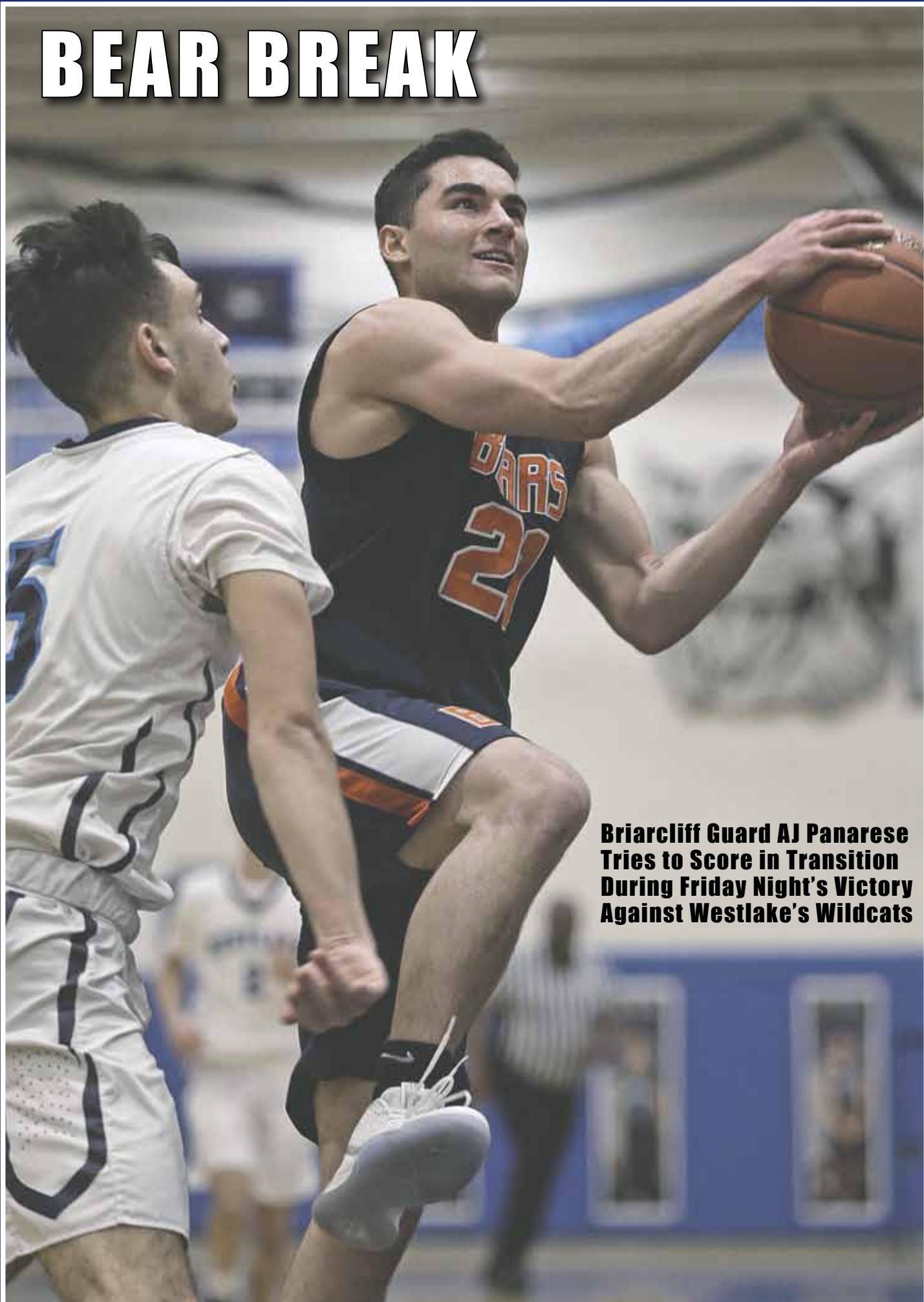


## BEAR BREAK



**Briarcliff Guard AJ Panarese  
Tries to Score in Transition  
During Friday Night's Victory  
Against Westlake's Wildcats**

# First-Quarter Blitz Paves the Way to a Panther Victory

By Andy Jacobs

A huge scoring spurt in the opening quarter quickly put the Pleasantville girls' basketball team on the path to victory last Wednesday afternoon.

Outscoring the host Westlake Wildcats 16-0 during a four-minute blitz, the Panthers took command early and went on to a 54-33 rout. Junior Jenna McAllister led the way, connecting on four 3-point shots and finishing with a game-high 20 points. Mary Grace O'Neill added nine and Lila Donohue chipped in with eight, all of them in the first half.

"We've had some games where we haven't come out strong to begin with," said Panthers head coach Dillon Clark afterwards. "So we've had to dig ourselves out of holes. We really wanted to focus today on coming out strong and not giving them hope that they can play with us."

The Panthers, now 12-7 and riding a seven-game winning streak after finishing the week with a win over Valhalla, found themselves trailing the Wildcats 4-0 after a couple of early baskets by freshman ToniAnn Mastracchio. But they proceeded to keep Westlake off the scoreboard for over five minutes and built a big lead with the impressive spurt that began with a McAllister 10-foot baseline jumper and ended with a Donohue drive through the lane.

A put-back basket by Jenny Straface just in time to beat the buzzer at the end of the first quarter finally put a halt to Pleasantville's run. But the Panthers had a 10-point lead heading to the second period, and it quickly stretched to 18 when they went on another



Pleasantville's Julia O'Reilly shoots the ball from the left baseline as Westlake's Nicole Karaqi tries to stop her in last Wednesday's game.

run, this time 10-0. Julia O'Reilly and Donohue had baskets during the streak, sandwiched around back-to-back swishes by McAllister from beyond the 3-point arc.

Pleasantville opened up a 31-14 advantage before Straface once again beat the buzzer with a put-back to end the opening half.

"They were shooting well," said Westlake coach Sean Mayer about the red-hot Panthers. "We tried to get out on their shooters and they used a quick dribble to go past us. So it was hard. You lay off them, they would make the shot. We go out to challenge, they would go past us. They played well. You know, we did the best we could."

The second half began with a layup by McAllister, but then both teams struggled offensively. After nearly three scoreless minutes, the Panthers' Tina Matica connected on a 3-ball from the left elbow, giving Pleasantville a 20-point cushion midway through the third quarter. A steal and fast-break layup from Sami Oswald, who led Westlake with eight points, and then a free throw by Straface with three seconds to go cut the Panthers' lead to 40-24 heading to the final period.



Tina Matica of Pleasantville rises for a shot in the lane during the Panthers' road win over Westlake.

"I like how we ended the quarters today," said Mayer, searching for positives. "You know, we got a couple of layups at the end of quarters. That'll give you some momentum. We can build off that. We made some buckets in the second half. Some girls stepped up and made some nice plays."

In the fourth quarter, the Panthers got an early 17-foot jumper by Mary Grace O'Neill and then a 3-pointer by Matica. A 12-3 run, concluded by another basket from O'Neill, gave them their largest lead of the day, 52-27. Westlake's nine points in the quarter all came from beyond the 3-point line, with two treys from the freshman, Oswald, and one from sophomore Erin Nebel.

"I was lucky enough to inherit a group from coach (Myndi) Hill, who did a great job with the foundation," said Clark. "We have girls who have played three or four years on varsity and you could see the fruits of the labor with this group."

A good chunk of the Panther scoring against Westlake came from McAllister, but Clark likes the fact he never really knows from game to game which of his players will



Pleasantville junior Jenna McAllister lines up a 3-point shot in the 54-33 win over host Westlake.

be the biggest offensive weapon.

"I don't know the stats off the top of my head," he said, "but I would dare to say our leading scorer hasn't been the same for more than three or four games. So it makes it hard to scout. We have some girls with certain skills you can focus on. But it's nice when you can put five threats on the court and everybody can dribble and shoot."

That's a luxury Mayer wouldn't mind seeing down the road with his young team. With a loss to Briarcliff on Friday, the Wildcats fell to 6-13 this season and they probably won't have a long stay in the rapidly-approaching playoffs.

"We've had a lot of close games this year," said Mayer. "I know we might be a lower seed, 15 or 16. But we're gonna try our best."



The Wildcats' Nicole Karaqi gets to the basket in the home game against Pleasantville.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Pleasantville's Mary Grace O'Neill pushes the ball up the court in last week's win at Westlake.



Westlake sophomore forward Julie Lyden shoots the ball in the second half of last Wednesday's game.



Freshman guard ToniAnn Mastracchio dribbles the ball near midcourt in Westlake's loss to Pleasantville.



# Briarcliff Wins a Defensive Battle Against the Wildcats

By Andy Jacobs

On a night when shooting percentages were low, scoring averages dipped and getting stops was all the rage, it was the Briarcliff Bears who earned the highest grades for defensive tenacity.

Holding Westlake to a mere 10 points in the first half and then going on a 12-0 third-quarter run, the Bears came away with a convincing 42-28 victory on Friday, avenging their loss at the buzzer to the Wildcats nearly a month ago and spoiling the host's Senior Night.

"You know, it's kind of a multiplier effect," said Bears head coach Nick Friedman after watching his team throttle the Wildcats. "When our defense is right, we're confident offensively. And defensively, it doesn't just mean them not scoring. It means us really playing the way that we're capable of."

Aidan Murnane scored 15 points for the Bears, while Elliot Jones and Jayden Larregue provided eight apiece in a game where baskets were extremely hard to come by. With Westlake starting all five of its seniors instead of the normal unit, Briarcliff took advantage and scored the first nine points. The Bears never trailed all evening and built a lead as large as 16 points with two minutes remaining in the third quarter.

"It definitely hurt us to start, but there were so many more facets to the game," said Westlake coach Chad Charney about the improvised starting lineup that fell behind 5-0 in the opening minutes. "We didn't put the ball in the basket. We had a slow start offensively, but everything tonight was slow on offense."

Westlake junior guard Carter Falkenberg entered the game three minutes in after five quick points from Murnane had staked the Bears to an early lead. By the time Falkenberg, who finished with a game-high 16 points, finally got the Wildcats on the board with an inside bucket with 1:40 to go in the first quarter, the Briarcliff lead was 9-0.

"I don't think that set us back too, too much," said Charney after seeing his seniors

struggle out of the gate. "I mean, obviously Falkenberg off the floor to start the game, that definitely didn't help considering he's been our leading scorer all year."

It was Falkenberg who had dashed the length of the court to score the winning basket as time expired in Westlake's two-point win over the Bears on the road in early January. This time, though, the Bears built a 12-3 advantage after eight minutes and managed to overcome a big scoring drought in the second quarter on the way to improving to 8-9 this season.

Unable to score, Briarcliff saw its nine-point lead after one quarter get whittled down to just two points on a Falkenberg basket with 3:40 left in the half. Murnane finally ended the long Bear drought when he scored on a runner from right of the lane just before the buzzer sounded to end the half. Murnane's late basket gave Briarcliff a 14-10 lead at the break and left the Wildcats' Charney disappointed.

"There was a timeout with under a minute," he said. "We flubbed that one because we had a foul to give. We were supposed to foul the kid, make it even tougher, and maybe shut 'em out for the whole quarter. Yeah, we flubbed that one up. It happens, but you've got to hope it doesn't happen in the next game, in the playoffs."

"Our defense was so good in the second quarter that we managed to withstand scoring two points for the entire quarter," said Friedman. "That's just a testament to how good the defense was for all four quarters because we still won by a margin like that laying an egg in the second quarter. That means you've played some good D."

The Bears' Jones and the Wildcats' Falkenberg traded corner 3-pointers a couple of minutes into the second half before Briarcliff went on its 12-0 burst that broke the game open. A lefty layup by Falkenberg with 1:44 left in the third quarter ended the run, but a layup at the other end by Jones



Briarcliff sophomore forward Luke McCann corraling a rebound away from Westlake's Brendan Di Liberti.

with 13 seconds to go gave Briarcliff a 33-17 cushion heading to the final period.

"The big part was the third quarter," said Charney, pointing out why his team fell to 14-6. "We gave up 19 points and Briarcliff's not a 19-point kind of offense. They're not that kind of team. 19 points in the third quarter, that put us way too far back."

The fourth quarter began with five straight points from Westlake as Matt Martin connected on a jumper, Falkenberg hit a free throw and then passed to Brendan Di Liberti for a layup. But over the top of the Wildcat press, Jones scored on a layup and Murnane followed with a fast-break scoop to the hoop. With 3:45 remaining, the Bears' lead was 37-22.

The Wildcats' Matt Pierro knocked down a 3-pointer with 1:10 left, cutting the Briarcliff lead to nine, but four free throws in the final minute by Larregue sealed the outcome for the Bears, who came back 24 hours later to



Briarcliff's Nick Reish shoots the ball from the left baseline in the third quarter of Friday's game at Westlake.

defeat Saunders and reach the .500 level.

"We've had some droughts," said Friedman, asked about the second-quarter struggle to score. "Look, we're a young team. That's who we are offensively. But at the same time, we've got some guys that can shoot. We've got some guys that can score inside. We've got some guys that can drive and kick. So we've got a lot of what we need. It's just a question of pulling it together and staying confident in each other and trusting our stuff."

The Wildcats, meanwhile, now turn their attention to the sectional playoffs after their most successful regular season in nearly a quarter century.

"Yeah, that's a big accomplishment, 14 wins," said Charney. "We've had a great season, but obviously we wanted this one on Senior Night, at home, and we already beat 'em one time before. So it was tough."



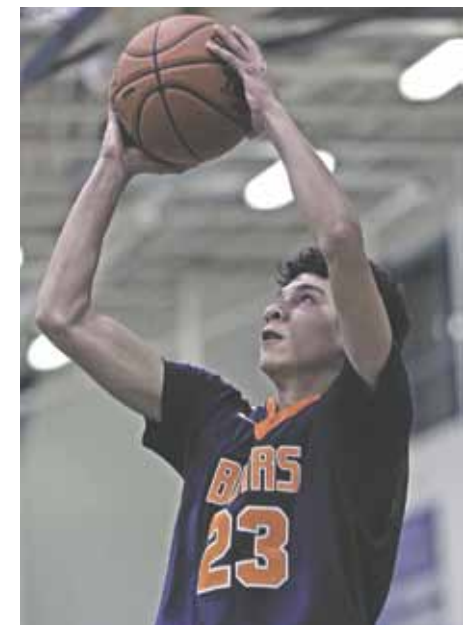
Sophomore guard Justin Silva of Westlake shoots from the right corner as Briarcliff's Nick Reish defends late in Friday night's game.



Westlake senior Matt Martin connects on a fourth-quarter jump shot in Friday night's game.



Carter Falkenberg of Westlake sends up a one-hander in the lane against the visiting Briarcliff Bears.



Briarcliff's Jayden Larregue takes the ball to the basket in the Bears' 42-28 victory at Westlake.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS





Fox Lane's Trey DiCarlo glides to the basket for two points in last week's game at Greeley.



Horace Greeley senior guard Sean Dunleavy is guarded by Fox Lane's Aidan Giannelli along the left baseline during the Quakers' 76-50 win.



Greeley star Nick Townsend comes down with another rebound in the Quakers' win over Fox Lane.



Fox Lane senior Anthony Thomas sends up a runner from the left baseline during the Foxes' game at Greeley High School.



Greeley senior Chris Melis rises above Fox Lane's Justin Allen to score in last Tuesday night's game.

*focus on*

# BOYS' HOOP

## Horace Greeley vs. Fox Lane



Greeley's Ben Troob gets set to pass the ball near the top of the key vs. visiting Fox Lane.



Fox Lane senior guard Will Crerend looks to pass the ball down low in last week's game against the Greeley Quakers.



Greeley's Christoph Sauerborn tosses up a one-hander in the first half vs. Fox Lane.



Aidan Hicks of Fox Lanes drives along the left baseline as Horace Greeley's Dylan Andersen defends in the second half of last Tuesday night's game.



The Foxes' Michael Lombardi shoots the ball from the free-throw line.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



# Fox Lane Girls Earn an Overtime Victory at Greeley

By Andy Jacobs

No, there weren't actually any punches thrown, but to Fox Lane girls' basketball coach Kris Matts last Tuesday afternoon's game at Horace Greeley High School was a bit like a boxing match.

"We took their best punch, came back," he said. "They took our best punch, came back. It was a real slugfest."

The slugfest wound up going to overtime, where the Foxes eventually prevailed 52-46 in a contest they trailed by seven points at halftime and by two entering the fourth quarter. Natalie Pence finished with a game-high 21 points, including nine in the third quarter when Fox Lane bounced back from its first-half woes.

"Oh, this is huge," said Matts after his team had found a way to defeat the Quakers. "The playoffs is where, if you haven't had a game like this before, then you're done. And then the season's over. This is our second overtime win. So now this team is battle-hardened. I have confidence in them that in a situation like this they can come out on top."

The Foxes probably got more than they bargained for from a Greeley team that endured a 10-game losing streak earlier in the season and wound up with just four victories. An 8-0 run to close the first half, highlighted by a 3-pointer from Emma Rose and a 15-foot jumper by Helen Matthews, gave the Quakers a 21-14 advantage at intermission.

"The message at halftime," said Matts, "was basically that we were getting a lot of open looks on offense and we weren't making any of them. And I thought it was because we were hesitant. After the second quarter, I said we're gonna have to change something if you guys don't start hitting shots. And, defensively, we really picked it up."

Indeed the second half began with a seemingly different Fox Lane team on the floor. Pence connected on a pair of runners in the first 35 seconds and the Foxes went on an 11-0 burst. A 3-pointer by Pence with 6:21 left in the quarter gave Fox Lane its first lead since her trey midway through the second period had provided a 14-13 edge.



The Quakers' Julia Herzner drives the right baseline past Sofia Zinzi of Fox Lane in last week's game at Greeley High School.



Susannah Kimsal of Fox Lane shoots the ball from the right corner against host Horace Greeley.

"Yeah, of course it's disappointing," said Greeley coach Sarah Schum about the way her team was ambushed early in the second half. "You want to come out and add to your lead. But basketball's a game of runs. So I didn't think they were just gonna lay down and roll over. I knew a run was coming at some point. I think our team was great in the sense that they responded quickly and then went on a little run ourselves. They didn't just fold."

Led by the scoring of Kaylin Genda, who had all seven of her points in the third quarter, and Matthews, who finished with a team-high 12, Greeley outscored the Foxes 13-7 over the final four and a half minutes, taking a 36-34 lead on a pair of free throws by Genda in the final second.

"I was very surprised," said Matts about the resiliency displayed by the Quakers. "I thought that once we took the lead, after those 11 straight points, I was like, 'Now we're OK.' But Greeley, they don't stop fighting. They don't stop fighting and they took the lead."

A basket by Matthews with 3:23 remaining in the game gave Greeley a 42-38 edge. Unfortunately for the Quakers, though, they never scored another point in regulation time while the Foxes got a runner in the lane from Pence with 2:38 to go and then a game-tying layup by Susannah Kimsal with 30 seconds on the clock.

In the four-minute overtime session,



Fox Lane senior Sofia Zinzi sends up a shot in the second half of the Foxes' overtime win at Greeley last week.

Fox Lane's Sophia Garten scored on a put-back a minute in, then Kat Genda tied the game again with a lefty layup 90 seconds later. That set the stage for perhaps the biggest shot of the night, a top-of-the-key 3-pointer by the Foxes' Holly Ades with just over a minute remaining.

"Holly Ades is the best shooter in the program, and she's the best shooter I've coached in a long time," Matts said. "It's a perfect shot, but she doesn't have confidence all the time. I've been yelling at her all season, 'You better keep shooting. You better keep shooting.' As soon as she released it, I knew it was going in."

Greeley managed to close within 47-46 with two foul shots by Rose with 48.8



Kat Genda of Greeley gets past Nicole Picinich of Fox Lane late in last Tuesday afternoon's game that was decided in overtime.



Fox Lane's Natalie Pence scores on a runner during the third quarter of last Tuesday's win at Greeley.

seconds to go, but a basket by Pence with 34 seconds left and then a free throw by sophomore Quoya Schnell with 12.3 seconds on the clock all but clinched the Fox Lane victory. Pence provided the final margin with two more free throws with 5.8 seconds remaining.

"It's heartbreaking," said Schum, knowing that the sectional playoffs are about to get underway without her Quakers. "I think we needed (to win) today. Maybe even Thursday (against White Plains). But I'm telling you, these kids are still gonna come to fight. It doesn't matter. They could've been out of the playoffs in game eight if that's possible and they would still fight every single day."

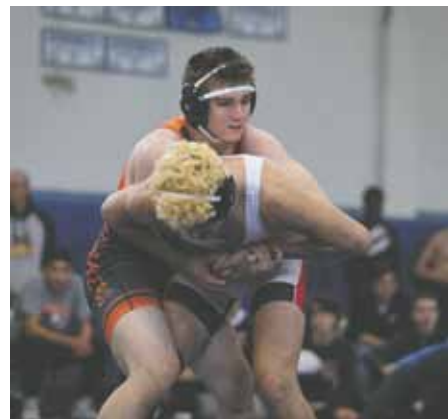
"I'm a Fox Lane graduate and I hated coming here," said Matts, who warned his players they were in for quite a battle before they took the court. "I said Fox Lane and Greeley is always a war. It's always a playoff atmosphere in here when it's Fox Lane-Greeley."



Horace Greeley guard Jesse Harris tries to drive past Fox Lane's Quoya Schnell in the first half of last Tuesday's game.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS





The Quakers' Michael Ametrano is in control against Fox Lane's Marc Berisha.



Fox Lane's Robert Geirum has his hand raised after winning the 145-pound division title.



Greeley's Vincent Sasso controls Mahopac's Carlos Miguel in 160-pound match.

The Foxes' Quincy Downes scored a quick pin in the 170-pound finals.

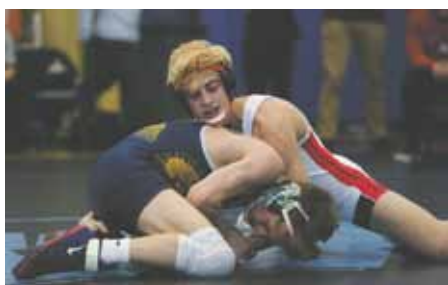


Griffin Zegras works for the pin in the 195-pound semifinals.

# *focus on* **WRESTLING** **DI Divisionals** **Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020** **Westlake High School**



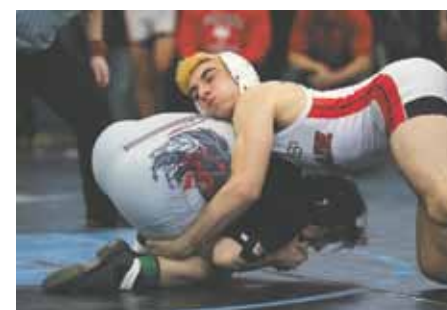
BBHVW's John Fortugno secured a 6-4 decision over Mahopac's Alex Smith in the 106-pound final.



Sam Dixon of the Foxes is in control against Mahopac's Ryan Kick in the 126-pound finals.



Fox Lane's Luis Diaz-Giron pins teammate Jack Covino in the third-place match at 99 pounds.



Fox Lane's Mitchell Antin controls Ketcham's Brendan Carroll in the 138-pound final.



Alex Behar of BBHVW won the 182-pound division title with a pin of Fox Lane's Marc Berisha.



Fox Lane's Jake Hoffmann defeated Mahopac's Aidan Muldoon in the 120-pound final.



Justin Fortugno of BBHVW grabs hold of Mahopac's Angelo Centrone.





The Quakers’ Gabe Adams controls the puck along the right wing during Friday’s game at Brewster Ice Arena.



Greeley sophomore Charles Spar sends a slap shot toward the goal in Friday afternoon’s 7-2 victory at the Brewster Ice Arena.



The Quakers’ Evan Scott waits for a faceoff in the second period of Friday’s win.



Greeley senior Jake Potter moves the puck up the ice in Friday afternoon’s home win.



Greeley’s Ilan Laurence controls the puck near center ice during Friday’s game. He had a hat trick in the Quakers’ 7-2 victory over the combo team from Brewster/Yorktown/Somers/North Salem.

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



Horace Greeley defenseman Dylan Mutkoski searches for an open teammate as he controls the puck.

**2019 High School  
NY State Coach  
of the Year**

**SUKHI SANDHU**  
**Horace Greeley High School**  
**Chappaqua, New York**

Sandhu led Horace Greeley to a historic season in 2019. The Quakers won their first Section I title since 1984, defeating defending champion and powerhouse Mamaroneck 1-0 in the sectional final, earning a spot in the New York Class A State tournament. They then went on to defeat Kingston 2-1 in the Regional Finals to advance to the program’s first ever Final 4 where they would defeat Penfield 2-1 in the state semifinal. Sandhu’s squad couldn’t get past defending state champions Maine-Endwell as they fell 2-1 in the state final, finishing their cinderella season just short with a final record of 18-1-4 and a final ranking in the Northeast Region of #7.



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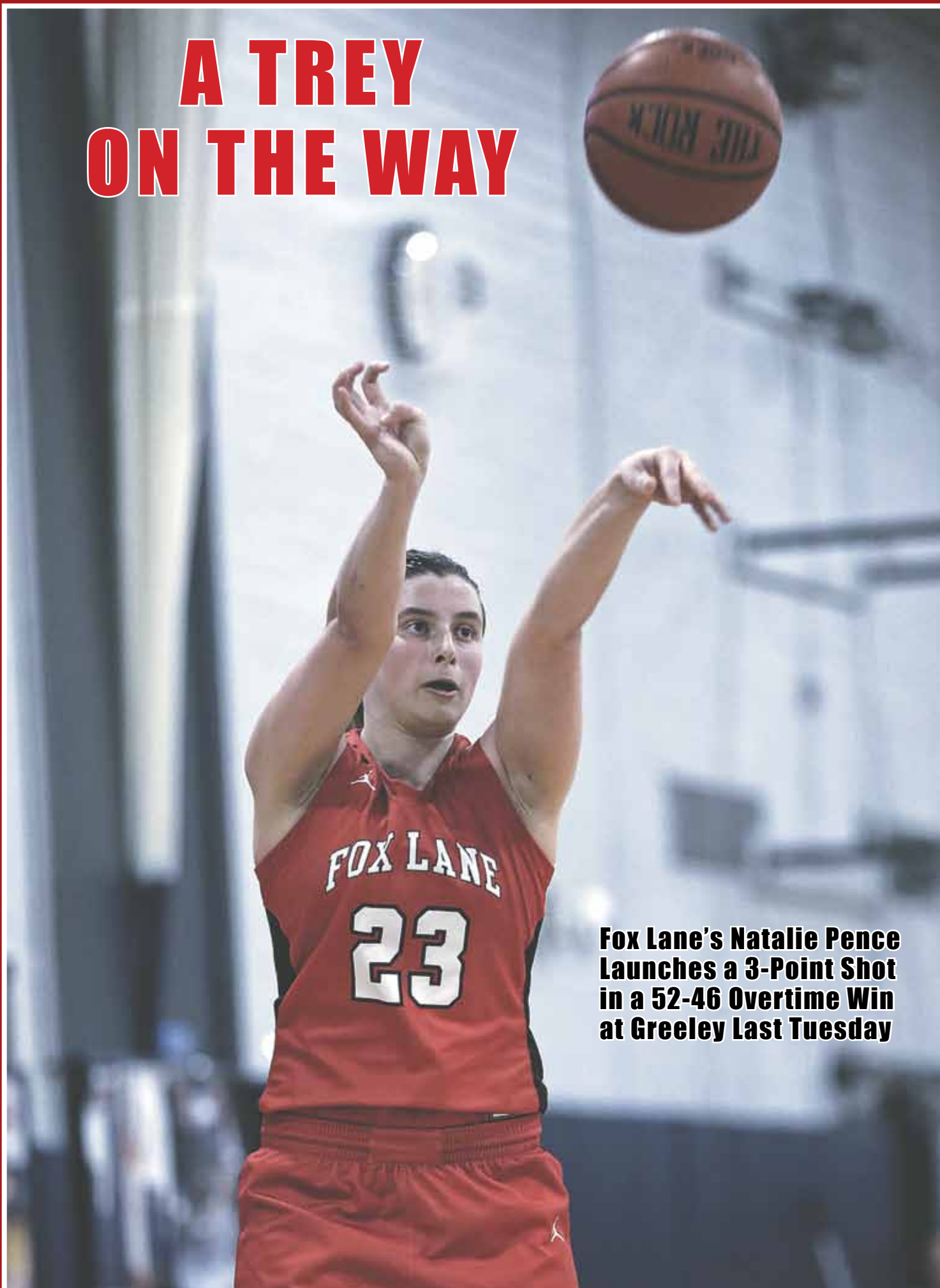
The Northern Westchester Examiner

The Putnam Examiner

The White Plains Examiner

**SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS**

## A TREY ON THE WAY



**Fox Lane's Natalie Pence  
Launches a 3-Point Shot  
in a 52-46 Overtime Win  
at Greeley Last Tuesday**