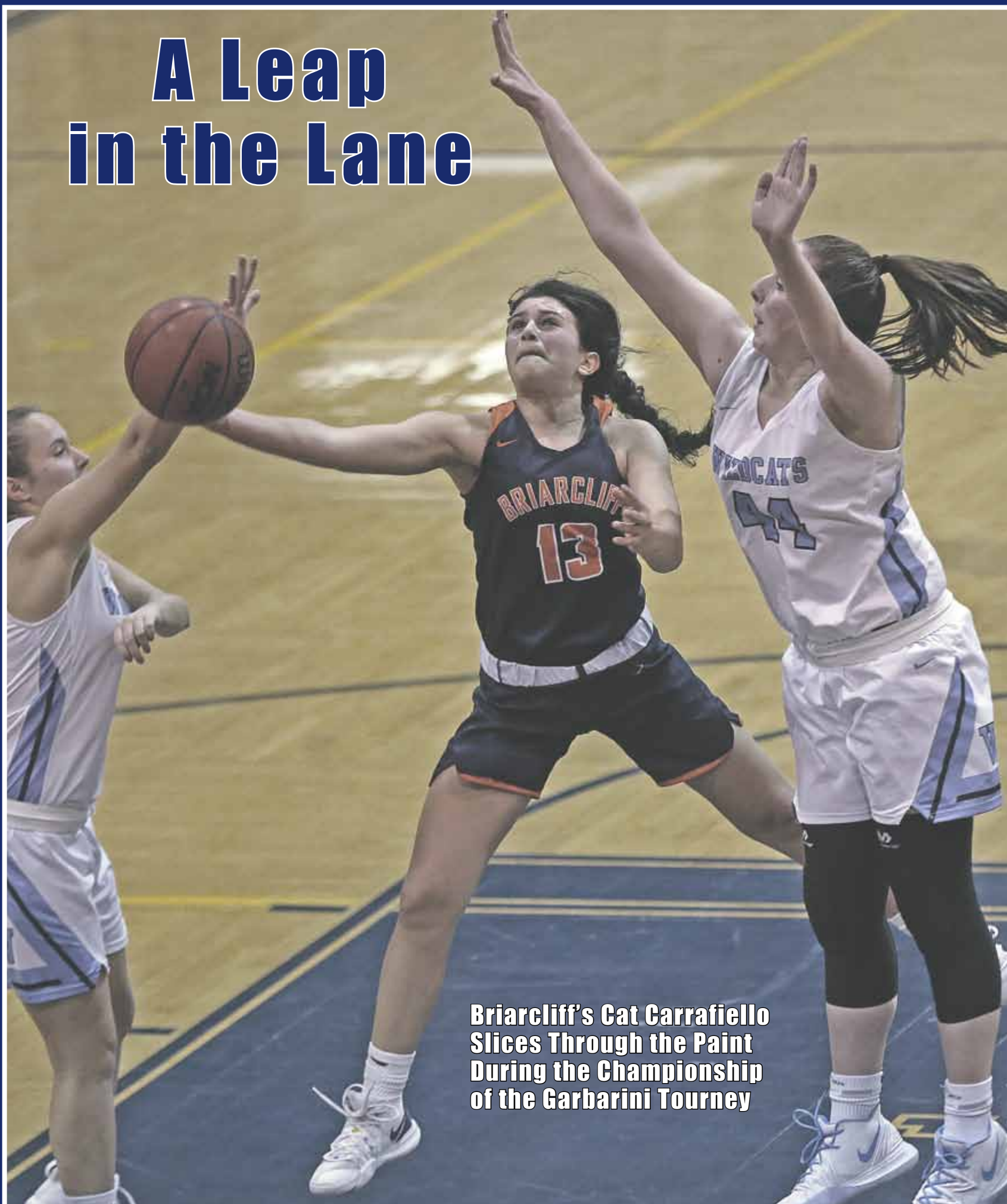


## A Leap in the Lane



**Briarcliff's Cat Carrafiello  
Slices Through the Paint  
During the Championship  
of the Garbarini Tourney**



# Bears Hang On to Defeat Westlake in Tournament Final

By Andy Jacobs

Fueled by four 3-pointers, the Westlake girls' basketball team played its finest eight minutes of the season on Friday evening. The Wildcats outscored undefeated Briarcliff 16-8 in their dazzling third quarter and whittled a 10-point halftime deficit down to just two.

But the Bears answered with a 7-0 burst over the first 90 seconds of the final quarter to thwart the Westlake comeback bid and went on to a hard-fought 52-45 victory in the championship game of the 16th annual Lt. Charles Garbarini Memorial Basketball Tournament at Pace University. Alana Lombardi scored a game-high 18 points and freshman Cat Carrafiello added 12 as Briarcliff won the title for the fourth straight time.

"Yeah, that was big," said Bears head coach Don Hamlin afterwards about his team's response at the start of the fourth quarter. "Obviously the longer a game is tight like that, the more likely it is that it'll slip away. They came up big when we needed it right there."

Briarcliff, now 9-0, never trailed all evening, though the offense struggled early as Lombardi was sent to the bench with two quick fouls. The upset-minded Wildcats managed to tie the game four different times in the first half, but still a buzzer-beating 15-foot bank shot by Kaitlyn Ryan enabled the Bears to close the second quarter on a 6-0 spurt for a 31-21 halftime cushion.

Just 20 seconds into the second half, Westlake's Allie Castellone, who along with Nicole Karaqi finished with a team-high 12 points, provided a hint of what was to come from the upstart Wildcats, drilling a 3-point shot from the right corner that ignited an 11-4 burst.

"To start the third quarter, I said the first two minutes are gonna be very important," Wildcat coach Sean Mayer told his players "Briarcliff is gonna come out very strong. We can't let them go on



Briarcliff's Cat Carrafiello tries to drive past Westlake's Nicole Karaqi in Friday's tourney game at Pace.

a quick 8 or 10-0 run. We've got to make plays and, boy, did we ever. Although the score did not come out our way, that was by far the best game we've played all year."

A left-corner 3-pointer from Karaqi nearly midway through the third quarter cut the Briarcliff lead to 35-32. The Bears responded with back-to-back baskets by Carrafiello and Lombardi, but then didn't score again over the final three minutes of the period. Meanwhile, Westlake got a trey from ninth-grader Sami Oswald and then a drive down the lane by another freshman, ToniAnn Mastracchio, just before the buzzer to end the quarter within 39-37.

But Westlake, just 3-8 this season, quickly lost momentum once the fourth quarter got underway. The Bears' Julia Barbalato began the period with an 18-foot jumper and Lombardi soon followed with an old-fashioned 3-point play.



Westlake's ToniAnn Mastracchio moves past Caroline Barbalato of Briarcliff during the title game of the Garbarini Memorial Tournament.



Briarcliff senior guard Julia Barbalato dribbles past midcourt in the Bears' 52-45 win over Westlake.

A minute later, Lombardi scored on a fast-break layup and the Bears' lead was suddenly back up to nine points. Though a Karaqi 3-pointer cut the Wildcats' deficit to 46-40, that was as close as they would get. Consecutive buckets from Barbalato and Lombardi stretched the Briarcliff advantage to 10 points with 5:26 remaining in the game.

Lombardi connected on a 12-foot jumper from left of the lane with 4:45 left on the clock. The Bears never scored again, though it hardly mattered. A 3-pointer by Riley Neglia, the Wildcats' 10th of the game, trimmed the Briarcliff lead to seven points, but the score never changed again over the final two minutes and forty seconds of the contest.

"Obviously you want to continue to score," said Hamlin, "but I felt like our fourth quarter defensively was as good as it's been. I really wanted to focus on that, not so much the missed opportunities."

Westlake had arrived at Pace still licking its wounds from a lopsided loss on the road just two days earlier. According to Mayer, whose roster includes four freshmen and four sophomores, the Wildcats took a big step against the Bears.

"We just had a very rough game against Pleasantville," he said. "I wanted to see how we respond. And, boy, did they



Briarcliff's Jordan Smith eyes the basket as she drives the left baseline in Friday night's tournament game against Westlake.

respond well. So I'm proud of 'em. I think going forward, the girls will have confidence now. I'm gonna tell them right now this is what we need to do and this is what you're capable of doing. As a young team, it's important to have a game like this to get confidence."

For Hamlin and the Bears, a perfect record almost halfway through the regular season is not something they will be dwelling on. But at least on Friday night, they could take a few moments to relish the fact the impressive Garbarini trophy, and all it represents, has been handed to them each of the four years the tournament has been contested by the four Mt. Pleasant-area schools.

"Honoring anybody with the significant impact that Mr. Garbarini had on his community," Hamlin said, "and, obviously, the 9-11 tragedy, any time we can do anything to honor those guys, we're more than happy to."



Nicole Karaqi of Westlake gets set to shoot the ball in the lane over the defense of Briarcliff's Jordan Smith and Julia Dalessandro.



Briarcliff's Alana Lombardi draws the attention of four Westlake defenders as she drives to the basket during Friday night's Garbarini Tournament final at Pace University.



# First-Half Spurs Propel Valhalla to the Garbarini Championship

By Andy Jacobs

A pair of 12-0 runs in the first half, one in the opening quarter and the other in the second, gave the Valhalla Vikings all the ammunition they would need to overwhelm Pleasantville in Friday night's championship game of the 16th annual Lt. Charles Garbarini Memorial Basketball Tournament.

Backcourt maestro Sebastian Pacheco scored a game-high 23 points, controlling the contest offensively and defensively, and Marlin Wise added 14 as the Vikings improved to 9-1 this season with a convincing 65-47 victory over the Panthers at Pace University's Goldstein Fitness Center.

"We do have explosive ability when things go right," said Vikings head coach Richard Clinchy shortly after his team had captured the tourney title for a second straight year. "We do have some explosive players and we have great speed. I've got 10 guys that I can use interchangeably. So we're blessed with that sort of depth that allows you to play 94 feet every moment of the game if we want."

It was the Panthers who jumped out to an early lead, getting a layup by Willie Cahill and a 3-pointer from the left corner by Nick Doto before the Vikings began their first blitz of the evening. By the time Rahsean Melvin capped the 12-0 burst with a turnaround jumper in the lane with 1:53 left in the opening quarter, the Valhalla lead had swelled to 13-5.

A pair of free throws by Christian DeJesus, who along with Doto led the Panthers with 11 points, brought Pleasantville within six points at the end of the first quarter. But Valhalla's full-court defensive pressure soon took a big toll on the Panthers. The Vikings scored three buckets in the opening 75 seconds of the second quarter and their lead grew to 26-11 on a layup by Wise just over three minutes into the period.

"We knew we were gonna have to control their runs," said Panther coach Bob Jordon. "They're a good team that can run on you, and for about a minute and a half, both in the first and second quarter, we allowed their runs to happen."

The Panthers got a one-hander in the lane from Aidan Lynch to briefly slow the Vikings' surge. But then Pacheco spearheaded the second 12-0 Valhalla spurt of the night with three straight layups and Pleasantville suddenly found itself trailing 38-13 with 1:47 left in the half. At the break, the Panthers were faced with a 40-16 deficit.

"It was those two-minute runs in those two quarters that bumped them up to 20, 25 points at halftime," said Jordon, who conceded it was difficult to prepare for the Valhalla pressure in practice. "No, you can't simulate speed. The best thing that we tried to do is put additional players on the floor. We had a nice scheme for breaking the press, but then we didn't take care of the ball on the offensive side."

The Vikings opened up their largest lead of the evening, 26 points, when Pacheco dished to Wise for a layup just nine seconds into the third quarter. A 13-7 run from the Panthers, highlighted by five quick points by Noto on a 3-pointer and fast-break layup, only managed to cut the huge Valhalla cushion to 20 points. The fourth quarter began with the Vikings leading 57-35.

A 3-point shot by Valhalla's James McAndrew 10 seconds into the final period was soon followed by an 8-0 Pleasantville run that left Clinchy contemplating bringing his starters back on the floor.

"Yeah, I think another basket or two, I was gonna," he said. "I remember one game a long time ago when I waited too long. And I wasn't gonna wait too long again."



Valhalla guard Sebastian Pacheco is pressured at midcourt by Pleasantville's Christian DeJesus during Friday night's tournament game at Pace University.

The stellar play of his senior point guard, Pacheco, has also caused Clinchy to look back at his long coaching career for comparisons.

"Sebastian has the unique and extraordinary ability to know what's gonna happen on a basketball court before it happens," said Clinchy. "I've had two players, one I coached in college and one in high school 30 years ago, who had the same sort of ability. And no one else. It is Division 1, almost pro. Some people are faster, some may dribble better, some shoot better. But no one anticipates the game like he can, on defense especially. It is a gift for him to have it, and it is a gift for me to coach it."

Pacheco certainly put his stamp on the game during the second quarter when the Vikings were outscoring Pleasantville 26-9. He had five baskets and left the Panthers



The Vikings' Sean Kelly drives along the right baseline past Pleasantville's Jonah Sreedhar in the Garbarini Memorial Tournament final.

with an impossible task in the second half — getting back in the game.

"We talked to 'em at halftime that, first of all, it's two points at a time, obviously," said Jordon of his message to his players. "But also about pride. They felt like they were a little embarrassed about the way they performed in front of a nice crowd and a great place to play. That was the key, talking about their pride. Let's have a little pride going into the second half, leave it all out on the floor."

Though they never really threatened in the second half, the Panthers did manage to outscore Valhalla by a 31-25 margin over the final two quarters.

"It's a tribute to the coaches and those kids," said an impressed Clinchy. "They came out and played harder than we did in the second half and they closed the gap. That's what sports teaches you — to be tough and never give up. I thought they played like champions even though we were lucky enough to win the trophy."



ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

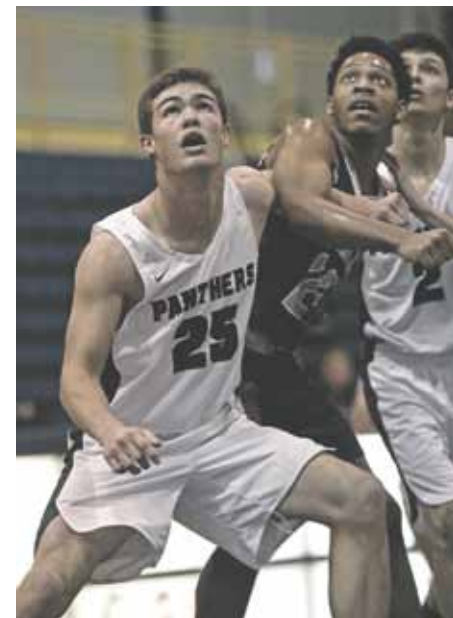


Pleasantville guard Christian DeJesus rises for a jump shot in the title game of the 16th annual Garbarini Memorial Basketball Tournament.

Nick Doto of Pleasantville corrals a rebound away from Valhalla's Marlin Wise in the first half of Friday night's tournament final.



Rahsean Melvin of Valhalla fires a jump shot over the outstretched hand of Pleasantville's Jack Skopetos in the first half of Friday's game.



Pleasantville's Willie Cahill boxes out Valhalla's Drew Drayton-Bey as they await a rebound in the championship game of the Garbarini Tournament.





Fox Lane's Nicole Picinich tries to drive past Horace Greeley's Julia Herzer in last week's 58-41 Fox victory.



Greeley senior Kat Genda boxes out Fox Lane's Sofia Zinzi in the Quakers' 58-41 loss last Thursday afternoon.



Horace Greeley guard Jessica Harris dribbles across midcourt in the Quakers' road game vs. Fox Lane.



Fox Lane's Sofia Zinzi shoots the ball from the left corner in Thursday afternoon's home game.



Fox Lane's Holly Ades lines up a 3-pointer from the right corner in the Foxes' home victory over Greeley.

# SPORTS SCENE

## Fox Lane vs. Greeley Girls' Basketball



Greeley's Julia Herzner dribbles across the court while being pressured by Fox Lane's Quoya Schnell.



Natalie Pence of Fox Lane grabs a rebound in traffic. She finished with 10 points and 19 rebounds in the win over Greeley.



Greeley's Emma Rose gets set to launch a 3-point shot.



Greeley's Helen Matthews shoots the ball as Fox Lane's Susannah Kimsal tries to block it in the second half of last Thursday's game.



Elaheh Bahari of Fox Lane is met in the lane by Greeley's Jessica Harris (30) and Kat Genda as she tries to get to the basket during Thursday's game.





Greeley standout Nick Townsend sails in for two of his game-high 29 points in last Thursday's 54-41 win at Fox Lane.

# SPORTS SCENE

## Greeley vs. Fox Lane Boys' Basketball



Aidan Hicks of Fox Lane finds a path to the basket in the Foxes' home games vs. Horace Greeley.



The Quakers' Sean Dunleavy pushes the ball up the court during the first half vs. Fox Lane.



Fox Lane's Oliver Shevick and Greeley's Sean Dunleavy set their sights on a rebound during Thursday's game hosted by the Foxes.



Connor Melis of Greeley takes the ball to the basket as Fox Lane's James DiBiasi defends in last Thursday night's game won by the visiting Quakers.



Fox Lane's Will Crerend is pressured by Greeley's Carter Salore (left) and Will Laforteza as Nick Townsend looks on.



Fox Lane freshman Charlie Shevick is pressured by Greeley's Will Laforteza as he shoots a fall-away jumper near the foul line.



Fox Lane guard Franz Depra dribbles the ball in the first half against visiting Greeley.



The Foxes' Trey DiCarlo drives against Greeley's Christoph Sauerborn in the second half of last Thursday's game.



Horace Greeley guard Christoph Sauerborn looks to get the ball inside as Fox Lane's Justin Allen guards him in the first half of last week's game.





Austin Gilbertson, who led Pace with 20 points in the loss to St. Anselm, drives to the basket.



Ray Montilus of the Setters' drives by the Hawks' Chris Paul.



Brandon Jacobs, who scored his 1,000th career point against Le Moyne on Jan. 8, looks to get a shot off over St. Anselm's Miles Tention.



The Setters' Peyton Wejnert soars through two St. Anselm defender on his way to the hoop.



Pace's Bryan Powell soars to the rim on Saturday at the Goldstein Center.

*focus on*  
**PACE**  
**Basketball**



Pace's Lauren Schetter drives the baseline past St. Anselm's Shannon Ryan.



Naya Rivera goes up for two in Pace's 73-60 win over St. Anselm last Saturday afternoon.



Brianna Wong looks to maneuver around Macy Spinks of the Hawks.



The Setters' Jackie DelliSanti attacks the basket while St. Anselm's Sara Messler defends.



Lauren Hackett, Brianna Wong, Lauren Schetter and Naya Rivera cheer on Jackie DelliSanti after she makes a free throw.



Sophomore point guard Lauren Hackett handles the ball for the Setters in Saturday's home game.





Greeley senior defenseman Evan Scott awaits a third-period faceoff vs. John Jay.



The Quakers' Dylan Mutkoski is tied up by John Jay's Scotty MacDonald as he tries to shoot the puck on a breakaway in the second period at Brewster Ice Arena.



Horace Greeley goalie Arye Wolberg stays ready between the pipes early in the third period at Brewster Ice Arena.

*focus on*  
**GREELEY**  
**Hockey**



The Quakers' Anthony Girardi eyes the puck near the blue line in Sunday night's game at Brewster, won by host John Jay 4-3.



Horace Greeley head coach Dan Perito watches the Quakers battle John Jay in Sunday night's game.



Greeley senior Jake Potter tries to gain possession of the puck along the boards in the second period of Sunday night's game.



Ben Cohen skates up the right wing with the puck in the first period of Sunday's game vs. the John Jay Indians.



Horace Greeley sophomore forward Gabe Adams skates around Charlie Oestreicher of John Jay during Sunday night's 4-3 loss to the host Indians.

**VIKING  
FLOOR  
GENERAL**

**Senior Guard Sebastian Pacheco  
Sparks Valhalla to a 65-47 Victory  
Over the Pleasantville Panthers  
in the Garbarini Tournament Final**