

Shenandoah defeats Union Local in volleyball

By MIKE HUGHES
For The Intelligencer

MORRISTOWN — Shenandoah entered Saturday's OVAC Class 3A volleyball final with a spotless 22-0 record.

During that stretch, only two teams managed to earn a set one earlier in the season.

Saturday, the Zeps were on a mission, avenging 2022's OVAC 3A finale loss with a 25-23, 25-14, 25-19 sweep.

The two team's previous duel in the 2022 final was a back-and-forth battle that stretched into the fifth set. Saturday started off in a similar fashion as Shenandoah fought for every point, winning 25-23 in the first.

But as kills mounted and small cracks in the UL defense started to manifest, it became clear the Zeps were not entertaining any thoughts about an upset.

"We got down and started making little mistakes and it took us out of our game," Union Local (18-4) head coach Kaye Sechrest noted after the match.

The Zeps got up by as many

as 10 in the second set when an attack error sent a ball long and gave the designated home team a 21-11 advantage.

Another error allowed the Zeps to take the second set 25-14.

UL wasn't giving the championship trophy away, however, and battled even to 12-12 before senior Mya Leach started to take over.

Leach successfully hit through a block to go up 13-12, followed by a well-placed drop shot for a 14-12 reading.

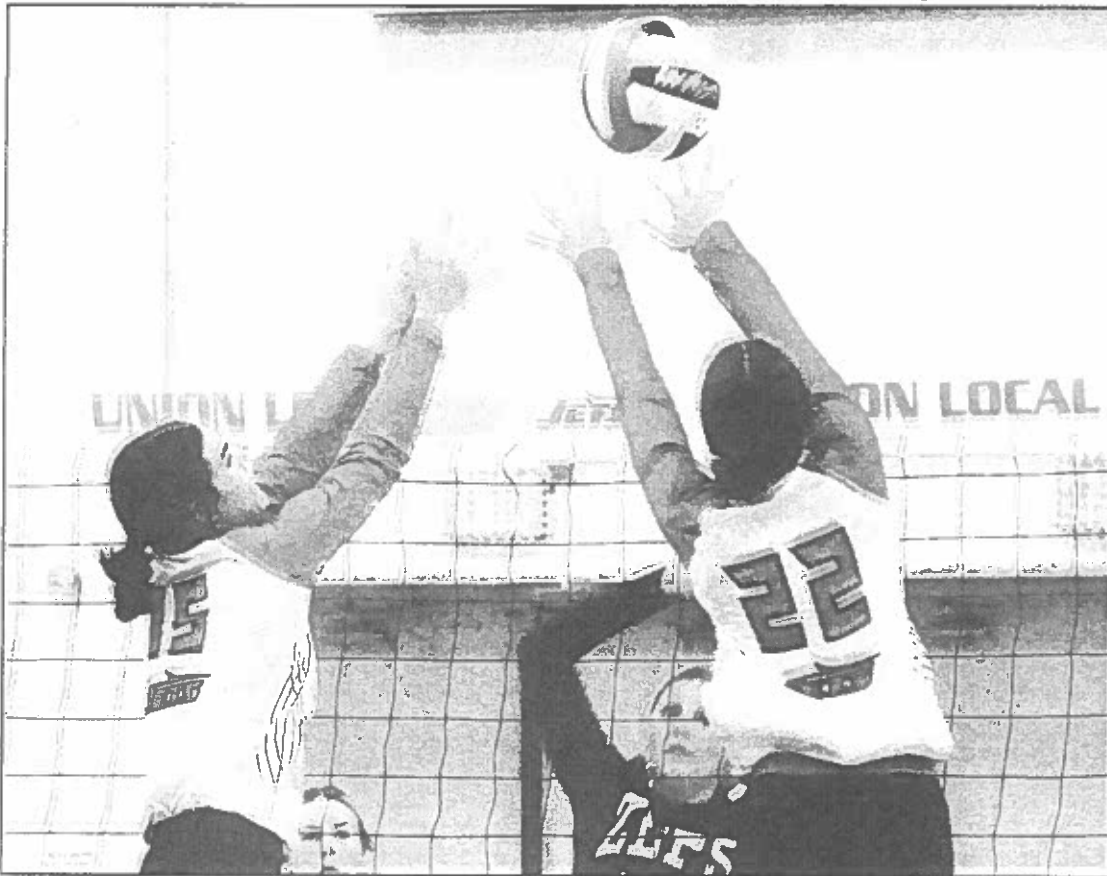
Not to be outdone, Brenna Leach twice registered kills hitting off the block soon after.

Fittingly, that's exactly how Mya Leach ended the match at 25-19, hitting off a block for the final point.

"We couldn't seal our blocks and push it back over for some reason," Sechrest said.

The elder Leach finished with a match-high 17 kills to go with seven digs and five assists. Brenna Leach backed her with eight kills, as did senior Brylee May as the trio held sway at the net.

See UNION, Page B2



UNION LOCAL'S Olivia Wortman (15) and Laken Vinskovich (22) go for a block at the net against the Shenandoah Zeps on Saturday. Photo by MIKE HUGHES

OVCCCL championship



RIVER'S MARA Beard speeds along the race path during the OVCCCL Championships at Buckeye Local on Saturday. Beard finished first in the girls race, finishing in 18:40.29. Martins Ferry claimed the gold in the girls race, followed by Barnesville and Shadyside. Shadyside's Chloe Meholovitch, Edison's Josie Lesnansky, River's Mallory Brake and Barnesville's Marah Bethel rounded out the top five. In the boys race, St. Clairsville took first, Linsly second and Bellaire third. The Red Devils' Ben Shields placed first, Caleb Bryniarski placed third, and Tyler Harris placed fourth. Barnesville's Conner Star placed second and Linsly's Jakob Schmidt-Weigand placed fifth.

Browns stun 49ers 19-17

CLEVELAND (AP) — From dominant to defeated — in less than a week. The San Francisco 49ers were reminded there are no perfect teams or givens in the NFL.

Brock Purdy suffered his first loss as a starter and the Niners had their regular-season winning streak stopped at 15 when rookie kicker Jake Moody missed a 41-yard field goal with six seconds remaining, giving the Cleveland Browns an unexpected 19-17 win on Sunday.

"I don't think we deserved to win," said 49ers star defensive end Nick Bosa. "We didn't underestimate them, but they did play better than us. We haven't lost in a long time in the regular season, so it hurts a lot more."

Dustin Hopkins kicked four field goals for the Browns (3-2) — the last with 1:40 left, capping a drive helped by a disputed unnecessary roughness call against San Francisco. Cleveland pulled off the upset without quarterback Deshaun Watson, who missed his second straight game with a bruised right shoulder.

The 49ers (5-1) came in looking nearly unbeatable after destroying Dallas 42-10 at home last week and scoring at least 30 points in each of their first five games.

But Cleveland's top-ranked defense was more than up to the task, and the 49ers

Ohio State delivers 41-7 blowout to Purdue

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. (AP) — Ohio State running back Dallan Hayden spent five games preparing for an opportunity that never came.

When he got his chance Saturday, he was ready.

On a day Kyle McCord threw three touchdown passes,



Montgomery shuts out Astros as Rangers win Game 1 of ALCS

HOUSTON (AP) — Jordan Montgomery shut down the Houston Astros and Leody Taveras homered as the Texas Rangers did just enough against Justin Verlander to get a 2-0 win in the opener of the AL Championship Series on Sunday night.

Montgomery pitched five-hit ball over 6 1/3 innings and Taveras provided a two-run lead with his solo homer in the fifth. Evan Carter, a 21-year-old rookie, doubled and scored in the second and made two nifty defensive plays in left field.

"We just found a way to get a couple of runs across the board," Texas manager Bruce Bochy said. "That was the difference in the game, obviously. But our guy was really good. Monty, terrific job he did. And he got in a couple of jams there and found a way to get out of it."

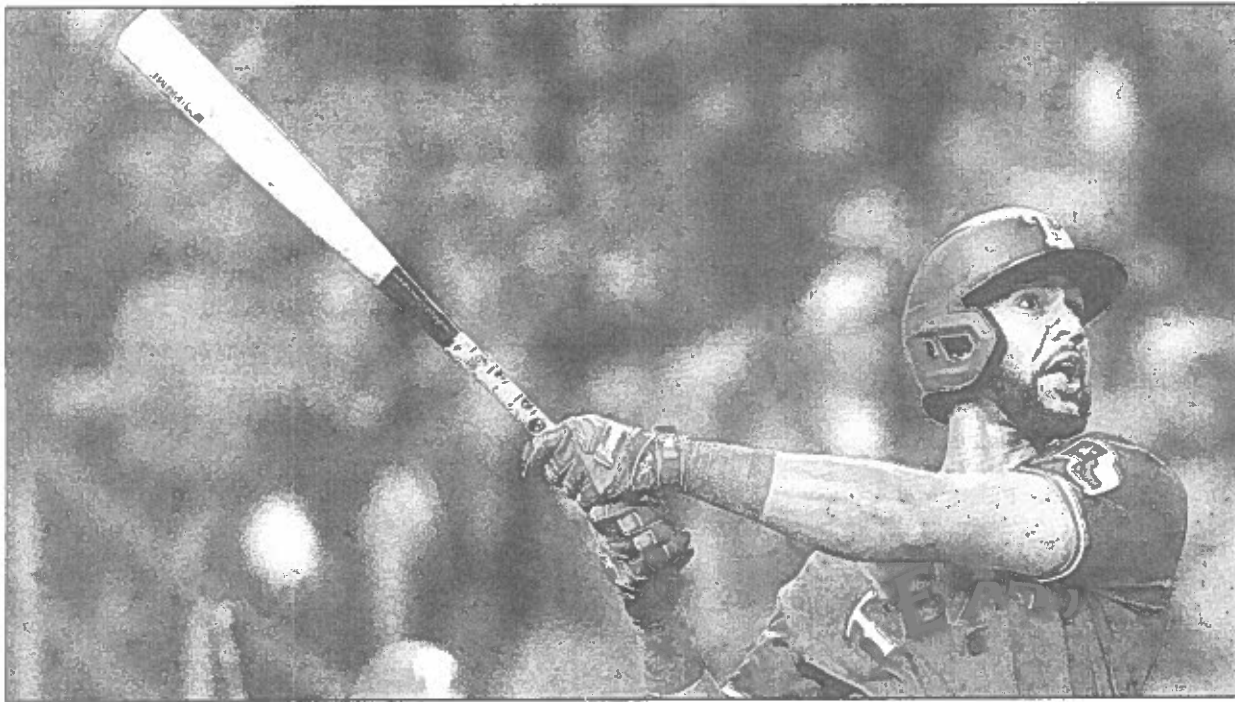
In the ALCS for the first time since back-to-back appearances in 2010-11, the Rangers improved to 6-0 this postseason after sweeping the Rays in the Wild Card Series and the Orioles in the Division Series. The winning streak followed losses in their previous six playoff games against Toronto in the ALDS in 2015 and 2016.

Game 2 of the best-of-seven series is Monday in Houston.

The defending champion Astros, in the ALCS for a seventh straight year, had a tough time getting anything going against Montgomery. The top four batters in Houston's lineup were 2 for 12 with five strikeouts against the left-hander. Slugger Jordan Alvarez struck out against him three times.

Houston's offensive woes came after it hit 16 homers and outscored the Rangers 39-10 in a three-game sweep in September. Things were much different in the first postseason meeting between these in-state rivals as they managed just five singles.

"Sometime you've got to say: 'Hey, the guy threw a great game tonight against us, excellent game,'" manager Dusty Baker said. "And they say



TEXAS RANGERS' Leody Taveras hits a home run during the fifth inning of Game 1 of the baseball AL Championship Series against the Houston Astros on Sunday in Houston.

good pitching beats good hitting, but when you don't hit, everybody wants to know what's wrong. There's not a whole bunch to say. He threw a real good game against us."

Montgomery has been great in the last month, allowing just two earned runs over 27 innings in his last four starts of regular season, and posting a 2.08 ERA in three postseason starts.

Verlander allowed two runs and six hits in 6 2/3 innings to mark the first time this postseason where both starters pitched into the seventh. It was the 36th postseason start for Verlander and the MLB-record 14th time he's started a playoff series opener.

The three-time Cy Young Award winner threw 47 fastballs, getting 27 swings without a single swing and miss.

Josh Sborz walked Jose Altuve starting the eighth and was replaced by Aroldis Chapman. The Rangers turned a double play when Carter made a great grab on the track on a ball hit by Alex Bregman and Altuve was called out for not retouching second base when he retreated to first after Carter's catch.

Altuve initially called safe, but the Rangers challenged the play, and it was overturned in a video review. Alvarez following with an inning-ending

groundout.

Carter was asked about his ability to stay calm in his first playoff run.

"Oh, my gosh. This is so much fun," he said. "That's just all I think about. Where else would I want to be. This is awesome. I'm just trying to keep my feet grounded and just keep rolling with this team. It's been a lot of fun."

Jose Leclerc struck out one in a perfect ninth for the save and the Rang-

ers' second shutout of the playoff.

Texas' bullpen has a 1.86 ERA in the playoffs after ranking 24th at 4.77 during the regular season.

Carter got things going for Texas with a hustle double on a grounder with one out in the second before scoring on a single by Jonah Heim. John Jung singled with two outs. Taveras walked to load the bases and Verlander limited the damage by retiring Marcus Semien on a

fly ball.

Verlander had retired eight in a row when Taveras drove a hanging slider 398 feet into the seats in right field with one out in the fifth.

The Astros had chances to score in the third and fourth innings. Martin Maldonado walked with one out in the third before a two-out single by Bregman. But they were both stranded when Alvarez struck out.

Three straight singles

• Union

Continued from Page C1

Brenna Leach also finished with 12 digs.

Sechrest noted that Mya Leach in particular was tough to defend as she's capable of generating a ton of power on attack swings, but Leach also knows when to tip or place a drop shot just behind the first line of defense.

"They have their three options, but we knew who the main option was," the coach added. Olivia Wortman finished with eight kills and

"She's a good player and she can put the ball wherever she wants and when they can do that and run their offense, they are really good and tough to beat," Sechrest said.

"They have their three options, but we knew who the main option was," the coach added.

Olivia Wortman finished with eight kills and

Ella Pietranton and Laken Vinskovich had seven apiece for the Jets, which now await a meeting with Buckeye Local in the first round of the Division III postseason.

Shenandoah def. Union Local 25-23, 25-14, 25-19

U — Wortman 8 kills, 5 digs, 9 pts; Pietranton 7 kills, 9 pts; Vinskovich 7

kills, 8 pts, 3 dgs; Brounsard 14 digs; Logan 16 assists, 7 digs; Yager 10 digs; 4 kills, 4 pts; Butler 6 digs; Martin 5 digs; Saunders 4 pts, S — M. Keach 17 kills, 5 assists, 7 digs; Knoll 10 digs, 9 pts; B. Leach 12 digs; 8 kills; 4 pts; Crum 11 pts; 15 assists; 8 digs; Merryn 7 ts; 16 assists; McVicker 4 kills; May 8 kills

• Ohio

Continued from Page C1

Harrison caught six passes for 105 yards and had the first score of the game while Stover had four catches for 53 yards and two TDs, one in each half.

McCord was 16 of 28 with 276 yards, matching his single-game career high for TD throws.

"They're No. 3 in the country for a reason," Purdue coach Ryan Walters said after a second straight loss. "And they're sitting where we want to go as a program."

Purdue quarterback Hudson Card was 13 of 32 with 126 yards and one touchdown. Devin Mockobee ran 18 times for 110 yards for the Boilermakers.

THE TAKEAWAY

• Browns

Continued from Page C1

P.J. Walker came off Cleveland's practice squad and outplayed Purdy, who threw his first interception this season, finished with just 125 yards and nearly pulled off a stirring comeback in the final moments before Moody's failed kick.

The 23-year-old Purdy had been perfect in his

Ohio State: Nobody questions the Buckeyes defense, which has only allowed 58 points all season. Now Ohio State's offense is starting to show some mettle. Despite all the injuries, the Buckeyes seem to be kicking it into high gear, outscoring opponents 68-14 over the last three halves.

Purdue: The Boilermakers wanted to take advantage of playing five of their first seven at home. Instead, they're 1-4 at Ross-Ade in Year 1 under Walters, treating fans to some of their worst games of the season.

Purdue's first three scoring chances ended with missed field goals. Even worse, a student came out during a media timeout and made mul-

tiple field goals during a contest.

INJURY REPORT
Ohio State's medical team took away Trayanum's helmet following a brief examination in the injury tent. Purdue offensive lineman Luke Griffin was carted off the field with an air cast around his lower right leg during the first quarter. His teammates ran to the cart to show their support.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Ohio State helped its case with a lopsided road victory, but until No. 1 Georgia or No. 2 Michigan stumbles, the Buckeyes will have a hard time climbing in the rankings.

BY THE NUMBERS

Ohio State: Harrison posted his fourth 100-

yard game of the season and the 11th of his college career. ... The Buckeyes are now 4-5 at Purdue since 2005. ... Ohio State rushed for 4.2 yards per carry one week after averaging 1.9 against Maryland. ... Day is 34-0 against unranked opponents.

Purdue: Burks caught three passes for 22 yards and now has five TD catches this season. ... The Boilermakers are 3-3 in their last six games against top-five foes.

UP NEXT

Ohio State: The Buckeyes host Penn State next Saturday in a key East Division game.

Purdue: The Boilermakers have a bye week before visiting Nebraska on Oct. 28.

River sweeps Wheeling Central

WHEELING — The River Pilots earned a three-set sweep Saturday against the Wheeling Central Catholic Maroon Knights, defeating them 28-26, 26-24, 25-17.

For the Pilots, Hallie Hammel totaled 13 kills and nine digs. Reese Hobbs finished with a stallion of eight kills, three blocks and three aces. Kaylee Hagan had five kills, three blocks, five digs and three aces.

Emma Reed had five kills and 13 digs for River. Aubrey Petty had 17 digs and Maci Isaly had 29 assists.

Oak Glen Defeats Potters In Four

MORRISTOWN — The Golden Bears were victorious in the 4A OVAC Championship on Saturday, dealing the Potters a 25-15, 24-26, 25-22, 25-21 defeat.

Ashlyn Six had 24 kills and two blocks for Oak Glen. Mckenzi Martin had 20 kills and three blocks. Brooklyn Six had six kills and one block. Averi Martin had five kills and seven blocks, and Reecelyn Craig had three kills and two blocks.

Jersey Smith finished with 50 assists, two blocks and three aces for the Bears. Addison Smith and Tia Vick each added five digs.

Exiting the conference tournament, Oak Glen has a record of 24-3-3.

Uniglobe Travel Show

Saturday, October 28

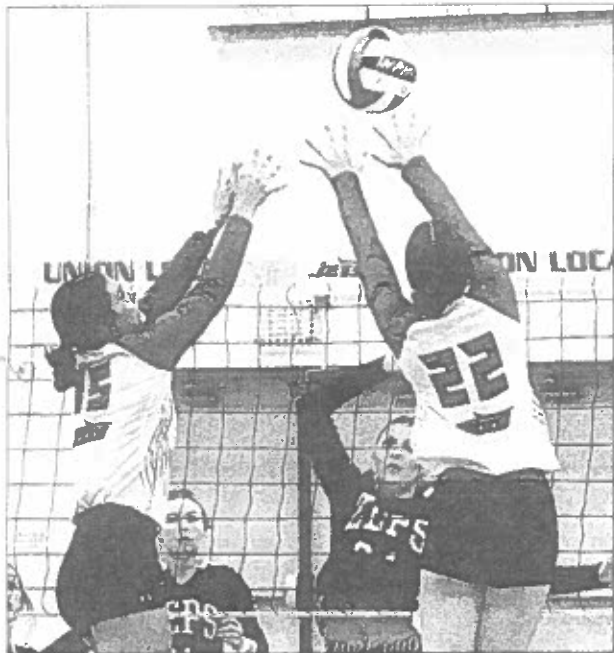


Photo by Mike Hughes
Union Local's Olivia Wortman (15) and Laken Vinskovich (22) go for a block at the net against the Shenandoah Zeps on Saturday.

UL Can't Solve Still-Unbeaten Shenandoah

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about an upset.

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Please see UNBEATEN, Page 12

Nailers Sharp In Preseason Tuneup



Photo by Joe Lovell
Wheeling's Bobby Hampton handles the puck with Cincinnati's Luka Burzan in hot pursuit during the Nailers' home match at WesBanco Arena, a 5-0 win for the home team.

Wheeling Blanks Cincinnati At Home, Will Hit Road To Face The Cyclones In Season Opener Saturday

WHEELING — The Wheeling Nailers had everything clicking in its lone preseason match.

The offense scored five goals, and the defense and goaltending turned in a shutout in a 5-0 triumph over the Cincinnati Cyclones at WesBanco Arena. Davis Bunz turned on the red light twice and Peter Laviolette had a goal and two assists to lead the offense, while David Tendeck earned the shutout with 24 saves.

The Nailers came out flying with a 2-0 lead in goals and a 17-5 advantage in shots. Both Wheeling markers were created with shots that came from the left point. David Drake sent

the puck deep and connected with Cedric Desruisseaux on the right side of the slot. Desruisseaux slid a pass through to Jarrett Lee, who turned to his backhand and flipped the puck into the left side of the cage at the 10:30 mark. Less than seven minutes later, Desruisseaux threw a shot on goal from deep, which produced a rebound for Davis Bunz, who deposited the puck along the ice and in on the right side of the net.

The home team put two more goals on the board in the middle session. At the 7:48 mark, Bunz struck for the second time in the contest, and this time, he did so

on the team's first power play. Bunz glided into the middle of the offensive zone, and launched a wrist shot into the top-left corner. The Nailers' fourth tally of the afternoon came with 7:13 left, when Jeff Solow teed up Matt Koopman for a one-timer from the slot, which Koopman drilled along the ice and in.

The first fight of the exhibition slate took place in the latter stages of the period. Matthew Quercia laid a punishing hit on Colton Kalezic, then got challenged to a fight by Malcolm Hayes, who received an instigator penalty.

Please see NAILERS, Page 12

Watt, Highsmith Have Willed Steelers To 3-2 Start

By WILL GRAVES
AP Sports Writer
PITTSBURGH — Nick Herbig took offense to the question.

Asked if T.J. Watt and Alex Highsmith might be the best edge-rushing tandem in the NFL, the Pittsburgh Steelers rookie outside linebacker who has essentially attached himself to his two superstar teammates since training camp began just shook his head.

"Might be?" Herbig said, with more than a tinge of sarcasm. "Might be? Look at the tape, bro." Look at the standings, too.

The Steelers entered their bye week at 3-2 and atop the AFC North almost in spite of an offense that still can't seem to get out of its own way. They now sit a half-game

behind the Baltimore Ravens in the standings following their rivals' defeat of the Tennessee Titans on Sunday in London.

They've survived thanks in large part to two players who are well aware of the franchise's great pass-rush duos of the past — Hall of Famer Kevin Greene and Greg Lloyd and James Harrison and Lamarr Woodley to name just two — and embraced the standard that comes with it.

Week in and week out, opponents put together game plans trying to find a way to keep Watt and Highsmith in check. And week in and (nearly) week out, they find a way to create the kind of chaos that can change the momentum of games and the arcs of seasons.

Highsmith is picking off DeShaun Watson on the first snap in Week 2 and running it back for a touchdown. Watt is pouncing on a Watson fumble and taking it in for the winning score a few hours later. There they were in the final minutes last week against Baltimore, Highsmith knocking the ball loose and Watt jumping on top of it to seal a victory that for about 55 minutes seemed unlikely at best.

"Those guys every week have the mindset that we have to set the tone," outside linebackers coach Denzel Martin said. "We're not waiting for somebody else to make the play. We're going to make the play and change the game."

Please see STEELERS, Page 12

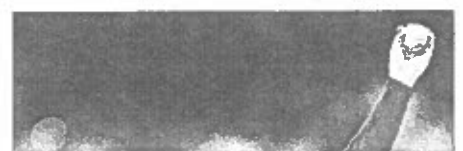


AP Photo
Pittsburgh Steelers' T.J. Watt (90) and Alex Highsmith (56) celebrate after the Steelers defeated the Baltimore Ravens in Pittsburgh on Oct. 8.

Browns Hand 49ers First



Rangers Shut Out Astros To



OVCCL CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD



Photo Provided

River's Mara Beard speeds along the race path during the OVCCL Championships at Buckeye Local on Saturday. Beard finished first in the girls race, finishing in 18:40.29. Martins Ferry claimed the gold in the girls race, followed by Barnesville and Shadyside. Shadyside's Chloe Meholovitch, Edison's Josie Lesnansky, River's Mallory Brake and Barnesville's Marah Bethel rounded out the top five. In the boys race, St. Clairsville took first, Linsly second and Bellaire third. The Red Devils' Ben Shields placed first, Caleb Bryniarski placed third, and Tyler Harris placed fourth. Barnesville's Conner Star placed second and Linsly's Jakob Schmidt-Weigand placed fifth.

BROWNS

(Continued from Page 11)

But Cleveland's top-ranked defense was more than up to the task, and the 49ers were short-handed in the second half without playmakers Christian McCaffrey and Deebo Samuel, who both went out with injuries.

P.J. Walker came off Cleveland's practice squad and outplayed Purdy, who threw his first interception this season, finished with just 125 yards and nearly pulled off a stirring comeback in the final moments before Moody's failed kick.

The 23-year-old Purdy had been perfect in his pro career, winning his first 10 regular-season starts and coming in with the highest passer rating (121.1) in league history for any quarterback through 10 games.

But the Browns kept him off balance and he completed just 12 of 27 passes (44%) — well below his league-leading average (72.1%) coming in.

"I didn't play at the standard that I needed to," Purdy said. "We feel like we failed our own expectations. I just have to be better and make the throws.

Man, it's the NFL. When you get opportunities, you've got to take care of them. There are plays that we didn't make."

Despite being without McCaffrey and Samuel, Purdy made a couple big throws on San Francisco's final drive and positioned the ball in the middle of the field for Moody, who pushed his attempt to the right.

"It's on me," said Moody, who missed a 54-yard in the first half. "I've got to make these kicks in these situations. That's what I signed up for at my position. The team fought really hard to give me a chance.

"It was a perfect snap, perfect hold. I just didn't hit it the way I wanted to."

When the ball sailed into the net, Cleveland's sideline erupted in celebration and Browns fans danced in the aisles after seeing the home team finally catch a few breaks.

"The truth is, we're a good football team," Browns coach Kevin Stefanski said. "We're not perfect, we know that. But we fought like crazy, and I'm just proud of so many guys."

UNBEATEN

(Continued from Page 11)

Not to be outdone, Brenna Leach twice registered kills hitting off the block soon after.

Fittingly, that's exactly how Mya Leach ended the match at 25-19, hitting off a block for the final point.

"We couldn't seal our blocks and push it back over for some reason," Sechrest said.

The elder Leach finished with a match-high 17 kills to go with seven digs and five assists. Brenna Leach backed her with eight kills, as did senior Brylee May as the trio held sway at the net.

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STEELERS

(Continued from Page 11)

They're doing it with remarkable consistency.

Watt already has eight sacks, putting him ahead of his pace in 2021 when he tied the NFL single-season record with 22 1/2 on his way to being named Defensive Player of the Year. The 29-year-old youngest member of the Watt NFL clan that includes now-retired three-time Defensive Player of the Year J.J. Watt also has two forced fumbles and has swatted down four passes.

Not that Watt wants to talk about it. He figures he's just doing his job.

"We're not paid to do anything other than go out there and make as many plays as possible and try to deliver the ball to the offense," Watt said in his trademark monotone that belies the frenzied blur his No. 90 becomes at the snap.

Highsmith downplays his own contributions. Maybe he shouldn't. He proved during Watt's extended absence last season due to a torn pectoral muscle that he could become a disruptive force in his own right. He collected a career-best 14 1/2 sacks and his five forced fumbles led the NFL.

The Steelers signed him to a lucrative four-year extension over the summer, meaning Watt and Highsmith will spend their primes standing on opposite ends of the line of scrimmage, using a level of communication that's become almost ESP-like to render opposing game plans useless.

The Browns were trying to nurse a fourth-quarter lead on Sept. 18 when they faced second-and-9 at the Cleveland 20. Highsmith and Watt suspected a play-action pass was coming. A little hand signal to each other led them to line up a little wider than usual hoping for a better angle of attack.

Sure enough, Watson faked a handoff and dropped back to pass. Highsmith cut inside Browns left tackle Jedrick Willis and swatted the ball out of Watson's hands. Watt, who says he basically blacks out during plays and that makes them sometimes difficult to remember, scooped it up and sprinted 16

yards to the end zone.

Asked if it feels as if he and Watt seem to share the same brain, Highsmith just smiled and said: "Sometimes."

It's a connection that's been building from the moment the Steelers selected Highsmith in the third round of the 2020 draft. He arrived in Pittsburgh as a project of sorts after playing defensive end at Charlotte. He poured himself into his craft, with Watt playing the eager mentor.

Herbig points out Watt and Highsmith are rarely at their lockers, instead preferring the sanctity of the film room, though the conversation doesn't stop when they head home. The outside linebackers have a text thread that can light up each other's phones at seemingly all hours.

"They're calling all throughout the night talking," Martin said. "They can be with their families, their wives. They're calling, texting about linemen, how they set up, what might work."

Their commitment to their bodies — Watt doesn't really overindulge during the offseason, wary of how that extra slice of pizza might affect him in the fall — and their almost maniacal approach to their work sets an example that basically forces everyone below them on the depth chart to catch up.

"Those guys practice every day like they're in a game," said veteran linebacker Markus Golden, who played with J.J. Watt in Arizona before joining the Steelers in the offseason. "They've just got it all. On and off the field."

Highsmith figures it's what's expected when you play his position in a place that likes to call itself "Blitzburg." The team's history is littered with defensive game wreckers. It's a legacy Watt and Highsmith take seriously.

Yes, they are talented individually. Together, they have the chance to become something special.

"I think we feed off each other, we build off each other," Highsmith said. "So I think we just got to continue to do that week in, week out. I think our best ball is still in front of us."

ALCS

(Continued from Page 11)

The defending champion Astros, in the ALCS for a seventh straight year, had a tough time getting anything going against Montgomery. The top four batters in Houston's lineup were 2 for 12 with five strikeouts against the left-hander. Slugger Yordan Alvarez struck out against him three times.

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SPECIAL OFFER

SPORTS

Wednesday,
October 11, 2023

St. Clairsville Red Devils fall to Oak Glen

By MIKE HUGHES
For The Times Leader

NEW MANCHESTER — Oak Glen played its fifth game after the disappointing 4-1 loss to Weir in the OVAC 4A championship match.

Since then, the Golden Bears (13-6-1) are 4-1 and have outscored opponents 19-9, including Tuesday's 4-1 win against visiting St. Clairsville (8-8).

Senior captain Kami Ward did her part, recording a hat trick with two of her three goals coming in the third half. And while a "Ward" was responsible for all four goals, it was the

second — coming off the foot of sister Natasha Ward, that drew the biggest smile from head coach Bill Watts.

Natasha fired a rising shot toward Red Devils' keeper Kiya Kyer.

The freshman keeper got her hands on it, but the force of the shot, coupled with the angle, propelled the blast through her hands and into the net.

That put up the home club 2-1 with 38:14 left to play and St. C. couldn't get any closer.

Watts liked the shot, but the fact it came off a foot other than Kami Ward was the most critical element.

"We're a young team. We (start) three freshman and play five a good bit, we have some sophomores — we're young, but we've gotten better throughout the season finding players," Watts said. "Early in the season it was the Kami show, but the last couple of games, we've have other people score and create opportunities.

"And we need people other than Kami to produce. Since the OVAC game, we've really placed and emphasis on that. This is our fifth game (since) and only once did we not have more than one person score each night."

Tuesday night, it was actually St. Clairsville that struck first. Senior Delaney Florence played an excellent through ball to a streaking Emma Gasber, who took the pass and fired a shot past Golden Bears' keeper Cameron Michaud.

That occurred less than a minute into the first half and the Bears didn't even the score until Kami Ward tipped in a rebound off a corner kick a few minutes later.

You couldn't picture a better start — 49 seconds in and we score," St. C. head coach Wes Stoner said. "It was a great ball and a great finish. We let a cou-

ple of junk ones unfortunately, and Kami is a pain.

"She's extremely quick. I thought we had a good game plan for her early and we were able to hold her off for a little while, but those last two, we just kind of gave up and slowed down and that's something we'll have to talk about.

"Overall, we played a great game. We moved the ball well and got a lot of good chances and it was 1-1 at the half. But they finished more chances than we did."

See ST. CLAIRSVILLE,
Page B2

Jets sweep Ferry in Semis

By NICK HENTHORN
Sports Editor

MORRISTOWN — Adding to a nine-game Tuesday slate to open up the 2023 OVAC Tournament, No. 3 Martins Ferry came out swinging against their hosts, the No. 2 Union Local Jets, taking a 8-4 lead to start the first set.

The Jets had fuel to burn though, wading through rough early-goings to win the set 25-19, and never letting the Purple Riders get that close again, sweeping Ferry 25-19, 25-11, 25-16 to advance in the 3A conference tourney.

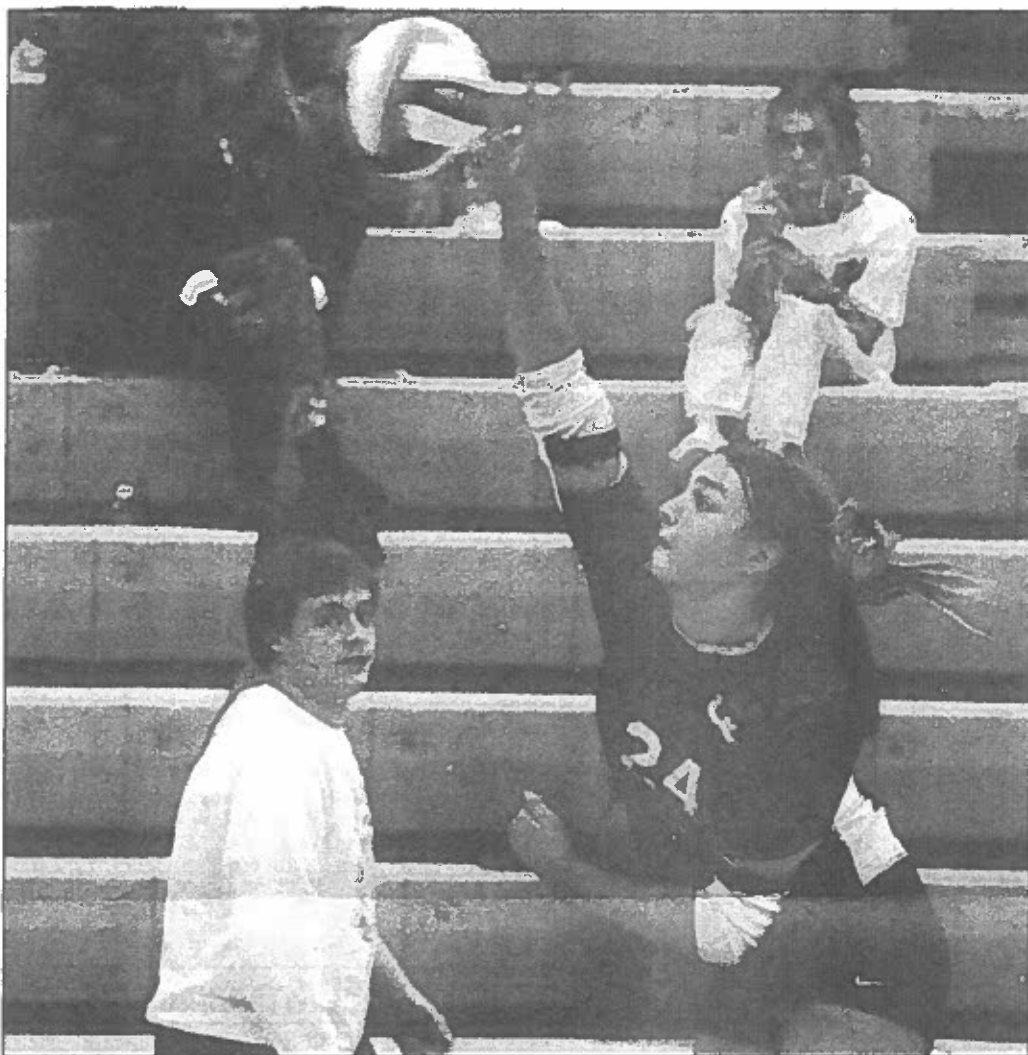
"They played well," Union Local head coach Kaye Sechrest said. "We started slow, they came out on fire, and we got behind. Sometimes I think we like to play from behind. They came out strong, we survived and kind of doused it, and we controlled it from that point on."

The Jets and Purple Riders traded high-impact plays at the match's onset, high-velocity kills and emphatic blocks on both sides signaling the heightened atmosphere of a tournament game as Ferry came out on top of the early exchanges.

Union Local seized momentum of their own to take a lead which grew 14-11, but the pendulum swung again for Ferry, who rattled off four straight points to flip the set to their advantage, 15-14.

Union Local called timeout, and coming out of the huddle, the Jets outscored the Riders 7-1 over the next eight volleys, cruising to a 25-19 set win.

"I think we started out fantastic," Martins Ferry head coach Jaela Koller said. "But we have some work to do. Once we get ahead, we



MARTINS FERRY'S Giana Chirpas blasts a ball over the net during the Purple Riders' OVAC 3A Conference Tournament Semifinal game against the No. 2-ranked Union Local Jets.

have to learn how to finish." The hosts led wire-to-wire in the second set, scoring the last eight points of the set to win 25-11.

Martins Ferry clung to a slim advantage through the early stages of the third set with the match on the line, leading 5-4. A quick three-point swing boosted the Jets to a 7-5 advantage, and the momentum stayed with Union Local, who built a 15-9 advantage.

Teegan Day smashed a kill from the outside to seal the match point, 25-16.

"It was a team effort," Sechrest said. "Good serving, that helps. Good blocking, good net play. Julie, my libero in the back row, she gets to a lot of balls. Tonight it was just everybody."

Sechrest said she was looking forward to the Jets' next matchup, a 9 a.m. date with the No. 1-ranked Shenandoah Zeps, who likewise swept their semi final opponent Tuesday.

For Union Local, Ella Pietranton had a team-high nine kills along with two blocks, while Laken

Vinskovich had eight kills and two blocks. Alayna Logan piled up 20 assists, Delaney Butler had 15 assists and 10 digs, and Jule Broussard had 16 digs.

For Martins Ferry, SJ Koller had 25 digs, Giana Chirpas had six kills and four blocks, Sydney Koller added seven kills and 13 digs, Lindsey Best had five kills and nine digs, while Maddie Lucas had 13 assists.

In the class 5A tournament, No. 4 John Marshall fell to No. 1 Morgantown 3-0, 25-19, 25-17, 25-19.



MCGUFF

OSU added Taylor to a well-stocked Big 10 team

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The ideal approach to sustained success for Ohio State, in coach Kevin McGuff's mind, revolves around recruiting players straight from high school and developing them over four or five seasons.

"We have a system that I like. They tend to get better and better each year," McGuff said. "But we have used the transfer portal to our benefit, obviously, just to kind of fill in some holes."

The well-timed and carefully chosen addition to the roster can go a long way to complement or even carry a team, and in this dizzying era of the portal there aren't many high-level programs these days that don't at least dip into the pool to pick up an experienced transfer.

The Buckeyes reeled in a big one this year with Celeste Taylor.

"She's brought a level of maturity and experience that I think is going to be really beneficial," McGuff said at Big Ten women's basketball media day at Target Center in Minneapolis, where the conference tournament will be staged for the second straight season. "She's an incredible defender. I think our press has got a chance to be even more effective this year with her in that."

Taylor brings the potential to be the conference's biggest impact newcomer after she spent the last two years at Duke and her first two college seasons at Texas.

Bedard picks up an assist in NHL debut as the Blackhawks rally past Crosby, Penguins 4-2

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Connor Bedard did not disappoint in his NHL debut. Crosby and Bryan Rust scored for the Penguins, who had their own 16

Blackhawks rookie Kevin Korhonski during warmups, the two teenagers having the dish to themselves most

LOCAL CARD

(All events begin at 5:30 p.m. unless noted)
Wednesday, Oct. 11
BOYS SOCCER
Tusky Valley at Harrison Central, 7 p.m.
St. Clairsville at Wheeling Central Catholic, 7 p.m.
VOLLEYBALL
Buckeye Local at Martins Ferry

FOOTBALL CARD

(all games start at 7 p.m. unless noted)
Thursday, Oct. 12
COLLEGE
WVU at Houston
Friday, Oct. 13
PREP
Paden City at Beallsville
University School at Steubenville
Beaver Local at Cambridge
Clay Bataille at Cameron
Steubenville Catholic at Conotton Valley
Linsly at Dover
Edison at Harrison Central
Brooke at John Marshall
Richwood at Madonna
Wheeling Central at Martins Ferry
Frontier at Monroe Central
Parkersburg South at Morgantown
East Liverpool at Oak Glen
Buckeye Local at River Bridgeport at Shadyside
Barnesville at Shenandoah
Caldwell at Toronto
Bellaire at Union Local
Spring Mills at University
Ravenswood at Tyler Consolidated
Magnolia at St. Marys
Wheeling Park at St. Clairsville, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 14
PREP
Indian Creek at Mapleton
COLLEGE
Ohio State at Purdue, noon
West Liberty at W.Va. Wesleyan, 1 p.m.
Carnegie Mellon at Bethany, 1 p.m.
Wheeling at Glenville St., 1:30 p.m.
USC at Notre Dame, 7:30 p.m.

NFL STANDINGS

Table with NFL Standings: American Conference (East, South, North, West) and National Conference (East, South, North, West) with columns for Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA.

OHIO RATINGS

Table with Ohio Ratings: Division IV, Division V, and Division VII with columns for Region, School, Rating, Won, Lost.

WV RATINGS

Table with WV Ratings: AAA, AA, A with columns for School, Rating, Won, Lost.

OVAC FOOTBALL

Table with OVAC Football: CLASS 5-A, CLASS 4-A, CLASS 3-A, CLASS 2-A, CLASS 1-A with columns for School, W, L, T, TG, CP, AVE.

NHL

Table with NHL: Eastern Conference (Atlantic, Metropolitan, Pacific), Western Conference (Central, Pacific) with columns for Team, GP, W, L, OT, Pts, GF, GA.

Wheeling Central Rolls By Tyler, 7-0

SISTERSVILLE - Wheeling Central cruised past the Tyler Consolidated Knights on Tuesday, 7-0, in girls high school soccer action.
The Maroon Knights were led by Addie Payton and Mariah Ratcliffe, each of whom had two goals. Ramsay Mansuetto, Addi Hanson and Monti Smith also got in on the scoring parade as the win moved Wheeling Central to 15-4-1. Tyler moves to 2-1-4.

Assisting on Wheeling Central's goals was Hanson with three, Ratcliffe and Mansuetto with two each, and Katie Tiu and Lilly Whitelatch with one apiece.
Bella Fitzsimmons kept a clean sheet for the Maroon Knights with six saves.

Oak Glen 4, St. Clairsville 1
NEW MANCHESTER - Kami Ward scored three goals and Natasha Ward added the other tally as the Golden Bears rolled past the visiting Red Devils.
Emma Gasber tallied the lone St. Clairsville goal off an assist by Delaney Florence.

OVAC VOLLEYBALL
Oak Glen Advances To 4A Final
NEW MANCHESTER - Being a perennial contender, the Golden Bears are certainly aware when the OVAC tournament starts the games get tougher.

Facing Beaver Local, which had defeated Oak Glen in the conference semifinals each of the past two seasons, Morgan Poling and company knew they'd be in for an especially tough fight.
Oak Glen started strong, winning the first two sets by scores of 25-14 and 25-12. The visitors, though, rallied in the third to extend the match with a 25-21 victory.

BOYS SOCCER
Steubenville 10, Indian Creek 0
STEUBENVILLE - Matt Loot scored three goals and added his school-record 23rd assist of the season as Big Red (10-5-1) blanked the Redskins.
Joey Rice added a pair of net-finders, while Cole Bowers, Luke Dinovo, Mason Montgomery, Drew Stimpert and Enrico Batolini Baldelli also had goals.

Bowers added three assists, while Nick Nurczyk, James Devereaux, Gabe Martin, Aidan Morales and Isaac Rosel all had a helper each.
Robby Lucas made two saves.
(Late Monday)
BOYS SOCCER
OVAC Third-Place Game
Brooke 4, Steubenville 2
WELLSBURG - Ben Ferguson scored twice and Chance Brozstek made 10 saves as the Bruins (13-5) doubled up the Big Red. Chase Hile and Christian Packer also scored for Brooke.
Dylan Black, Devin Cipoletti and Nick Sagan all recorded assists.

Rangers Sweep Orioles Out Of The MLB Playoffs

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) - Corey Seager and Adolis Garc a homered early. Nathan Eovaldi struck out seven over seven innings in another series-clinching start and the Texas Rangers completed an AL Division Series sweep of the Baltimore Orioles with a 7-1 victory Tuesday night.

The Rangers, whose loss at Seattle on the last day of the regular season made them a wild-card team instead of the AL West champion, have since won all five of their postseason games. They are going to the American League Championship Series for the first time since 2011.

Baltimore won an AL-high 101 games and was never swept in a series during the regular season, but the AL East champions are done after a sweep at the most inopportune time. The Orioles have lost eight playoff games in a row over the past 10 seasons.

Seager pulled a 445-foot drive into the right-field seats in the first inning, and Garc a's three-run homer - one the All-Star slugger admired while taking a few slow steps out of the batter's box - made it 6-0 in the second to chase Orioles right-hander Dean Kremer, the Israeli-American pitcher making his first career postseason start.

It was the first Rangers playoff game at Globe Life Field, the stadium that was brand new in 2020 when it hosted much of MLB's neutral postseason during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Seager is one of five Texas hitters who started for the AL squad in this year's All-Star Game. That is quite a lineup for Bruce Bochy, the three-time World Series-winning manager with San Francisco who was hired by the Rangers last off-season and is now going to his first AL Championship Series.

Astros 9, Twins 1
MINNEAPOLIS (AP) - Jose Abreu hit a three-run homer for Houston in a four-run first inning against Sonny Gray and piled on with a two-run shot in the ninth, powering the Astros past the Minnesota Twins on Tuesday for a 2-1 lead in their AL Division Series.

MLB PLAYOFFS

Table with MLB Playoffs: x-if necessary, Division Series (Best-of-5), American League Texas 3, Baltimore 0; Houston 2, Minnesota 1; Boston at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.; L.A. Lakers vs Sacramento, 10 p.m., Anaheim, Calif.

OSU's Henderson Expected To Return; Egbuka Unlikely



AP Photo
Pittsburgh Penguins' Erik Karlsson (65) collides with Chicago Blackhawks' Taylor Hall during the first period of a game in Pittsburgh, Tuesday.

Pens Drop Opener, 4-2

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Connor Bedard did not disappoint in his NHL debut.

The Chicago Blackhawks rookie picked up an assist and dazzled occasionally with his skating as Chicago rallied past Sidney Crosby and the Pittsburgh Penguins 4-2 on Tuesday night.

The 18-year-old Bedard, the top pick in the NHL draft, played over 21 minutes, often sharing the ice with Crosby, one of his idols. Bedard registered five of the 35 shots Chicago fired at Tristan Jarry as the Blackhawks began a new era with an impressive victory over the veteran-laden Penguins.

Chicago trailed 2-0 when Crosby began his 19th season by scoring his 551st career goal, a shot into an open net off a pass from Jake Guentzel 11:56 into the second period.

The Blackhawks roared back behind a goal from Ryan Donato — with a secondary assist from Bedard — in the second period and Cole Guttman's goal midway through the third. Jason Dickinson gave Chicago the lead with 4:31 remaining. Nick Foligno's empty-netter with 1:33 to go sent most of the sellout crowd that came to watch one of the NHL's brightest stars take on one of its newest.

Petr Mrazek stopped 38 shots for the Blackhawks.

Crosby and Bryan Rust scored for the Penguins, who had their run of 16 consecutive playoff appearances end last spring thanks in part to a late-season pratfall against the Blackhawks.

Army Excited As Nailers Open 31st Training Camp



Photo by Kim North

Wheeling Nailers head coach Derek Army talks to the media Tuesday afternoon following the second of two practices on the opening day of training camp in preparation for the team's 31st season in the Friendly City. The camp continues through next week at WesBanco Arena. A preseason game will be played on Sunday at home as Cincinnati visits for a 2:10 p.m. face-off.

Wheeling Opens Camp With 29 Players; Home-Opener Set For Nov. 4

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

WHEELING - The Wheeling Nailers dropped the puck on their 31st training camp Monday morning on the ice inside WesBanco Arena.

Head Coach Derek Army is excited about what will happen over the course of the next week or so.

"I've been very excited since last season's end. Your goal is to get into the playoffs, but unfortunately, that didn't happen," he said Tuesday following the second of two practices on the first day of camp. "From finding some players that we wanted in the development aspect, I think we are in a really good spot."

"The energy in practice today was incredible today, so there's a lot to be excited about."

Army and first-year assistant coach Mitch Giguere have compiled a roster of 18 forwards, eight defensemen, and three goaltenders for a total of 29 players to begin training camp. The Nailers announced late Tuesday afternoon that eight players had been added to the training camp roster from the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins.

Practices on Wednesday and Thursday will also be split into two groups, but with an added twist -- both days will feature a scrimmage from 11-11:45 a.m. On Friday, there will be a morning skate, with the groups taking to the ice from 10-10:30 and 10:30-11. That night will feature an intrasquad scrimmage, which starts at 7:10 p.m. The first week will conclude with a preseason game against the Cincinnati Cyclones on Sunday at 2:10 p.m.

All practices are open to the public, and fans must stay in the seating bowl, as ice level access is not permitted. The in-

"The energy in practice today was incredible today, so there's a lot to be excited about."

Wheeling Nailers Head Coach Derek Army

trasquad scrimmage and preseason game are both free to attend with open seating.

Leading the list of players coming from the AHL's Baby Pens is forward Justin Addamo. He had an enormous rookie season with 21 goals and 33 points in 42 ECHL games, as well as five AHL goals, which helped him earn an AHL contract from the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins.

"Justin was incredible for us last year. We only had him for 30 games, but during that time we were competitive and he was a big part of it," Army praised.

Joining Addamo is goaltender Taylor Gauthier who returns for his second professional season. He started last year in Wheeling, then played the entire second half of the campaign for Wilkes-Barre/Scranton. Between the two levels, he posted a 16-10-7 record in 36 appearances.

On the blueline, the Nailers also received rookie Thimo Nickl. Nickl is a 21-year old native of Austria, who is set to make his North American pro debut, after playing the last three seasons in Sweden. He was originally selected by the Anaheim Ducks in the 2020 NHL Entry Draft.

Please see NAILERS, Page 10

OVAC CLASS 3A VOLLEYBALL SEMIFINALS

Union Local Sweeps Martins Ferry

By NICK HENTHORN
Sports Editor

MORRISTOWN - Adding to a nine-game Tuesday slate to open up the 2023 OVAC Tournament, No. 3 Martins Ferry came out swinging against their hosts, the No. 2 Union Local Jets, taking a 8-4 lead to start the first set.

The Jets had fuel to burn though, wading through rough early-goings to win the set 25-19, and never letting the Purple Riders get that close again, sweeping Martins Ferry 25-19, 25-11, 25-16 to advance in the 3A conference tourney.

"They played well," Union Local

head coach Kaye Sechrest said. "We started slow, they came out on fire, and we got behind."

"Sometimes I think we like to play from behind. They came out strong, we survived and kind of doused it, and we controlled it from that point on."

The Jets and Purple Riders traded high-impact plays at the match's onset, high-velocity kills and emphatic blocks on both sides signaling the heightened atmosphere of a tournament game as Ferry came out on top of the early exchanges.

Please see UNION, Page 10

Martins Ferry's Lindsey Best prepares for a kill during Tuesday night's OVAC Class 3A semifinals inside 'The Hangar' at Union Local. The Jets soared to a sweep of the Purple Riders and will play Saturday for the championship.



Photo by Nick Henthorn

The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the teams were still completing the deal.

Jefferson is a 2020 second-round pick who played a steady role on the Rams' offense when healthy for his first three NFL seasons. He started every game in Los Angeles' 2021-22 championship season, setting career highs with 50 catches for 802 yards and six touchdowns before catching four passes in the Super

Philadelphia. Jefferson's fate was fairly clear when he played only two offensive snaps against the Eagles, with even Ben Skowronek getting more playing time. Jefferson has eight catches for 108 yards this season.

Jefferson could contribute quickly with the Falcons, who have questionable depth and little production at receiver behind USC product Drake London, who has 17 catches for 204 yards and

To Injured Reserve
LB Leighton Vander Esch, whose history of neck injuries includes surgery, didn't return after appearing to jam his neck in a collision with Parsons in the second half.

McCarthy said Monday he is likely headed to injured reserve along with special teams ace C.J. Goodwin, who left with a shoulder injury.

Goodwin is a Linsly graduate and played in the 2017 Super Bowl with Atlanta.

UNION

(Continued from Page 9)

Union Local seized momentum of their own to take a lead which grew 14-11, but the pendulum swung again for Ferry, who rattled off four straight points to flip the set to their advantage, 15-14.

Union Local called timeout, and coming out of the huddle, the Jets outscored the Riders 7-1 over the next eight volleys, cruising to a 25-19 set win.

"I think we started out fantastic," Martins Ferry head coach Jaela Koller said. "But we have some work to do. Once we get ahead, we have to learn how to finish."

The hosts led wire-to-wire in the second set, scoring the last eight points of the set to win 25-11.

Martins Ferry clung to a slim advantage through the early stages of the third set with the match on the line, leading 5-4. A quick three-point swing boosted the Jets to a 7-5 advantage, and the momentum stayed with Union Local, who built a 15-9 advantage.

Teegan Day smashed a kill from the

outside to seal the match point, 25-16.

"It was a team effort," Sechrest said. "Good serving, that helps. Good blocking, good net play. Julie, my libero in the back row, she gets to a lot of balls. Tonight it was just everybody."

Sechrest said she was looking forward to the Jets' next matchup, a 9 a.m. date with the No. 1-ranked Shenandoah Zeps, who likewise swept their semi final opponent Tuesday.

For Union Local, Ella Pietrantoni had a team-high nine kills along with two blocks, while Laken Vinskovich had eight kills and two blocks. Alayna Logan piled up 20 assists, Delaney Butler had 15 assists and 10 digs, and Jule Broussard had 16 digs.

For Martins Ferry, SJ Koller had 25 digs, Giana Chirpas had six kills and four blocks, Sydney Koller added seven kills and 13 digs, Lindsey Best had five kills and nine digs, while Maddie Lucas had 13 assists.

In the class 5A tournament, No. 4 John Marshall fell to No. 1 Morgantown 3-0, 25-19, 25-17, 25-19.

season of his three-year NHL entry level contract. Frasca collected 12 points in 36 games with the Nailers, and really hit his stride in March, when he scored four times in a five-game span.

Lukas Svejkovsky, 2020 fourth-round draft pick, begins his second pro season, after recording 15 points as a rookie with Wilkes-Barre/Scranton. Svejkovsky had electric numbers in juniors, as he finished the 2021-22 season with 76 points in 57 games. Ty Glover also enters his second season in the organization, after tallying seven goals and 12 points for the AHL Penguins a year ago. Glover will be the fourth player in team history from England. Dillon Hamaliuk was acquired by Pittsburgh in a trade with the San Jose Sharks over the summer. Hamaliuk spent the majority of the 2021-22 season with the AHL's San Jose Barracuda, then amassed seven points in six games last year with the Wichita Thunder. Evan Vierling earned an AHL contract this summer, following an outstanding conclusion to his junior career. Vierling finished fifth in the OHL with 95 points as a member of the Barrie Colts.

Also in camp are netminders David Tendeck, who is entering his fourth pro season after spending his first three years in the Arizona Coyotes organization. Tendeck went 12-12-5 with the Atlanta Gladiators last season, and also earned a victory for the AHL's Tucson Roadrunners. Oskar Autio made his first pro start in last year's season finale, as he made 19 saves on 22 shots for the Nailers in Iowa. Autio played collegiately at Penn State and the University of Vermont.

On the blueline, David Drake returns to anchor the defense, after being one of three Wheeling players to play in all 72 games a year ago. Drake is the lone veteran on this year's squad, as he has played in 262 professional games. Louie Roehl and Davis Bunz return for their second pro seasons, and the two had nearly identical numbers in their rookie campaigns. Roehl finished with 24 points in 60 games, while Bunz recorded 23 points in 58 games. Sebastian Dirven is the final returning member of the defense, as he began his pro career with three points in four contests during the spring.

There are three newcomers to the defense. Quinn Wichers was acquired by the Nailers in a trade this summer, and he is entering his third pro season. Wichers spent the majority of his first two years playing a shutdown role for the Rapid City Rush, while mixing in AHL stints

playing in all 72 games a year ago. Felix Pare is back for his third season in a Wheeling uniform, as he raised his point total last year, despite playing in 14 fewer games due to injury. Speaking of injuries, Matthew Quercia and Shaw Boomhower are looking forward to putting those behind them and finding their magic from the 2021-22 season. Quercia scored the infamous overtime goal in game seven to defeat Fort Wayne, while Boomhower led the team with 127 penalty minutes and chipped into the offense with 13 points. Cam Hausinger begins his third season in Wheeling, after recording 62 points in 87 regular season games, in addition to nine goals in ten playoff contests. Bobby Hampton is also entering his third campaign with the Nailers, as he has 32 points in 93 games over his first two seasons with the club. Wheeling native Peter Laviolette III is back for year number two with his hometown team, as he put up 11 points and 96 penalty minutes.

Four players who joined the Nailers at the end of last season have returned for what will officially be their rookie seasons, after getting an initial taste of the pro game. Jarrett Lee wasted little time in making a name for himself, as he notched three points in his pro debut. He finished with eight points in 13 matches. Tanner Laderoute won an NCAA National Championship at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, and is looking to bring that winning formula to Wheeling, where he registered seven points in his first 11 pro contests. David Jankowski found the net often in the spring, as he racked up three goals and six points in seven games with the Nailers. Matt Koopman also put his name onto the scoresheet with great frequency, as he snagged seven points in his first 14 games. Additionally, Dominiks Marcinkevics will be making his Wheeling and ECHL debut, but already has a year of pro hockey under his belt, as he totaled 32 points in 53 games last season with the SPHL's Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs.

The Nailers will have an intrasquad scrimmage on Friday at 7:10 p.m., followed by a preseason game against Cincinnati on Sunday at 2:10. Both contests are free to attend with open seating.

The 2023-24 regular season begins on Saturday, Oct. 21, when Wheeling visits Cincinnati at 7:35 p.m. The home opener is Saturday, Nov. 4 at 7:10 against Reading. "Mad" Chad Taylor will be the star of the night, as he juggles chainsaws.

WVU

(Continued from Page 9)

"Are you going to play a perfect game? No. Are you going to pitch a shut-out every game? More than likely not. But you do strive for that. You have to point that out and it's hard sometimes when everybody is feeling pretty good after a win. You still have to correct those things."

They have had to overcome some problems along the way, beginning with Penn State proving itself to be much superior in the opener while ranked No. 7 in the country, a start that could have planted doubts.

But WVU played on.

Then it suffered two cruel losses in the TCU game, having the team's best defensive player knocked out in Aubrey Burks and then having a rising star at linebacker, Trey Lathan, be lost for the year with a broken ankle.

They kept after it, seeking that perfect game.

"It's a tribute to two things ... the guys who step up and have been leaders for us. If you ask them, every guy is going to mention Beanie Bishop, every guy is going to mention Lee Kpogba and probably Mike Lockhart and Eddie Vesterinen and

Sean Martin," Lesley said.

"The whole group goes as they do. It's a tribute to them, but it's also a tribute to how every assistant coach handles their rooms and the message every week and getting them prepared for when those things happen."

Defensive tackle Eddie Vesterinen is an example of what Lesley means when he talks about the defensive players believing there is more meat on their bones.

"Personally, I have more in me. As a defense, we have to start faster. We haven't played our best defense yet," he said. "It's mental mistakes. There's a lot you can correct after a game and I am trying to correct those things."

One problem has been slow defensive starts ... Pitt drove the field on its first possession for a score, and TCU scored three first-half touchdowns.

"Go back to the Pitt game," Vesterinen instructs. "Their first drive, they started rolling, but it was because of missed tackles. If we made those tackles, they wouldn't have had that drive. And Texas Tech, the same, it comes back to good fundamental football. As a defense we are waiting for someone to make that big play and then we start to play like a good de-

The Intelligencer.

Wheeling News-Register

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