

## Blanking the Wolves

**Justin Perlman Tosses Six Shutout Innings  
as Pleasantville Beats Gorton 3-0 at Parkway  
for Its Second Straight Win to Open the Season**

# New-Look Wildcats Chasing More Success

By Tony Pinciario

When school resumed last September, Westlake senior Jamie Perfito began preparing for the 2019 varsity softball season.

The four-year varsity player did it more so from a team standpoint than an individual approach.

Westlake had graduated seven starters from the team that beat Rye Neck for the 2018 Section 1 Class championship, the first one in school softball history.

The Wildcats would advance to the state final four, but Susquehanna Valley (Section 4) put an end to Westlake's dream season with a victory in the semifinals.

Knowing she would be welcoming numerous new and young players to varsity, Perfito's leadership kicked in.

"It's a whole different experience where I was once one of the youngest to now the oldest and captain on the team," said Perfito, who will attend Quinnipiac University in the fall. "In the fall, I was getting to know the girls and then having open gyms. I had to introduce myself because we're such a young team."

"It was important to do because chemistry is a major part of softball. You have to know your teammates to be successful and understand what it is like to be on a varsity team."

Perfito, who returns at shortstop, and junior Kristin Pierce, who will pitch and play the outfield, are primed to lead the young, eager and enthusiastic Wildcats to another sectional title.

"They have a lot of talent and are willing to work hard," said Perfito of the new varsity players. "During out scrimmages and our first game, they were really nervous. But we all started out as



Westlake's Kristin Pierce delivers a pitch in last week's season-opening win over Irvington.

freshmen and I told them to get rid of the nerves, relax and they will improve as it goes on."

Westlake coach Michael D'Angelo agrees with Perfito. He is also happy knowing how important Perfito and Pierce are.

"We are young and learning," D'Angelo said. "Perfito and Pierce are great leaders and are getting this team prepared to be at its best in May."

In order to have her young teammates prepared for the season, Perfito pointed



The Wildcats' Jillian Walpole sends a fly ball toward center field in the season opener.

out that the team, while practicing inside, focused on the basics. Westlake also spent plenty of time in its indoor batting cage. Once Westlake went outside, the younger Wildcats received a different perspective.

"It was a lot better once we got to work on a full-length field, so the girls got to see what it's like and how different it really is," Perfito said.

Daily progress is the goal of every team once preseason starts, especially when there are new, young players moving up to varsity. Perfito has witnessed this, from cutting down on errors to becoming more comfortable in the box to hitting the ball better and harder.

Perfito is well aware that each of their



Juliette Galleti gets set to run the bases in Westlake's 17-0 win over the Bulldogs.

opponents will be at their best because they want to topple the champs.

"That makes us realize we can't take anything or anyone lightly," Perfito said. "We have to give our best effort every time we play because our opponent will be coming at us with their best effort."

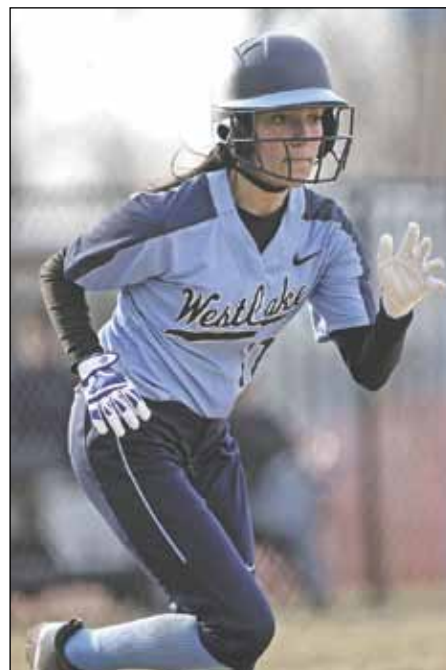
Westlake opened the season with a 17-0 home victory over Irvington last Wednesday afternoon.

Perfito is hoping that her final season is as exciting as her junior year.

"I'm very excited because this my last time playing and I want it to be a good season, especially after last year," Perfito said. "Last year was amazing. We worked so hard for it and it was great to finally do it and make it all the way to the state semis. It was so much fun and we were so proud of each other, being able to accomplish that and make school history."



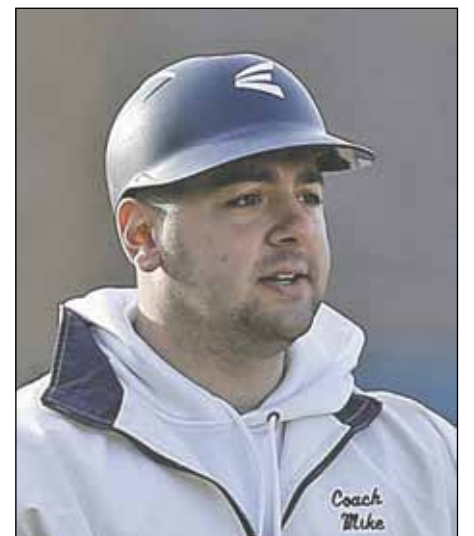
ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Westlake's Alyssa Gutierrez runs down the first base line during last Wednesday's home game.



Westlake batter Mia Williams awaits a pitch in the season opener.



Head coach Mike D'Angelo guided the Wildcats to the state final four in his first season at the helm.

Senior shortstop Jamie Perfito throws out an Irvington batter in the final inning of Westlake's 17-0 win last Wednesday afternoon.



# Poggi Pitches Briarcliff Past North Salem in Season Opener

By Rob DiAntonio

Coach John Schrader and Briarcliff's baseball team graduated 14 seniors and its entire pitching rotation that helped lead the Bears to the Section 1, Class B championship game in 2018.

So, naturally, Schrader was looking for some arms to step up heading into a new season.

Patrick Poggi obliged.

The junior blanked host North Salem in a 7-0 opening-day win on Thursday afternoon in a shortened five-inning game.

"We lost four big pitchers," Schrader said. "[Poggi] came up from JV with a number of other kids who are going to be throwing this year. They were very well coached and had a really good season. They played a lot of AA schools last year on JV. Honestly, the sky is the limit because these kids are really working hard. They're focused up. We'll



Jason Oppong heads for home to score one of his three runs vs. North Salem.



Shortstop Joseph Scanga makes the toss to second baseman Anthony Mingola but the throw is late.



Briarcliff's Alex Benson heads for third base.

see what happens."

Poggi wasn't overpowering, but mixed up his pitches well to keep the Tigers off balance. He allowed just three hits while walking three and striking out two.

"He's very resilient," Schrader said. "He had pretty good command of his pitches. He did a really nice job on opening day. We expect big things from him this year."

With a runner on in the bottom of the second inning, Poggi induced Camden Binette into an inning-ending double play.

Briarcliff was patient at the plate against North Salem pitchers Rian Balbino and Michael Puletz, who struggled to find the strike zone.

"That's really what we preach:

focusing up, being patient, team baseball and doing the small ball," Schrader said. "Anything that's needed to contribute to a win, and they did a great job at it today."

Leadoff hitter Jason Oppong reached base four times and scored three runs. He had two hits and was hit by two pitches. His blazing speed on the base paths is certain to create headaches for opposing teams.

"He's definitely one of the fastest kids I've ever been around and coached," Schrader said. "I'm very happy he's on our team."

Brett Ostrover dropped down a bunt

to score Oppong in the top of the first, giving Briarcliff the early 1-0 lead. The Bears added another run in the next inning when Joseph Scanga singled to right center, bringing home Oppong again.

In the top of the fourth, Oppong's bunt single set up runners on the corners for Scanga, who delivered a two-run single. Ostrover followed with a two-run single of his own to stretch the lead to 6-0.

Poggi had an RBI single in the top of the fifth to close out the scoring.

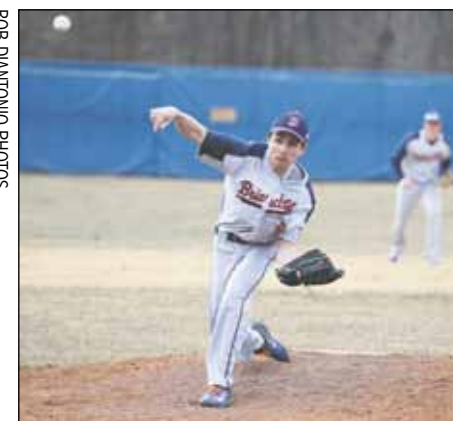
On Saturday afternoon, in the home opener, Briarcliff improved to 2-0 with a 6-1 win over the Pawling Tigers. William Henshaw earned the win in relief, allowing just one hit. Joseph Murray started the game, scattering four hits and striking out five. Michael Hardy (2 for 3, RBI), Poggi (2 for 3, 2 RBI), Daniel Huegel (RBI), Julian Matthews (RBI) and Alex Benson (2 for 4, RBI) led the offense.



Joseph Scanga hustles for third base.



Michael Hardy follows through on a swing against host North Salem in the Bears' season opener.



Starting pitcher Patrick Poggi delivers on his way to a win vs. North Salem.

ROB DIANTONIO PHOTOS



# Bazyk's Six Goals Propel the Foxes to a Win

By Rob DiAntonio

Clinging to just a one-goal halftime lead, Fox Lane wasn't about to let Ossining take control of the game.

Instead, the Foxes erupted for five goals in the third quarter to coast to a 14-8 win over the visiting Pride last Wednesday afternoon at Memorial Stadium.

Jake Bazyk, who led Fox Lane with six goals and two assists, found Jaak Chasse on the doorstep to make it 6-4 with 6:12 left in the third quarter. Bazyk then wrapped around the cage and finished to extend the lead to 7-4 a little over a minute later.

"I think we needed to settle down," Fox Lane head coach Craig Henley said of what changed for the Foxes in the third quarter "They realized they didn't need to force anything and that if they stayed patient and ran through their Xs and Os, that better things would come."

Ethan Carmody made it 8-4, then Everett Banks (3G, 2A) released a lefty rip from distance to stretch the lead to 9-4 with 1:27 left in the third quarter. Banks scored again with 13 seconds to go. Ossining ended the run with three seconds left to send the game into the final quarter with the Foxes leading 10-5.

It was more of the same to start the fourth quarter. Bazyk scored on a nifty behind-the-back goal with the feed coming from Banks. Alex Franciamas



Jake Bazyk attacks while being pressured by Ossining,

scored next and Banks finished on a one-handed wrap-around shot to build the Foxes' margin up to 13-5 with 6:12 left on the clock.

The Foxes dominated possession and were more effective on face-offs in the second half.

"We've had a tough time at the face-off X," Henley said. "Our senior leader and captain (Dillon Morgan) is out for a while. He's our face-off guy, so kids have been practicing and willing to step up and try. That's good to see, but we have to fix it quickly because it's obviously an issue for us."

Joe Rozgonyi had a goal and an assist for the Foxes (2-1). Goaltender Sean Bailey made 12 of his 13 saves in the first half.

"He's had two solid games," Henley said

of Bailey. "He's a man on a mission and is very motivated."

Fox Lane defeated host Eastchester 10-8 on March 29. Bazyk paced a balanced attack with two goals and two assists. Banks, Carmody and Rozgonyi had two goals each.

The Foxes trailed powerhouse Yorktown by just two goals heading into the final quarter, but fell 13-7 to the host Huskers on March 25.

Fox Lane returns to the field when it travels to Rye for a 5 p.m. game on April 2. The Foxes host Tappan Zee at 5:15 p.m. this coming Thursday and then conclude the week by traveling to Brewster for an



Jake Bazyk of the Foxes celebrates one of his six goals.



Alex Franciamas makes his move against Ossining.

11 a.m. contest on Saturday.

"We've been a young team for a few years," Henley said. "There's experience at the junior level. In a way, we have experience. But we don't have a lot of seniors."



Fox Lane's Jake Wollman looks for a teammate.



Ethan Carmody of the Foxes attacks the cage.



Joe Rozgonyi sprints in transition.



Everett Banks scoops up a ground ball.

ROB DIANTONIO PHOTOS





Samantha Kilman of Briarcliff is closely guarded by Sophie Manundo of Valhalla during last week's game.



Pleasantville's Justin Perlman fires a pitch in the Panthers' 3-0 victory over Gorton at Parkway Field on Saturday.



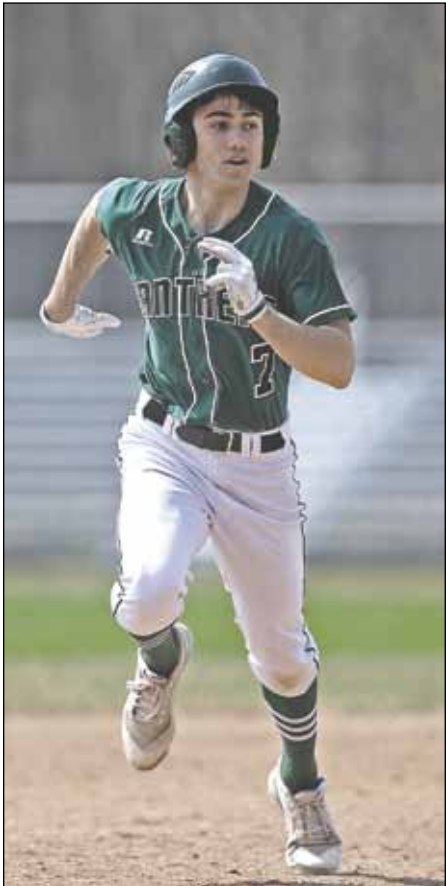
Briarcliff's Kelly O'Donnell takes the ball past Valhalla's Lote Barker (left) and Sophie Manundo in last Wednesday afternoon's game won by the host Bears.



Briarcliff starting pitcher Joseph Murray delivers to the plate in Saturday afternoon's 6-1 win over visiting Pawling.



Briarcliff junior Bianca Santucci controls the ball in the Bears' home win over Valhalla last Wednesday.



Jason Oppong runs the bases during Briarcliff's home win over the Pawling Tigers on Saturday.



Briarcliff senior middle Chase Duke runs past Andre Sokk of Newtown in the 8-3 win by the Bears this past weekend.



Briarcliff's Tim Isola sets his sights on the descending ball during Saturday afternoon's 8-3 victory over visiting Newtown.

Danny Melillo of Pleasantville scampers toward third base in Saturday's win over the Wolves.



Massimo Stinziani swings the bat in Pleasantville's win at Parkway Field on Saturday morning.



Spencer Rockmore of Briarcliff tries to dodge his way past Newtown's Mike Haddick in the Bears' home win on Saturday.



Pleasantville first baseman Ned Huerster backpedals for a pop fly during the 3-0 win over Gorton.



# A Local Lacrosse Player is Stepping Up for Pace

By Tony Pinciario

One major adjustment the majority of college freshmen have to make is how to handle the distinct possibility of minimal playing time.

Does the freshman accept it, learn from experienced teammates and use the playing time to advantage, or does the student-athlete take the opposite approach by sulking and complaining?

Carlyn Mucci, the former Lakeland/Panas all-section and all-state player, was facing this situation her freshman year on a senior-laden 2018 Pace women's lacrosse team. Mucci knew what to expect and when given the opportunity to perform, made the most of it.

Mucci played in 13 games her freshman year, finishing with seven goals and three assists. Her performance impressed Pace coach Tricia Molfetta, but, more importantly, showed Mucci she chose the right approach.

"With lifts, team meetings and practice, most of the day is taken up by lacrosse, so time was the biggest adjustment," said Mucci, a 2017 Panas graduate and Sports Marketing major. "Another adjustment was going from being the oldest to taking on the role of being a freshman and starting fresh again."

"As a freshman, I was excited to see the field for the time I did and begin to gain some confidence, which helped make the transition from last year to this year easier. This year, I have more confidence in myself and my team, which has led to a more successful group dynamic."

The sophomore, who is playing attack,



ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS  
Former Lakeland/Panas star Carlyn Mucci passes the ball during a game at Pace Stadium.

has established herself as a leader on offense. Through nine games, including three starts, Mucci is third on the team with 12 goals and also third in points with 20.

Graduating 11 seniors presented numerous opportunities for returning players. However, Mucci didn't automatically think she had earned significant playing time.

"With 11 seniors graduating, there were more opportunities for playing time, which allowed me to take my game



The Setters' Carlyn Mucci heads toward the cage in last week's home game against the Le Moyne Dolphins.

knowledge from last year and translate it onto the field this year," Mucci said. "I realized I needed to step up this year, as did the rest of my team. We've had multiple players contributing big time each game!"

Molfetta is impressed with Mucci's approach to the game from freshman to sophomore year. As a result, Mucci is quickly becoming a dependable/impact player.

"The great thing about her experience last season was she was able to learn and

watch so many talented attackers and I think it's made her a better player this year," Molfetta said. "She is an intelligent player and anticipates the next play, which helps our team immensely. She is also a tough competitor and really difficult to defend because of her physical presence."

Mucci had a hat trick and an assist as Pace rallied to an 11-10 victory over seventh-ranked East Stroudsburg. Mucci registered two goals and two assists in a triumph over Southern Connecticut State.

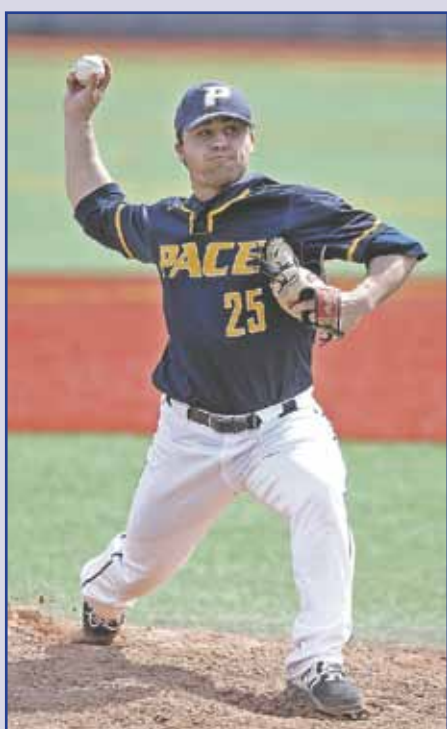
"Her offensive game is improving as she continues to get more comfortable with her role this season," Molfetta said. "She is becoming someone the team can rely on to make that big play and it's nice to see her stepping up!"

Pace is 4-5 to date as the schedule-makers were unkind. Four of Pace's first seven games were against teams ranked in the Division II top 10, including No. 1 Le Moyne. Despite the grueling early-season schedule, Pace welcomes the challenge and will continue to raise its level of play.

"Graduating 11 seniors from last year, we knew as a team we'd have to work harder, smarter and together to fill the roles from last season," Mucci said. "Our team dynamic this year is the best it's ever been and we've really been trying out new things to give us the most success on the field."

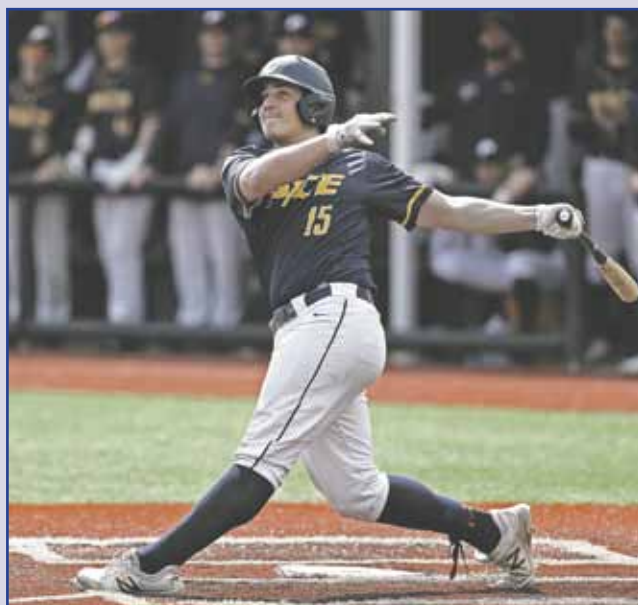
According to Mucci, the team's struggles now will provide some dividends later on.

"We definitely are being tested right off the bat," she said. "It has taught us that we can't expect anything and nothing will be given to us. We need to work hard and show what we're made of and what Pace lacrosse is made of through our actions and not words. This is only the beginning for us and these early battles are giving us the competitive edge we'll need for big games around the corner."



Lorenzo Russo of Pace delivers a pitch in relief in the opening game against Le Moyne. He hurled a scoreless two innings to earn the victory.

## Pace Splits a Twin Bill



Pace batter Brian Bohlander blasts a pitch down the left-field line during the Setters' 2-1 victory over Le Moyne in the first game of Saturday's doubleheader.



# Westchester Knicks Earn Their First-Ever Playoff Victory

By Andy Jacobs

Before last Wednesday night, the Westchester Knicks had never won a playoff game in their brief history of competing in the NBA G League.

But behind the red-hot early shooting of Billy Garrett and stifling team defense, the Knicks jumped out to a big first-quarter lead against the Windy City Bulls and went on to an impressive 95-82 victory in an opening-round, winner-moves-on Eastern Conference playoff game at the Westchester County Center.

Garrett connected on all five of his shots from the field in the first quarter, scoring 12 of his team-high 20 points as Westchester built a commanding 26-12 advantage. The Knicks scored the game's first five points and never trailed all evening.

"I thought we were really locked in defensively," said Westchester head coach Mike Miller, whose team held the Bulls to 5-of-23 shooting in the opening quarter. "We were making them take some tough shots. And we were taking some tough shots, but fortunately Billy got some good looks and he made 'em. So that kind of put us in a good spot."

A 3-pointer by Garrett with 2:40 left in the first quarter stretched the Knicks' huge early lead to 23-7. It was the fifth consecutive jump shot the 6-foot-6 swingman from DePaul made and the Bulls never really recovered. They trailed by 15 points at halftime and never got closer than seven the rest of the way. Garrett went scoreless in the third quarter, but his coach said the Bulls' improved defense wasn't the only reason.

"Yeah, we'll give 'em credit," said Miller. "But I think part of it was I played him 12 minutes in the second quarter. Not a good move. I don't do that normally, but we were stretching the game a little bit and I felt like we needed a cushion if we could get it. He was playing so well we



Westchester's Billy Garrett fires a jump shot over Windy City's JaKarr Sampson in last Wednesday's G League playoff game.

kind of took a chance and rode with it."

Unfortunately for Windy City, Garrett had plenty of help from his Westchester teammates. Guard Zak Irvin, out of the lineup for three weeks recently with a lower back strain, scored 19 points and grabbed 14 rebounds. Forward Jameel Warney came off the Knicks' bench to provide 20 points and 14 boards. Luke Kornet, the 7-foot center on assignment from the New York Knicks, chipped in with 14 points and nine rebounds.

"I give these guys credit because they've had different people playing with them," said Miller, who has had to improvise with stalwarts John Jenkins and Kadeem Allen promoted late in the season to Madison Square Garden. "This guy's in, this guy's out. You give them all the credit because they continue to play



Knicks center Luke Kornet tosses up a one-hander in the lane during the 95-82 playoff win over the Windy City Bulls.

and sometimes it's choppy. But they keep playing and they put themselves in a good position at the end."

Windy City, which was led by the 29 points from speedy guard Walter Lemon Jr., sliced its 47-32 halftime deficit to just eight points by the end of the third quarter. A jump shot by Garrett 10 seconds into the final period restored the Knicks' double-digit margin, but when Lemon Jr., who was signed by the Chicago Bulls mere hours after the game, made one of two free throws with 10:32 remaining the lead dwindled to just seven points.

The Knicks, though, responded with an 8-2 burst over the next 90 seconds as Kornet scored inside and Irvin and Garrett followed with back-to-back 3-pointers. Windy City later closed to within eight points four different times before a Warney layup with 1:28 on the clock gave Westchester a 91-80 lead and all but sealed the outcome.

"Feels good," said Miller, asked about the franchise's initial playoff win. "This was hard fought. This felt like the playoffs. It was just kind of grind it out. I think both teams were playing really hard and sometimes that disrupts how fluid a game is. So maybe it wasn't pretty to watch, but I think when you look at it for what it is, it's a playoff game, both teams are trying to advance and doing what they need to do, it was what you'd expect."

The victory over the Bulls sent Westchester into Friday night's Eastern Conference semifinal game against the Lakeland Magic. Despite a 15-0



Westchester Knicks forward Jameel Warney uses his left hand trying to score over the Bulls' JaKarr Sampson near the basket.

run by the Knicks in the second quarter that erased a 43-28 deficit, their season came to an end with a 104-91 loss. Sekou Wiggs came off the Knick bench to score a game-high 23 points, while Isaiah Hicks made eight of nine shots from the floor and finished with 16 points.

Even though Westchester is now out of contention for the G League title, Miller, for one, couldn't be more pleased to be an integral part of the development ladder for future New York Knicks.

"It's been so fun," he said. "From the beginning, they've been so inclusive with everything and so helpful trying to grow this organization. We want this to be an asset for the Knicks and to be able to bring guys up. So I think we're working well in sync to give them options and then they're putting us in a great position to be successful and help these guys along the way."



Westchester head coach Mike Miller pleads with the officials in the second half of last week's first-round playoff game.



Zak Irvin gets to the basket for two of his 19 points in Westchester's playoff victory at the County Center.



Isaiah Hicks of the Westchester Knicks has his path to the lane blocked in the first half of last Wednesday's G League playoff win over Windy City.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



# ExaminerSports

**BYRAM HILLS 10**  
**GREELEY 8**



ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Action from the Byram Hills victory over host Greeley on Friday afternoon included, clockwise from top left, Casey Begleiter celebrating a Bobcat goal in the fourth quarter; Ben Mautner creating havoc for the Quaker defense; Greeley goalie Matt Maitland controlling the ball after making a save; the Quakers' Jack Rifkin going on attack in the third quarter; Mike Meringolo trying to outrun Alec Geller of the Bobcats near midfield; Will Mykytiuk protecting the ball from the defense of Greeley's Elliot Cohen; and Greeley's Bryce Gell getting set to fire a shot past the defense of Benny Rakower.