturday.



The Westlake Wildcats pose together after beating Rye Neck 3-0 in the Section 1, Class B softball final at North Rockland High School.



The 2018 Section 1, Class B champion Pleasantville Panthers pose with their championship awards after beating Briarcliff on Saturday.

Byram Hills Falls in the Sectional Final to the Hornets

By Danny Lopriore

A late rally fell just short Saturday afternoon as the resilient Byram Hill Bobcats were defeated by Lakeland 3-2 in the Section 1, Class A baseball championship game played at Palisades Credit Union Park in Rockland County.

The third-seeded Bobcats trailed 3-0 going into the bottom of the sixth inning, but mounted a comeback, scoring twice on hits by Brandon Fonte, Antonio Aversa and Gianluca Nelson, before Lakeland pitcher Joe Vetrano got the final two outs of the inning. Vetrano earned a complete-game victory and earned MVP honors by getting out of another scoring threat in the seventh.

Byram Hills finished its season with 18 wins, second most in school history. The Bobcats won the state title in 2015.

"This team gave it everything, came prepared in every practice and every game up to the last inning," Bobcats head coach Scott Saunders said. "They refused to lose and that attitude earned us 18 wins. This group of kids are among my favorite teams."

Nelson and Fonte led the Bobcats with two hits apiece and Aversa stroked the run-scoring double that closed the



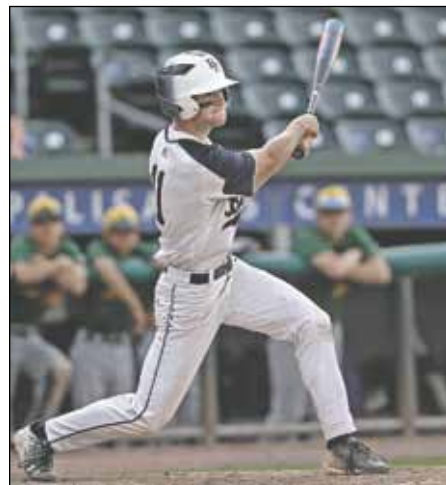
Byram Hills southpaw Ryan Steeg delivers a pitch in Saturday afternoon's Section 1, Class A championship game at Palisades Credit Union Park.

gap to 3-2 in the sixth. Fonte singled in the sixth with two outs, but Vetrano got a ground ball to force him at second base.

Vetrano held the Bobcats hitless until Nelson's infield single in the fourth



It was a frustrating finish for Matt Nichols and his Byram Hills teammates in the Section 1, Class A championship game.



Jackson Pinsky hits the ball to right field during the Bobcats' 3-2 loss to Lakeland in the sectional championship game.

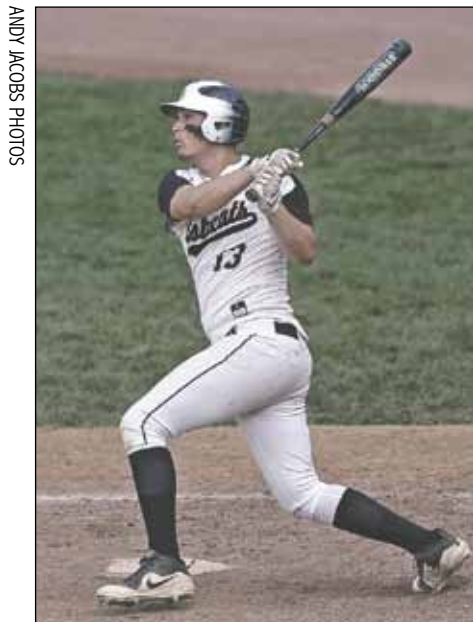


Byram Hills head coach Scott Saunders escorts a dejected Brandon Fonte off the field following the final out of Saturday's Class A championship game.

inning. The big sophomore lefthander struck out six batters and surrendered just the two runs in the sixth.

Byram Hills starting pitcher Ryan Steeg was outstanding, striking out five Hornets and allowing just one earned run over seven innings. Lakeland, seeded just 12th, scored twice in the first inning on a bunt hit, throwing error and a sacrifice fly. Another error led to Lakeland's third run in the fourth inning.

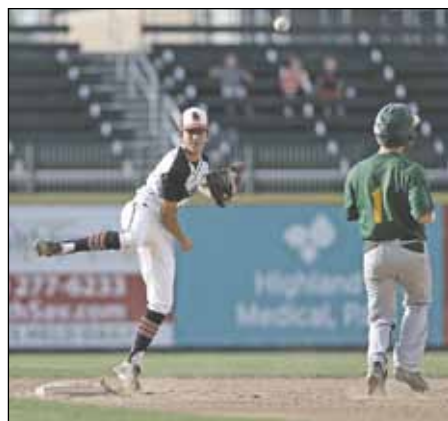
Matt Schenk had a run-scoring double in the first inning for the victorious Hornets and Jason Green drove in the eventual winning run with a triple in the fourth. Byram Hills stranded



Byram Hills slugger Antonio Versa sends a long fly ball to left-center field in Saturday's Class A title game.

the tying run in the seventh inning, leading to a huge Hornet celebration in front of the mound. During the trophy presentation, the dejected Bobcats looked on with bowed heads and tears in their eyes.

"We had our pitching where we wanted it and played very well through the last few games of the season and the playoffs," Saunders said. "Ryan was outstanding as he has been all year. He had some tough luck early, but never gave in and he gave us a chance to win. We are losing eight seniors, a great group of leaders who the younger guys look up to. It was an amazing year."



Byram Hills second baseman Kyle Smelser throws to first base to complete a double play in Saturday's title game at Rockland County's Palisades Credit Union Park.



Gianluca Nelson of Byram Hills runs to third base in the sectional final against Lakeland.



Byram Hills center fielder Daniel DiSano makes a diving catch in the Class A sectional final vs. the Lakeland Hornets.

Wildcats Blank Rye Neck in the Class B Sectional Final

By Andy Jacobs

Back in April, Westlake senior Allison Brunetto had her doubts she'd be able to pitch at a level necessary to put the Wildcats in the hunt for a sectional title. Her ailing hips forced her to miss starts and make visits to the doctor.

"There was a point early in the season where I was stressed out, is the best way to put it, that there would be this obstacle I wouldn't be able to overcome," Brunetto admitted. "But then I thought about it and I said to myself there's no way I'm not gonna overcome it."

On Saturday morning, under a clear blue sky at North Rockland High School, the standout southpaw displayed just how far a lot of determination can take someone. She pitched her fourth consecutive playoff shutout as second-seeded Westlake defeated the top-seeded Rye Neck Panthers 3-0 in the Section 1, Class B championship game.

Brunetto limited the Panthers to just three hits and struck out eight batters. Seven of them came in an overwhelming first three innings that provided a good hint that the Wildcats were on the brink of their first-ever sectional softball title.

"The kid's been fantastic," said Wildcats head coach Mike D'Angelo shortly after witnessing the latest pitching gem from Brunetto. "She's battled through some stuff and she's been awesome. She's what every coach wants out there on the mound."

During the regular season, the Wildcats had lost to Rye Neck on the last day of April. But this time, with the stakes far bigger, they jumped ahead with a big third inning and never looked back. With one out, Laine Peterson reached on an error. Daniella Mulvey followed by blasting a



Westlake second baseman Laine Peterson tries to turn a double play in the fourth inning of the Section 1, Class B title game vs. Rye Neck.

triple over center fielder Jessica Santoli's outstretched glove to put Westlake on the scoreboard.

One out later, Kelly Pierce drove home Mulvey with another triple, this one over the head of right fielder Alexa Garcia. A wild pitch scored the Wildcats' third run of the inning, more than enough offensive support for Brunetto, who at the time was in the midst of striking out six straight Rye Neck batters.

"We knew we had to get ahead and play with a lead," said D'Angelo. "It was stressed all week long. Rye Neck is a very, very good team. They've got a great pitcher, they're gonna put runs on you if you give them chances."

The Wildcats threatened to increase their three-run lead in the top of the fourth inning. Antonia Perino led off with a single to center field. One out later, Kristin Pierce reached on a walk. With two outs, Peterson blooped a perfectly-placed infield hit just past the pitching mound to load the bases. The power-hitting Mulvey stepped to the plate and sent Olivia Dunn's first pitch to deep center field, but her long drive was caught just in front of the fence for the final out.

In the bottom of the inning, Rye

Neck put two runners aboard for the only time all game as Alicia Rodriguez singled with one out and then Carissa Peckia was hit by a pitch. But Brunetto retired Garcia on a grounder to short and Alana Prudian on a comebacker to the mound.

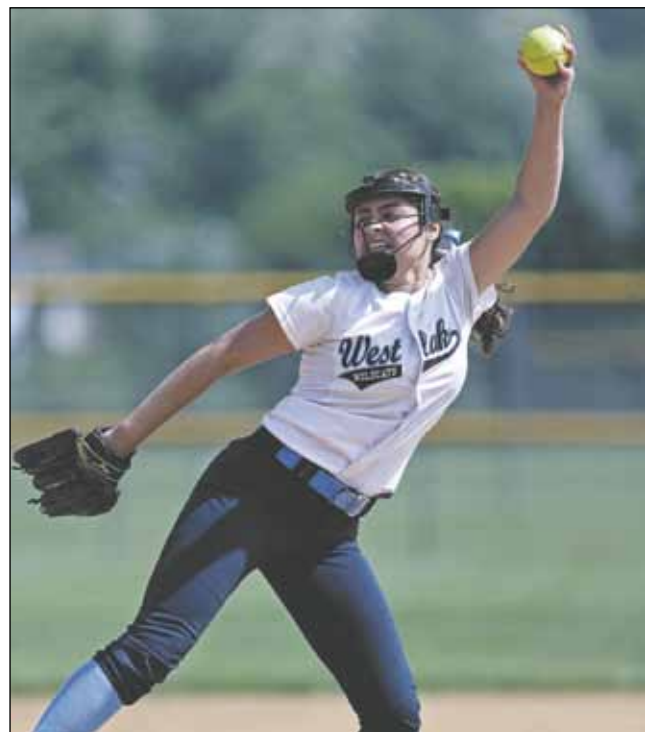
Jamie Perfito walked to open the fifth inning and Kelly Pierce soon sent her to third with a single into right. But the Wildcats' threat was thwarted as Angelina Guarnieri lined into a double play and Perino's liner right up the middle was caught by Dunn, the pitcher.

In the seventh, with two outs, both Kelly Pierce and Guarnieri drew walks. But Dunn retired Perino on a fly ball to right to retire the side. That left it up to Brunetto to finish off the Panthers. Rye Neck got a glimmer of hope when leadoff hitter Peckia reached on an error and then moved to second on a wild pitch.

"We went out to that seventh inning — I say it every inning — but it's three outs," said Brunetto. "That's all it is. You're in the moment. It's three outs. We had that error in the seventh and obviously it messes with you a little bit. But at the end of the day, this is the game that we've been taught and that we know how to play. We had to do it."

Brunetto extinguished the Panthers' last gasps by striking out Garcia and then retiring Prudian and Stephanie Santoli on ground balls. For the Wildcats, the wait for an elusive sectional championship was finally over.

"It feels great," said D'Angelo, now a



Westlake's Allison Brunetto delivers a pitch during the Wildcats' 3-0 victory over Rye Neck in the sectional championship game on Saturday morning.

champion in his first year at the helm. "It's hard to put into words right now. It's never easy closing out a game. Never. Those last three outs are the hardest ones of every game. It doesn't matter what your lead looks like. When it's win or go home, it's always tough."

For the senior-laden Wildcats, who next play Section 9 champion Rondout Valley in the state playoffs on Thursday afternoon, the motivation to do what they did this season began with what Brunetto termed "a wakeup call," the disappointing loss to Valhalla in the semifinals a year ago.

"Well, there's 10 seniors, so we had no choice," she said. "Like there's no next year. We've had trouble in the past getting over the semis hump. This year, we were not gonna let that stop us. Honestly, we've been playing together since we were seven years old. Every single one of us wanted to go out with a bang. We all just played our hearts out."



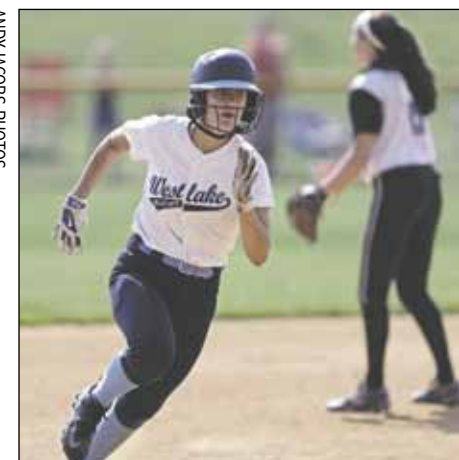
Westlake catcher Kelly Pierce, a senior captain, holds the championship plaque in the air after the Wildcats won their first-ever softball title on Saturday.



The Wildcats' Antonia Perino sends a fly ball to right field during Saturday's championship game at North Rockland High School.



Nicole Dragonetti lines a single to left field in the sixth inning of Westlake's 3-0 win over Rye Neck for the Class B title.



Westlake's Daniella Mulvey races to third base with a triple in the third inning that drove home the first run of the championship game on Saturday.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Pleasantville's Jake Coleman moves the ball behind the cage as Briarcliff's Andrew Kanovsky defends in last week's playoff game, won by the host Panthers.



Greeley's Elijah Cohen is chased along the left sideline in the final moments of the first half vs. the host John Jay Indians.



Jack Howe of Pleasantville gets set to send a shot toward the cage in the Panthers' semifinal victory over visiting Briarcliff.



Pleasantville's Brian Reda looks to dodge his way around Briarcliff's Kevin O'Donnell in the fourth quarter of last Thursday's Class D playoff semifinal.



Ryan Donnery tries to get to the cage in the third quarter of Westlake's 18-10 Class D playoff win over Bronxville at Byram Hills High School.



Camron Fash of Briarcliff is defended by Pleasantville's Jake Coleman in the third quarter of Thursday's Class D playoff game.



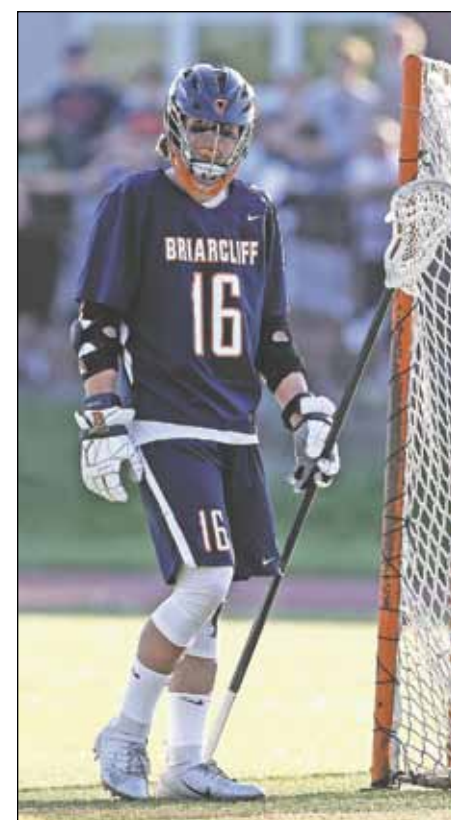
Declan McDermott tries to run out the clock in the final moments of Pleasantville's 9-5 sectional win over rival Briarcliff.



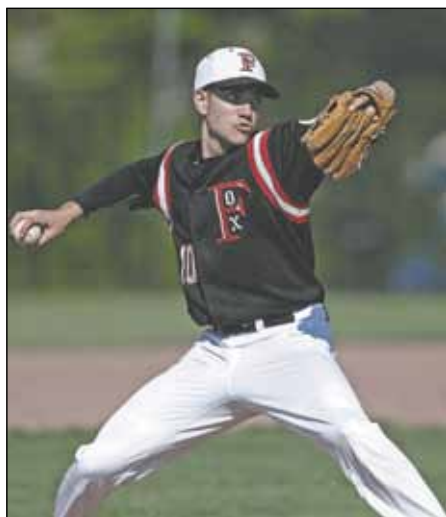
Briarcliff's Spencer Rockmore looks up the field as he tries to clear the ball in Thursday's Class D semifinal at Pleasantville.



Greeley junior midfielder James Allen tries to find some shooting space in the first half of last Wednesday's playoff loss to John Jay.



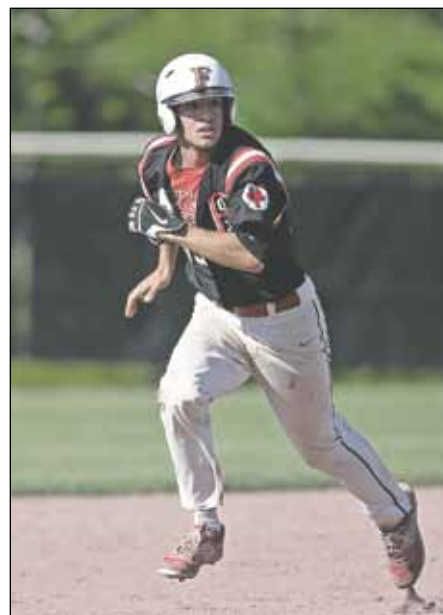
It was a disappointing finish for Andrew Kanovsky and his Briarcliff teammates, who were tied with Pleasantville 5-5 heading to the final quarter in last Thursday's playoff game.



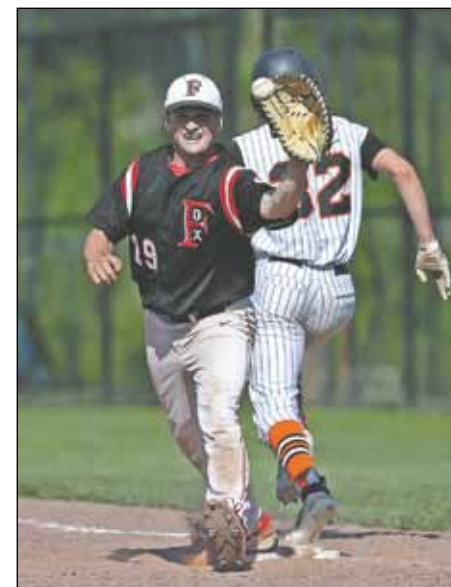
Fox Lane's Ethan Gabor throws a pitch in Thursday's home playoff game against Mamaroneck.



Fox Lane senior Marvin Pineda bats during last week's semifinal playoff loss to the Mamaroneck Tigers.



Antonio Chousa of Fox Lane heads toward third base in the second inning of Thursday's Class AA semifinal against visiting Mamaroneck.



Fox Lane first baseman Thomas O'Sullivan fields a late throw in the Foxes' season-ending semifinal playoff loss to Mamaroneck.



Rob DiNota of Westlake moves the ball up the field in the Wildcats' 18-10 win over Bronxville in the sectional semifinals.



Westlake's Dylan Donnery is surrounded by Bronxville defenders in the second half of Thursday's Class D semifinal, won by the Wildcats.



Horace Greeley's Jack Rifkin tries to get to the cage in the second quarter of last Wednesday's Class B semifinal at John Jay.



Greeley's Kyle Gelber takes the ball toward midfield in the first half of the Quakers' season-ending playoff loss to John Jay.



Pleasantville's Garrett Carney celebrates a Panther goal in last Thursday's 9-5 playoff win over Briarcliff.



Brent Rosendorf of Greeley races up the field with the ball in last week's playoff game at John Jay in Cross River.



Westlake's Nicholas Papaleo controls the ball in last week's playoff win over Bronxville.

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TRACK & FIELD

Section 1, Class B Championships
Friday, May 25, 2018
Beacon High School



Jonathan Mui of Byram Hills runs in the 3200.



Westlake's Nicole Musial competes in the 3000.



Caroline DeVincenzo of Byram Hills took fifth place in the pole vault.



Westlake's Dylan Ahern takes off in the triple jump.



Anna Touitou of Pleasantville heads for the finish line in the 100.



Pleasantville's Adrian Rippstein finished third in the 110 meter hurdles.



Alden Iaconis of Pleasantville clears a hurdle.



Samantha Castellano of Westlake competes in the shot put.



Westlake's Eric Nieves finished in fifth place in the 100.