

Photo Provided

Union Local's Ella Pietranton tries to attack through the block of Linsly's Laura Carbonell, left, and Luchia Fato during Saturday's OVAC Class 3A championship match in St. Clairsville.

UL Tops Linsly To Win OVAC Class 3A Title

By MIKE HUGHES
For The Intelligencer

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — After a brief one-year hiatus, Union Local is back on top of the OVAC Class 3A volleyball world.

Saturday's 3A championship sweep of No. 2-seeded Linsly not only avenged last season's loss to Shenandoah in the conference finale, but it also helped ease the disappointment from losing in the Buckeye 8 Championship Match.

"It was a good game and they are a good team," Union Local head coach Kay Sechret noted following the 25-20, 25-17, 25-22 victory. "We lost the Buckeye 8 so we had some extra motivation coming into this game after losing it."

"This is also getting us ready for tournament time. We play Wednes-

day so we needed to come back strong."

While the Jets did win in straight sets, this match was anything but a one-sided affair.

Linsly held the lead on multiple occasions and throughout seemed to match UL's small runs with scoring bursts of its own. Thank outside hitters Laura Carbonell and Chloe Faidella for a large portion of that scoring output.

Carbonell led all players with 18 kills while Faidella wasn't far behind with 15 kills, adding a few impressive foot digs to her totals.

This was a match where every point counted, and Linsly head coach Ashlee Jividen briefly lamented a key stat that worked against her Cadets — errors.

Please see OVAC, Page 12

Harris Leads Steelers To A Victory In Vegas



AP Photo

Pittsburgh Steelers running back Najee Harris, right, dives for the end zone to score past Las Vegas Raiders cornerback Jack Jones during the second half in Las Vegas, Sunday.

RB Has Best Game Of Season In Win Over Raiders

By MARK ANDERSON
AP Sports Writer

LAS VEGAS — Najee Harris broke free down the left sideline, reached the 5-yard line and dived toward the pylon, just getting the ball across the goal line for a Steelers touchdown.

Shaking off a slow start to the season, Harris didn't let anything stand in his way — even if it meant pushing through a swarm of tacklers for a big gain.

Harris rushed for 106 yards and the 36-yard touchdown to lift Pittsburgh to a 32-13 victory over the Las Vegas Raiders on Sunday.

"I don't know what he ate last night. I don't know what he did, but he sure did ball out today," Steelers quarterback Justin Fields said.

Harris exceeded 100 yards for the first time since ending last season with back-to-back such performances. He rushed for 1,000 yards in each of his first three seasons but entered averaging 3.3 yards per carry this year.

Harris had a 15-yard run early in the second quarter in which he nearly was stopped at the line of scrimmage but fought through multiple tacklers.

"When drives aren't going well, you need a play that will spark it," Harris said. "I always try to be that person to spark the play."

Fields added 59 yards on the ground and two TDs, though he passed for just 145 yards. Fields' hold on the starting job had come into question after recent subpar

performances and with Russell Wilson being activated for the first time this season after being out with a calf injury.

Pittsburgh (4-2) stopped a two-game skid with its highest-scoring game since beating Cincinnati 34-11 last Dec. 23. The Steelers entered ranked 26th in scoring offense, with an 18.4-point average.

Their defense, which gave up 803 yards in losses the past two weeks, returned to early-season form when their first three opponents gained just 687 yards combined. Pittsburgh held the Raiders (2-4) to 275 yards, and four-time All-Pro T.J. Watt forced two fumbles and had two tackles for loss.

Please see STEELERS, Page 12

Missed Opportunities Haunt WVU In 28-16 Home Loss To Iowa State

By DEREK REDD
Managing Editor

MORGANTOWN — The West Virginia University football team's defense had Iowa State on the ropes several times during Saturday night's game at Milan Puskar Stadium. But nearly every time, the Cyclones were able to slip away from the knockout blow and counter with a big strike of their own.

Three long Iowa State scoring drives, coupled with a handful of crushing WVU offensive mistakes, led to the No. 11 Cyclones pulling away from the Mountaineers for a 28-16 win.

"You've got to take advantage of those opportunities when we had the ball down there," WVU head coach Neal Brown said. "And we just didn't."

ISU (6-0, 3-0 Big 12) salted the game away in the fourth quarter, capping a 10-play, 65-yard drive with a three-yard Carson Hansen touchdown run. WVU (3-3, 2-1 Big 12) forced



WVU Needs To Play Mistake-Free Football

By DEREK REDD
Managing Editor

MORGANTOWN — Every college football team wants to stay as mistake-free as possible, but West Virginia University's 28-16 loss Saturday to No. 11 Iowa State showed just how many mistakes the Mountaineers can afford to make in order to reach the goals they have for this season.

That's pretty much zero.

There are teams in the country that have the ability to overcome an error or two or even three and still eke out a win. They can throw up a clunker and come out on top. WVU isn't one of those teams and that was evi-

started cropping up and the gap between WVU and ISU began to widen.

It began with a five-play span to start the second quarter. It looked like WVU converted a third and 3 at the ISU 18 when Rodney Gallagher corralled a low throw from Garrett Greene. The officials ruled otherwise on a video review. Michael Hayes missed a 36-yard field goal on the next play.

"We should never miss that field goal," WVU head coach Neal Brown said, "but we did."

It took Iowa State just three plays to make the Mountaineers pay. Cyclones quarterback Rocco Becht found a wide-open Jaylin Noel for a 60-yard touchdown that tied the

OVAC

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As many impressive kill shots as Linsly's attackers let loose, there were a large numbers of attack errors - 20 to be exact - long with nine service errors.

"I told them, I knew they wanted to win, but we made a few too many errors and came up short," Jividen said.

The early service errors were critical as Linsly totaled nine aces.

UL limited its errors throughout, finishing with only two service errors and four attack errors. But the Jets did struggle with receiving service early, hence the early number of aces.

"It takes my girls probably a half a set to settle down and get situated," Secret admitted.

The teams battled even at 20-20 in the first set before UL finally pulled away, with senior Ella Pietranton recording an ace for set point.

The second wasn't quite as nip and tuck, as fellow senior Olivia Wortman

started hitting home, logging a large portion of her team high 10 kills in the set. Wortman banged home set point at 25-17.

With the OVAC title nearly in hand, a Laken Vinskovich put UL in match-point position at 24-22, followed by Emma Yager hammering down match point for the win.

Pietranton backed Wortman with seven kills, while Vinskovich added six and Ameera Saunders five.

Delaney Butler led with 14 assists, backed by seven from Alli Kellaway.

Linsly's Katerina Spanos totaled 15 digs while Sophia Flanagan totaled 14 assists.

UL gets a brief respite to celebrate before getting back to work Monday in preparation for the Ohio postseason.

The Jets earned a bye and will face the winner of West Muskingum and Edison on Wednesday.

NLCS

(Continued from Page 11)

New York's only hits off him were a pair of singles by Jesse Winker and Jose Iglesias in the fifth. Flaherty struck out six.

Daniel Hudson and Ben Casparius pitched an inning each.

Lindor was 0 for 3 with a walk and a strikeout and Pete Alonso went hitless in three at-bats with a walk and a strikeout.

The Dodgers rallied from the brink of elimination against San Diego to win the NL Division Series in five games with shutouts in the last two games.

They opened their pur-

suit of a record 25th NL pennant by chasing Senga after 1 1/3 innings of his just third overall start in a year decimated by injuries.

The Japanese right-hander walked four of his first eight batters, including three in a row in a 14-pitch span in the first inning.

Senga walked the bases loaded with one out in the first, when just seven of his 23 pitches were thrown for strikes. Max Muncy singled up the middle, scoring Betts and a hobbled Freddie Freeman, who touched the plate with his left foot to protect his

sprained right ankle. He staggered into the arms of Betts, who steadied the much bigger and taller Freeman.

Ohtani chased Senga with an RBI single in the second and the Dodgers tacked on three runs in the fourth off reliever David Peterson as Tommy Edman and Freeman had RBI singles.

UP NEXT

Mets: Sean Manaea will start Game 2 after winning Game 3 of the NL Division Series against the Philadelphia Phillies. It will be the first time the Dodgers face a left-handed starter in this postseason.

STEELERS

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Watt, who had no sacks after entering the game with 4 1/2, said he knew he would need to find other ways to make a difference given the Raiders were determined to keep him away from their quarterback.

"I've been doing punchouts back to (college at) Wisconsin," Watt said. "I carry that with me, and it's something I continue to try to do. When you have a defense that flies around like this, you're able to take more chances. I don't always get the football, but when you do, it's big."

Second-year Raiders quarterback Aidan O'Connell, making his first start in place of the benched Gardner Minshew, opened the game 4 for 4 for 55 yards to lead a touchdown drive. But O'Connell failed to build on that, finishing 27 of 40 for 227 yards, and his interception midway through the fourth quarter set up a Pittsburgh TD and 29-7 lead, much to the delight of thousands of Terrible Towel-waving fans who made this seem like a Steelers home game.

"It was a great first drive for us to go down and get points and a touchdown," O'Connell said. "It was huge for momentum, but it takes 60 minutes."

The Raiders played without

their their top two receivers - Davante Adams (hamstring) and Jakobi Meyers (ankle) - as well as running back Zamir White (groin). Adams could be traded this season, though coach Antonio Pierce said Wednesday that he still considered Adams a Raider.

Pittsburgh let a victory get away a week ago when the Dallas Cowboys scored with 20 seconds left. There would be no such drama this time, largely thanks to the Raiders' mistakes.

INJURIES

Steelers: C Zach Frazier (ankle) left in the third quarter.

Raiders: G Dylan Parham (foot) was injured in the first half.

UP NEXT

Steelers: Host the New York Jets on Sunday night.

Raiders: Visit the Los Angeles Rams on Sunday.

EAGLES 20, BROWNS 16

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Jalen Hurts threw for 264 yards and two touchdowns, including a go-ahead 45-yard toss to DeVonta Smith in the fourth quarter, and Philadelphia held off Cleveland.

Hurts also threw a 22-yard TD to A.J. Brown, who returned along with Smith after both wide receivers missed

time with injuries. The Eagles can't afford to lose either for any more lengthy stretches if they want to make a deep postseason run.

Coming off a bye, the already maddening Eagles (3-2) had to tough one out against the Browns (1-5) in front of a mostly listless crowd. Before Smith's TD, Eagles fans only showed some fire when they chanted for coach Nick Sirianni to get fired.

Trailing 20-13, the Browns moved into Eagles territory late in the game, only to settle for Dustin Hopkins' 31-yard field goal. Deshaun Watson was pushed out of bounds at the 2-yard line on a scramble, and he threw incomplete on third down.

RAVENS 30, COMMANDERS 23

Lamar Jackson threw for 323 yards and a touchdown to outshine rookie Jayden Daniels in a showdown between two of the NFL's best quarterbacks this season. Derrick Henry ran for two TDs and the Baltimore Ravens beat the Washington Commanders 30-23 on Sunday for their fourth consecutive victory.

BEARS 35, JAGUARS 16

LONDON (AP) - Caleb Williams threw four touch-

down passes - two each to receiver Keenan Allen and tight end Cole Kmet - and Chicago held a tea party celebration in the end zone in a rout of Jacksonville at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London.

COLTS 20, TITANS 17

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - Joe Flacco threw for 189 yards and two touchdowns, leading Indianapolis to a win over Tennessee.

PACKERS 34, CARDINALS 13

MILWAUKEE (AP) - Romeo Doubs returned from a one-game suspension and caught two of Jordan Love's four touchdown passes in Green Bay's victory over mistake-prone Arizona.

TEXANS 41, PATRIOTS 21

C.J. Stroud threw three touchdown passes and Houston spoiled the first start of rookie New England quarterback Drake Maye, breezing past the Patriots.

BUCCANEERS 51, SAINTS 27

Baker Mayfield overcame three turnovers with 325 yards and four touchdowns passing, and Tampa Bay defeated New Orleans in what they hoped would be a morale boost to their many fans who endured

Hurricane Milton earlier in the week.

CHARGERS 23, BRONCOS 16

DENVER (AP) - Justin Herbert directed a clock-chewing, methodical Los Angeles Chargers offense that capitalized on the departure of star cornerback Patrick Surtain II to beat Denver.

FALCONS 38, PANTHERS 20

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) - Bijan Robinson ran for 95 yards and two touchdowns. Tyler Allgeier added 105 yards rushing and a score and Atlanta defeated Carolina for their third win over an NFC South foe in three weeks.

LIONS 47, COWBOYS 9

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) - Jared Goff threw for 315 yards and three touchdowns after his completion streak ended on his first throw, and Detroit blew out Dallas, handing the Cowboys a fourth consecutive lopsided loss at home.

BENGALS 17, GIANTS 7

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) - Joe Burrow scored on a career-long 47-yard run on the opening possession, and the Cincinnati Bengals' defense carried them to a much-needed 17-7 victory over the New York Giants on Sunday night.

HAUNT

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The Mountaineers couldn't get off the field on any of those three plays.

On the last third down of the drive, the WVU defense forced ISU quarterback Rocco Becht to throw the ball out of the back of the end zone. But corner Ayden Games was called for defensive holding, giving the Cyclones first and goal at the WVU 3. Hansen scored on the next play.

On the ensuing drive, WVU quarterback Garrett Greene threw his second interception of the game, giving Iowa State the ball back on the Mountaineer 33. Iowa State scored its final touchdown on the next drive, a 10-play campaign that saw the Cyclones convert two third downs and a fourth down.

West Virginia's defense struggled to get off the field at several points during the game. The Cyclones were 9 of 14 on third down and 2 for 2 on fourth down for the game. ISU took a lead it would never relinquish in the second quarter, gobbling up 8 minutes, 8 seconds of game clock on a 17-play, 91-yard drive capped by an 11-yard Hansen touchdown run.

On that drive, Iowa State converted three third downs, including a third and 10 at the Iowa State 31, where quarterback Rocco Becht found Jayden Higgins for an 18-yard gain.

"You've just got to find a way," Trotter said. "You just have to bow up at some point and try to hold them to field goals. That's the hard part on those long drives, trying to figure out how to stop them, especially when we got to those third downs."

"We just have to go back to work and do a better job of getting them off the field," he added.

At the game's onset, it looked like WVU could have a good night against an Iowa State defense that entered Saturday's game ranked sixth nationally in points allowed and 13th nationally in yards allowed. The Mountaineers scored a touchdown on their opening drive, ending a 14-play, 75-yard drive with an 8-yard Jahiem White scoring run.

But outside of a 43-yard Michael Hayes field goal at the end of the first, WVU's offense went quiet.

There were opportunities for the Mountaineers, but offensive errors proved costly. It initially looked like WVU converted a third and 3 at the Iowa State 18 at the start of the second quarter, but an official's review ruled it an incomplete pass. Hayes missed a 36-yard field goal wide left to end the drive.

"I think momentum is real," Brown said. "That hurt for sure. It hurt that we didn't convert and it hurt that we missed the field goal."

other call, which caused confusion.

WVU had a chance to take the lead in the third quarter down 14-10 after the defense, which did a better job of getting to Becht than any other team on the ISU schedule so far, forced the Cyclones to punt. WVU was able to drive from its 14 to Iowa State's 29, but Greene was intercepted by Jamison Patton to kill the drive. ISU's next drive ended with Hansen's second touchdown.

Brown said he thought pass interference should have been called on the first interception, but Greene's second was just a bad decision.

"I was trying to do too much," Greene said of his second pick. "That's my fault."

Hansen finished the game with 96 yards and three touchdowns on 20 carries. Becht - whose father, former WVU tight end Anthony Becht, was honored Saturday night for his induction into the WVU Hall of Fame - finished the game with 265 yards and a touchdown on 18-of-26 passing.

Greene finished with 206 yards, a touchdown and two interceptions on 18-of-32 passing, while also leading the Mountaineers with 87 rushing yards on 10 carries.

Greene said it was a disappointed locker room in the aftermath of

NEEDS

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Brown said a miscommunication on the defensive play call - half the unit got one call and the other half got another - allowed Noel to sprint down the middle of the field unabated.

In those five plays, the Mountaineers went from possibly taking a two-score lead and knocking the Cyclones on their heels to falling back to even. It was the last time Saturday night they would be even with ISU.

Iowa State pulled away as West Virginia squandered several opportunities through crippling errors. A 17-play, 91-yard ISU touchdown drive could have been halted multiple times, but WVU couldn't keep the Cyclones from converting three third downs, including a third and 10 at the ISU 31.

WVU could have regained the lead in the third quarter, but Greene threw an interception to Jamison Patton at the ISU 21. Brown said he thought there was pass interference on the play that should be called "not nine out of 10, but 10 out of 10" times. That led to Iowa State's third touchdown, which might have been a field goal, except that Ayden Games was called for defensive holding in the end zone after Becht threw the ball away on third and goal.

Brown questioned the validity of that call, wondering if the ball should have been ruled uncatchable, but said the game wasn't decided on the refs' whistles.

"The officials didn't lose the game by any means," he said. "We lost the game."

There was no question of officiating on Greene's second interception. Both Brown and Greene said it was a bad decision by Greene. It also led to Iowa State's fourth touchdown and shut the door on any of WVU's comeback hopes.

The issues even trickled down to the quarterback-center exchange. Several of center Brandon Yates' snaps to Greene were off target, disrupting the

LOCAL CARD

(all events begin at 5:30 p.m. unless noted)
Monday, Oct. 14
VOLLEYBALL
Monroe Central at Martins Ferry
Tuesday, Oct. 15
GIRLS SOCCER
John Marshall at Parkersburg South, 6 p.m.
VOLLEYBALL
Williamstown at Wheeling Central, 6 p.m.
Tygart Valley at Hundred, 6 p.m.
Clay Battelle and Linsly at Magnolia, 6 p.m.
Wheeling Park at Weir, 6:30 p.m.

FOOTBALL CARD

(all games start at 7 p.m. unless noted)
WEEK NINE
Thursday, Oct. 17
PREP
John Marshall at Brooke
Friday, Oct. 18
PREP
Cambridge at Beaver Local
McDowell at Steubenville
River at Buckeye Local
Toronto at Caldwell
Cameron at Clay Battelle
Shadyside at Bridgeport
Columbiana at Wellsville
Harrison Central at Edison
Monroe Central at Frontier
Martins Ferry at Rootstown
Southern Local at Lisbon
St. Marys at Magnolia
Morgantown at Parkersburg South
Shenandoah at Barnesville
Oak Glen at Trinity
Calhoun County at Valley
Fort Frye at Warren Local
East Liverpool at Weir
Butler, Pa., at Wheeling Park
Carrick, Pa. at Wheeling Central
Linsly at Dover
Buckeye Trail at East Canton
Racine Southern at Paden City, TBA
Indian Creek at St. Clairsville, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 19
PREP
Union Local at Bellaire, noon
Conotton Valley at Steubenville Catholic
COLLEGE
Kansas State at WVU, TBA
Bethany at Waynesburg, 1 p.m.
W.Va. State at Wheeling, TBA
W.Va. Wesleyan at West Liberty, 1 p.m.

SPORTS ON TV

Monday, Oct. 14
CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE
1 p.m.
CBSSN - Ottawa at Montreal
COLLEGE GOLF
9 a.m.
GOLF - The St. Andrews Links Collegiate: First Round, Old Course and Jubilee Course, St Andrews, Scotland
MLB BASEBALL
4:05 p.m.
FOX - N.L. Championship Series: N.Y. Mets at L.A. Dodgers, Game 2
7:35 p.m.
TBS - A.L. Championship Series: TBD, Game 1
TRUTV - A.L. Championship Series: Cleveland at N.Y. Yankees, Game 1 (Datacast)
NBA BASKETBALL
7:30 p.m.
NBATV - Preseason: Philadelphia at Atlanta
10:30 p.m.
NBATV - Preseason: Dallas at L.A. Clippers
NFL FOOTBALL
8:15 p.m.
ABC - Buffalo at N.Y. Jets
ESPN - Buffalo at N.Y. Jets
ESPN2 - Buffalo at N.Y. Jets (MNF with Peyton and Eli)
NHL HOCKEY
7 p.m.
NHLN - Detroit at N.Y. Rangers
SOCCER (MEN'S)
11:50 a.m.
FS2 - UEFA Nations League Group Stage: Georgia vs. Albania, Group E, Tbilisi, Georgia
2:30 p.m.
FS2 - UEFA Nations League Group Stage: Belgium vs. France, Group B, Brussels
TENNIS
6 a.m.
TENNIS - Stockholm-ATP, Antwerp-ATP, Almaty-ATP, Osaka-WTA, Ningbo-WTA Early Rounds
9:30 p.m.
TENNIS - Stockholm-ATP, Antwerp-ATP, Almaty-ATP, Osaka-WTA, Ningbo-WTA Early Rounds
VOLLEYBALL (WOMEN'S)
7 p.m.
ESPNU - Athletes Unlimited: Team Nootsara vs. Team

NFL STANDINGS

Table with columns: Conference, Division, Team, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA. Includes American and National Conferences.

MLB PLAYOFFS

LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES (Best-of-7) (x-if necessary)
American League
Cleveland vs. New York
Monday, Oct. 14: Cleveland at New York (Rodon 16-9), 7:37 p.m. (TBS, truTV, and Max)
Tuesday, Oct. 15: Cleveland at New York (Cole 8-5), 7:37 p.m. (TBS, truTV, and Max)
Thursday, Oct. 17: New York (Schmidt 5-5) at Cleveland, TBD
Friday, Oct. 18: New York (Gil 15-7) at Cleveland, TBD
x-Saturday, Oct. 19: New York at Cleveland, TBD
x-Monday, Oct. 21: Cleveland at New York, TBD
x-Tuesday, Oct. 22: Cleveland at New York, TBD
National League
Los Angeles 1, New York 0
Sunday, Oct. 13: Los Angeles 9, New York 0
Monday, Oct. 14: New York (Manaea 12-6) at Los Angeles, 4:08 p.m. (FOX and FS1)
Wednesday, Oct. 16: Los Angeles at New York, 8:08 p.m. (FS1)
Thursday, Oct. 17: Los Angeles at New York, TBD
x-Friday, Oct. 18: Los Angeles at New York, TBD
x-Sunday, Oct. 20: New York at Los Angeles, TBD
x-Monday, Oct. 21: New York at Los Angeles, TBD

NHL

Saturday's Games
Boston 2, Los Angeles 1, OT
Buffalo 5, Florida 2
Toronto 4, Pittsburgh 2
Detroit 3, Nashville 0
Montreal 4, Ottawa 1
New Jersey 5, Washington 3
Utah 6, N.Y. Rangers 5, OT
Dallas 3, N.Y. Islanders 0
Seattle 5, Minnesota 4, SO
Columbus 6, Colorado 4
Anaheim 2, San Jose 0
Chicago 5, Edmonton 2
Calgary 6, Philadelphia 3
Carolina at Tampa Bay, p.p.d.
Sunday's Games
Winnipeg 2, Minnesota 1, OT
Dallas 2, Seattle 0
Calgary 4, Edmonton 1
Anaheim at Vegas, late.
Monday's Games
Florida at Boston, 1 p.m.
Los Angeles at Ottawa, 1 p.m.
Utah at New Jersey, 1 p.m.
Detroit at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Montreal, 7:30 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Colorado, 9 p.m.

NASCAR

NASCAR Cup Series Bank of America ROVAL 400 Results
Sunday at Charlotte Motor Speedway Road Course, Concord, N.C.
Lap length: 2.28 miles (Start position in parentheses)
1. (6) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 109 laps, 48 points.
2. (12) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 109, 35.
3. (10) William Byron, Chevrolet, 109, 34.
4. (5) Austin Cindric, Ford, 109, 39.
5. (7) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 109, 48.
6. (3) AJ Allmendinger, Chevrolet, 109, 0.
7. (1) Shane Van Gisbergen, Chevrolet, 109, 0.
8. (4) Joey Logano, Ford, 109, 47.
9. (9) Bubba Wallace, Toyota, 109, 35.
10. (14) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 109, 40.
11. (2) Tyler Reddick, Toyota, 109, 36.
12. (20) Carson Hocevar, Chevrolet, 109, 25.
13. (11) Kyle Busch, Chevrolet, 109, 27.
14. (18) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 109, 24.
15. (21) Michael McDowell, Ford, 109, 26.
16. (24) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Chevrolet, 109, 21.
17. (29) Chris Buescher, Ford, 109, 20.
18. (15) Todd Gilliland, Ford, 109, 19.
19. (23) Zane Smith, Chevrolet, 109, 18.
20. (26) Harrison Burton, Ford, 109, 17.
21. (30) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 109, 16.
22. (36) Josh Berry, Ford, 109, 15.
23. (8) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 109, 16.
24. (27) Daniel Hemric, Chevrolet, 109, 13.
25. (34) Ryan Preece, Ford, 109, 12.
26. (32) Justin Haley, Chevrolet, 109, 11.
27. (31) Kaz Grala, Ford, 109, 10.
28. (16) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 109, 9.
29. (38) Josh Bilicki, Ford,

AP TOP 25 POLL

The Top 25 teams in The Associated Press college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote, and previous ranking:
Rec Pts Prv
1. Texas (56) 6-0 1544 1
2. Oregon (6) 6-0 1493 3
3. Penn St. 6-0 1380 4
4. Ohio St. 5-1 1357 2
5. Georgia 5-1 1300 5
6. Miami 6-0 1232 6
7. Alabama 5-1 1127 7
8. LSU 5-1 994 13
9. Iowa St. 6-0 982 11
10. Clemson 5-1 980 10
11. Tennessee 5-1 959 8
12. Notre Dame 5-1 914 11
13. BYU 6-0 889 14
14. Texas A&M 5-1 744 15
15. Boise St. 5-1 597 17
16. Indiana 6-0 580 18
17. Kansas St. 5-1 567 18
18. Mississippi 5-2 511 9
19. Missouri 5-1 409 21
20. Pittsburgh 6-0 397 22
21. SMU 5-1 260 25
22. Illinois 5-1 249 23
23. Army 6-0 137 -
24. Michigan 4-2 133 24
25. Navy 5-0 84 -
Others receiving votes: Vanderbilt 68, Nebraska 62, Arizona St. 39, Oklahoma 36, Washington St. 32, Iowa 29, Texas Tech 18, Syracuse 13, Arkansas 13, Utah 7, Louisville 6, South-

Oak Glen Spikes Beaver Local, Repeats As OVAC 4A Champs

By MIKE HUGHES For The Intelligencer

ST. CLAIRSVILLE - Oak Glen and Beaver Local battled back and forth for the first three sets.

The defending OVAC 4A champion Golden Bears won sets one and three, while the Beavers, the No. 2 seed, took the second.

That trend looked to continue in the fourth as Beaver regrouped and started strong, taking a 7-0 lead early in the set. The champs started chipping away at that deficit, battling back to take the set, and the match.

The win gave Oak Glen its 13th OVAC volleyball title, the third-most in Conference history behind Buckeye Trail and East Liverpool.

Bears' head coach Morgan Sadler admitted not allowing the fourth set to get away from her team was critical.

"Volleyball is a game of momentum and it was extremely important that we stayed focuses and played Oak Glen volleyball and nothing less," Sadler said. "They were able to battle back and keep their composure and we were able to win."

The win moved Oak Glen to 21-3-3 with its attention now turning toward the West Virginia postseason and defending their Class AA state crown.

"Every day is a grind," Sadler said. "October is a long month and we keep working, day in and out, to be where we want to be at the end."

Middle hitters Averi Martin (junior) and Reecelyn Craig (senior) led the offensive attack with 15 and 14 kills, respectively, while Martin added 7 1/2 blocks.

Oak Glen's lineup features a number of other capable attackers, including McKenzi Martin, Brooklyn Six, and Tia Vick, but it was Craig and the younger

Martin who featured the hot hand Saturday at the East Central Ohio Service Center on the campus of Ohio University Eastern.

"We try to stretch our offense as much as possible," Sadler said. "But Reecelyn definitely stepped up today and was a huge asset, as was Averi."

"Both middle played really well. It was a full team effort, but those two definitely stepped up."

Brooklyn Six totaled 10 kills while the elder Martin posted eight with two aces as the Golden Bears spread the wealth.

That foursome is capable of attacking with power, either hitting through, off, or around block attempts. But more importantly, the Bears' attackers seemingly know the perfect moments to sneak in a successful tip shop, routinely catching the Beavers' off guard.

"That's something we've been practicing a lot this season, to increase our volleyball IQ, and it paid off (Saturday)," Sadler noted.

The score mirrored an earlier match between the two teams, which Oak Glen also took by a 3-1 margin.

Beaver Local did have a couple solid performances, with Jocelyn Pomeroy leading the charge with eight kills, backed by three apiece from Eva McKnight, Adison Ketchum, Sydney McNear, and Bria Boyd, who added six assists.

Ketchum added six blocks with solid play at the net.

Oak Glen also received 43 assists from Mikalyn Balch.

Prior to the 2023 and 24 OVAC championships, the previous time Oak Glen won the OVAC 4A crown occurred back in 2019 as the Beavers and East Liverpool Potters won between 2020 and 2022.

St. C. Golfers Tied For 4th After First Day Of State Tournament

AKRON, Ohio - St. Clairsville sits in a tie for fourth place after the first day of the Ohio Division II state golf tournament at the Firestone Country Club.

The Red Devils shot a four-man score of 326 to tie with Chagrin Falls.

Sophomore Mavrik a.m. along with Chagrin Falls and Columbus Academy.

Archbishop Alter leads the event with a 308, which was one stroke ahead of Ottawa Hills. Springfield Northwestern is third at 321.

Nailers Fall To Cyclones In Shootout In Team's Lone Preseason Tune-Up

WHEELING - The Wheeling Nailers played their lone preseason game on Saturday night at WesBanco Arena, and fans were treated to extra hockey, as the contest against the Cincinnati Cyclones needed overtime and a shootout to determine a winner. That winner was Cincinnati, who scored on both of its shootout shots to prevail, 5-4.

Cincinnati got on the scoreboard first at the 6:33 mark of the opening stanza, courtesy of Matt Boudens. However, the Nailers rebounded to net the next two and take a lead into the intermission break. Jared Westcott netted the equalizer, then Alex LaPlante put the home side ahead just 1:04 later.

Tristan Ashbrook tied the score for the Cyclones 2:57 into the middle frame, before Westcott's second of the night gave Wheeling the lead back. Zachary Massicotte assisted on both tallies by the rookie forward. Cincinnati pulled even just beyond the midway

mark of the period, when Matt Murphy found the back of the net.

Massicotte added a goal to his evening at the 4:25 mark of the third period, as the Nailers took a 4-3 advantage. However, with 2:38 to go, Patrik Bajkov's power play goal forced overtime with a 4-4 deadlock.

Neither team scored in the seven-minute overtime, so the match progressed to a shootout. David Jankowski was the lone Wheeling goal scorer, while both Ashbrook and Kyle Bollers scored on their attempts for the Cyclones to lift the road squad to the win.

Both sides had two goaltenders play. Pavel Cajan got the win for Cincinnati with 18 saves on 19 shots, in relief of Jon Gillies, who stopped 21 of the 24 shots he faced. Jaxon Castor was saddled with the shootout defeat, after going 7-of-9 in the game. Taylor Gauthier denied 12 of 14 shots in the start for the Nailers.

AP Top 25: Oregon, Penn St. Move Behind No. 1 Texas; Army And Navy Both Ranked

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

Oregon and Penn State each moved up a spot in The Associated Press college football poll on Sunday following thrill-

No. 2 with the other six first-place votes. It's their highest ranking since they ended the 2014 season at No. 2 after losing to the Buckeyes in the inaugural College Football Playoff championship game.

ing 6-3-1. Navy had entered the rankings a week earlier, at No. 17, and ended the season 9-2 and ranked No. 4. Army (6-0) and Navy (5-0) have not each been unbeaten at this point in a

Union Local Gets Back To OVAC Finals

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

MORRISTOWN - Sometimes a team, no matter what sport, needs a wake up call. Top-seeded Union Local got one Tuesday night in the second set of its OVAC Volleyball Class 3A semifinal versus No. 4 Monroe Central.

Leading one set to none, the short-handed Seminoles were a point away from knotting the match at 1-all. However, the Jets (18-2) reeled off the final seven points to stun the visitors, 26-24, and take a 2-0 lead en route to a 3-0 sweep by scores of 25-15, 26-24 and 25-21 inside 'The Hangar' on the Union Local Schools campus.

The victory allowed Union Local to advance to its third consecutive OVAC Championship match and fourth in the last five years. The Jets won the title in 2022 in a 5-set nail-biter against Shenandoah. They will face No. 2 Linsly on Saturday at 5 p.m. inside the ECO Center. The Cadets outlasted third-seeded Martins Ferry in five sets.

"I think the back-to-back losses to Meadowbrook and East Liverpool a couple of weeks ago was kind of a wake up call for the girls," Union Local head coach Kaye Sechrest said. "We beat Buckeye Trail in five sets at their place. I think that gave the girls some much-needed confidence and then we beat Oak Glen, so they were ready for whatever tonight."

Trailing 24-20 late in the middle set, Union Local used two kills each by Ella Pietranton and Olivia Wortman to spark the rally. Wortman made it 24-21 and Pietranton followed for a 24-22 reading. After Monroe Central hit the ball into the net to make it 24-34, a vicious spike by Wortman deadlocked the contest at 24.

Please see FINALS, Page 10



Photo by Kim North
Union Local's Ameera Saunders (24) blocks a shot by Monroe Central's Brylee McFrederick (6) as the Seminoles' Sydney Bass (18) looks on during Tuesday night's OVAC Class 3A Volleyball semifinal inside 'The Hangar' at Union Local High School. The Jets advanced to the finals on Saturday with a hard-fought 3-0 sweep over the Seminoles.

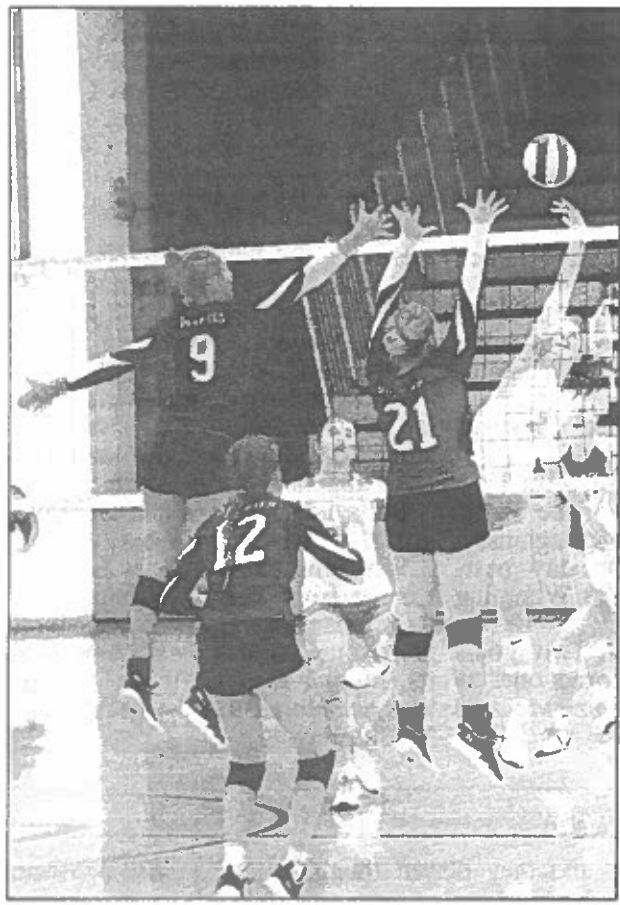


Photo by Andrew Grimm

Oak Glen's Averi Martin (2) blasts a spike while Harrison Central's Lauren Doane (9) and Olivia Tonkovich (21) jumps to defend during Tuesday's OVAC semifinal.

Oak Glen Sweeps Huskies To Begin Repeat Title Bid

By ANDREW GRIMM
For The Intelligencer

NEW MANCHESTER - The first of two repeat bids this season for Oak Glen is alive and well.

The defending OVAC Class 4A conference champions and West Virginia Class AA state champions entered Tuesday's conference semifinal as the top seed looking to get a shot at a repeat title.

They did just that, as the Golden Bears took care of business against No. 4 seed Harrison Central on their home court with a sweep, earning a return trip to Saturday's conference final match.

"The OVAC tournament is a big deal for our team and our girls and we came into tonight fired up," Oak Glen head coach Morgan Saddler said. "We wanted to get to play on Saturday. It means a lot to them, these girls put in the work every day for each other that's what it's all about."

The Golden Bears, now 23-3, opened leads early in all three sets on the way to a 25-19, 25-18, 25-14 victory over the Huskies (12-9).

"We definitely got stronger as we went," Saddler said. "We focused a lot on the team aspects of the game and I think that kept us moti-

vated."

For Harrison Central, it was the first time the Huskies had qualified for the tournament since 2017. They knew the Bears would be a big challenge to draw in their return to the field, and they indeed were.

"I told the girls coming in that it was going to be a tough game we would need to play our best," first-year Huskies head coach Grace Godich said. "Oak Glen is very good. I thought we played very hard. I'm glad we got to compete with a team like Oak Glen. That's going to be big for us going into the postseason."

"Being in the top-four and making OVACs again was one of our main goals for the season and I'm proud of the girls for accomplishing that."

Early deficits against a team like Oak Glen just proved to be too much to fight back from, especially in the third set when the Bears scored eight of the first nine points.

"That makes it tough against a good team," Godich said of the early deficits. "I told them lets try to be the first to five and work our way from there, but we got in some holes and it's hard to dig out of it."

Please see TITLE, Page 10

Central, Park Look To Finish Strong In Day Two Of W.Va. State Golf Championship

By NICK HENTHORN
Sports Editor

WHEELING - The West Virginia state golf tournament has often been as much a battle against the imposing Jones Course at Oglebay as it is a battle against fellow golfers from around the Mountain State.

After the first day of competition Tuesday, such remains the case for all, though some competitors were able to hurdle the obstacle the Jones Course presented.

The Wheeling Central Maroon Knights, defending Class AA champions, remain in the thick of things heading into the final day of play Wednesday, sitting

in second place behind only Shady Spring. Central's Luke Tiu is tied for first place in AA at a +4.

"I was happy the way that my No. 1 [Tiu] played," Wheeling Central head coach Jim Mortakis said. "I thought he did really well. We had one triple bogey on a hole that was pretty much a birdie hole, but it's golf. Sometimes you do well and sometimes you make a couple mistakes. I'm proud of him and I'm proud of the rest of the boys. That golf course is a difficult course."

Tiu triple-bogeyed on hole No. 2, but birdie'd holes No. 3, 5 and 7 in the 18-hole odyssey.

Please see TWO, Page 10



Photo by Nick Henthorn

Wheeling Central's Jake Brown follows-through on a drive Tuesday at the Jones Course at Oglebay during day one of the WVSSAC State Golf Championship

Tomlin Says Steelers Don't Have A George Pickens Problem As Wide Receiver's Playing Time Slips

By WILL GRAVES
AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH - Pittsburgh Steelers coach Mike Tomlin doesn't believe wide receiver George Pickens is becoming a dis-



WVU Defense Regrouped, Refocused Entering Game Against Iowa State

By DEREK REDD
Managing Editor
MORGANTOWN - As West Virginia Uni-

32-28. Then WVU throttled Oklahoma State's offense in a never-in-doubt 38-14 victory.

So the owner made the stunning decision Tuesday to fire coach Robert Saleh just five games into his fourth season after the team's 2-3 start following a 23-17 loss to Minnesota in London on Sunday.

"This is one of the most talented teams that has ever been assembled by the New York Jets," Johnson said during a conference call with reporters. "I wanted to give this team the most opportunity to win this season. I feel that we had to go in a different direction and that's why I did that today."

"This change, the change that we made today — that I made — I believe will bring new energy and positivity that will lead to more wins, starting now."

Saleh was 20-36 as coach of the Jets, who are trying to snap the NFL's longest active playoff drought at 13 seasons. The move marks the first time in Johnson's 25-year tenure that a head coach has been fired during the season.

Defensive coordinator Jeff Ulbrich will serve as interim coach for the rest of the season — with the Jets maintaining expectations to make the playoffs.

"He's going to add a spark of positivity," Johnson said of Ulbrich.

The surprising move came a day after Saleh said he was confident Aaron Rodgers and the Jets would be able to turn things around after losing two straight, including falling to undefeated Minnesota. Rodgers had his worst game with New York, throwing three interceptions.

"I'm not panicked," Saleh said. "Nobody in the building is panicked."

But Johnson had seen enough from Saleh, who became the NFL's first coach fired this season. Saleh, who had one year remaining on his contract, had the

has precipitated this decision," Johnson said. "It's a longer time frame. I've had a couple of years to think about this and I just think we can do better. The team can do better. As we have this new leadership, I think that's going to bring out the best in these players, I really do. I feel confident that that's going to happen."

Johnson said he spoke with Rodgers — but not about a possible coaching change — on Monday. He also chatted with general manager Joe Douglas, but added "this was my decision and my decision alone."

It's the 12th time since 2000 that a team has changed coaches just five games or fewer into a season, and the first since Matt Rhule was fired by Carolina after five games in 2022.

The Jets face the Buffalo Bills (3-2) on Monday night, when they have a chance to share the AFC East lead with a victory. But instead of Saleh, it will be the 47-year-old Ulbrich leading the team on the sideline.

Ulbrich, who played linebacker for 10 seasons with San Francisco, joined the Jets as part of Saleh's initial staff in 2021. He opened a video call with reporters by thanking Saleh for sticking by him when the Jets' defense struggled in their first season together.

"Today's an exciting day for myself from the standpoint of getting this opportunity," Ulbrich said. "But at the same time, heavy in my heart for Robert."

Ulbrich was an assistant with Atlanta for six seasons before coming to New York and was part of another midseason coaching change when the Falcons fired Dan Quinn five games into the 2020 season.

Two

(Continued from Page 9)

Central's Rowan Parker is tied for seventh place in AA, Jake Brown is in 19th place, and Bode Burge is in 21st place out of the 39 players in Class AA.

"I think that the course was set up very fairly, the pins weren't tremendously hard," Mortakis observed. "The greens were fast, but everybody's playing the exact same course and the better players will do better and the kids who aren't quite as good are not going to do as well. I'm happy with the way we played."

Wheeling Central is at +39 as a team, good for second place behind Shady Spring who are at +26 going into Wednesday, where the Maroon Knights will try to play catch-up.

"You can't win on day one, but you can certainly lose if you're not close enough," Mortakis said.

Wheeling Park is currently in sixth place in Class AAA out of eight teams. Their highest individual placer is Will Koegler, tied for 19th at +13. Will Fuller exits day one tied for 23rd. Andrew Pennybacker is tied for 27th, and Owen Abraham

is at 30th out of 38 AAA competitors.

"The Jones Course reared its ugly head today and it got a lot of kids," Wheeling Park head coach Don Headley said. "A lot of kids played bad, including some of our guys. There were some really high scores today."

"The rough was high, the greens were fast, I don't think the kids were prepared for a little bit of rough conditions that they had there. The golf course itself was in immaculate shape, but it was a whole other golf course compared to the summer when it was all dry. Now they didn't get any roll, the ball stuck, they were hitting clubs that they hadn't before, mis-hit some stuff. Just not a good day in general."

Though Cabell Midland is running away with Class AAA, putting together a +15 compared to second-place Hurricane's +28 and Wheeling Park's +44, the Patriots see a path to rising up the rankings.

"We're 29 shots out of the lead," Headley said. "I don't think there's any way we get to that, but

we'll just play the best that we can and see if we can move up a couple positions, get a little closer to the front team. That's our goal for tomorrow — play well, play every shot, try to make everything happen and try to get better."

The first group of golfers tees off at 8:30 a.m. tomorrow. On Tuesday, play ran from 8:30 a.m. to around 4:30 p.m.

Both Park and Central expect better showings on the second day of play.

"You always hope you can tweak a few things, but it's way too late in the year to change anything," Mortakis said. "We've already talked about some things that we need to approach a little bit differently. Hopefully we play a little bit better the next day."

"We're going to regroup tonight," Headley said. "They'll definitely do better tomorrow. It's one of those things where you always do better in the second day — we hope. They'll know a little bit more about the golf course, there will be a little better conditions tomorrow. They'll grind it out."

DEFENSE

(Continued from Page 9)

"That's the relationship we've built with each other," Joseph said. "We always want to be real with each other, be blunt. Because it's either we're gonna win or we're gonna lose."

The crux of the message was accountability, Joseph said. Every player needed to be responsible for their specific role in the unit. And that responsibility had to start at practice, which is where the players felt they were really coming up short. The defensive leaders made it clear that the consistency and intensity of practice had to improve.

probably the most important piece of it."

When WVU returned to the field the next weekend versus Kansas, the defense put words into action. Down 28-17 in the fourth, the Mountaineers scored a touchdown and two-point conversion to cut the lead to 28-25. Then the WVU defense forced a three-and-out that allowed the offense to score the go-ahead touchdown in just under two minutes.

Kansas got the ball back and got into WVU territory on a 36-yard Jalon Daniels throw to Lawrence Arnold, but

blinking. They're not missing a beat," Lesley said. "We were already into, when we get a stop, OK, this is what we're going to do. The last five minutes of that game was the opposite of what happened the week before. And that was probably the biggest change to me."

WVU followed that win with its best defensive performance of the season, allowing just 227 yards and only 36 yards on the ground to an Oklahoma State offense that featured 2023 Doak Walker Award winner Ollie Gordon II.

The competition steps

(10-3-3) ran past Wheeling Central 7-1 in boys' high school soccer action Tuesday night.

Brady Dinovo, Landon Bowers, Tad Loot and Drew Stimpert also scored for Big Red. Bowers, Luke Dinovo, James Devereaux and Cedric Peckins charted assists.

Robby Lucas made five saves. Luca Holt had one.

Grady Mullin scored a goal to keep the Maroon Knights from being blanked. JD Schoolcraft had the help.

Tino Sperlazza recorded 12 saves in goal.

Wheeling Park 4, Marietta 1
WHEELING PARK - The Patriots (14-3) scored a victory against a high-caliber opponent Tuesday, besting the Tigers (12-2-2) at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Tresz McLeod scored two goals and Rynder McLeod scored one, as did Wilson Hanna. Tresz McLeod also picked up an assist.

FINALS

(Continued from Page 9)

Pietranton's ensuing kill put the hosts ahead, 25-24, before her final volley was returned out of bounds.

"We had Homecoming over the weekend and I think the girls were still in that funk," Sechrest noted. "They were a little rusty, but guess what? They got the kinks out and we're back in the finals."

It seemed the Jets were going to soar to the finals as they led 23-15 only to watch the Seminoles stave off elimination time and time again until they drew to within 23-21 as Olivia Bettinger excelled around the net with several kills and a couple blocks.

A finesse shot by Emma Yager snapped the Monroe Central run and set up match-point at 24-21. Another long return by the Seminoles allowed the Jets to breathe easier.

"They played well

and they played tough," Sechrest said of the Seminoles. "They battled."

Losing a toughie like that, Monroe Central could have folded in the third set, but to their credit, the Seminoles hung tough and nearly duplicated the miraculous comeback.

Union Local built a 23-14 margin and seemed to be on cruise control until Monroe Central chipped away little by little, finally pulling to within 23-21 on back-to-back kills by Bettinger.

But it wasn't to be as a touch shot by Emma Yager made it 24-21 and a return by the Seminoles was long.

"We came in here and fought," Monroe Central head coach Jeanette Schwall said. "We had two freshmen start for us tonight that have not played varsity all year be-

GIRLS SOCCER

Wheeling Central 9, Harrison Central 1

WHEELING - The Maroon Knights rolled Monday at 16th Street Soccer Field, seven Central players tallying at least one goal in a decisive victory.

Brooke Porter and Seneca Heller each scored two goals for the Maroon. Rylee Wright, Loni Kusic, Elizabeth Steele, Maddie Kirchner and Isabella Brown all also scored.

Brown tallied three assists, Wright tallied two, with Kusic, Heller, Gianna Konkle, Kirchner and Kaila Blatt also tallying assists.

Bella Fitzsimmons had one save in goal. Kirchner had three.

Wheeling Central faces Bethlehem Center from Fredericksburg, PA in its regular-season finale on Saturday. Harrison Central's next game is also its regular-season finale, the Huskies scheduled to host Carrollton on Wednesday.

TITLE

(Continued from Page 9)

"We've been working on that all season, some days we're good at and some days we struggle and this was one of those games."

For Oak Glen, Averi Martin registered 13 kills and three blocks, Mikalyn Balch tallied 32 assists, Brooklyn Six recorded 11 kills, two digs and six aces, Tia Vick recorded five aces and two digs, Addison Smith had 14 digs, Reecelyn Craig tal-

lied five kills, five digs and an ace and McKenzi Martin finished with six kills, 12 digs and two aces.

The Huskies got 10 kills, seven blocks and six digs from Lauren Done, four kills, two blocks and two digs from Olivia Tonkovich, three aces, seven assists and six digs from Leah Grady and 13 digs from Mikayla Pelegreen.

The Golden Bears will

cause we had two starters injured. In my opinion, we played exceptional under the circumstances. We have a lot of grit and talent and we are very excited for the future."

Ameera Saunders and Laken Vinsakovich had 11 kills apiece to fuel the Jets, while Wortman charted 10. Delaney Butler added 22 assists and half-a-dozen digs, while Brooklyn Burley finished with 19 digs. Myah Martin added a dozen digs, two more than Yager. Alayna Logan charted 15 assists.

No statistics were available for Monroe Central.

Before playing for the OVAC Class 3A championship, the Jets will host East Liverpool on Thursday with the Buckeye 8 crown at stake. The JVs begin at 5:30 p.m., with the varsity to start at approximately 7.

meet Beaver Local in the Class 4A championship match at 9 a.m. inside the ECO Center. The second-seeded Beavers defeated No. 3 East Liverpool in four sets on Tuesday in the other semifinal. Oak Glen won a regular season meeting between the cross-river foes back on Sept. 3.

The Huskies will play the Potters in the third place match at East Liverpool on Thursday.

STEELERS

(Continued from Page 9)

Pickens declined to speak to reporters after the game and brushed them off again on Monday, retreating to the team's equipment room during the 45-minute media window.

This isn't the first time in his career that Pickens has found himself in the middle of a maelstrom because of a perceived lack of effort. He was chastised late last season when cameras caught him opting not to block downfield when teammate Jaylen Warren broke off a long run, a decision Pickens at the time attributed to injury avoidance.

Tomlin has repeatedly backed Pickens publicly, saying in September that he "absolutely" believes Pickens would handle adversity both on and off the field more positively

"This business between he and I, in terms of his growth and development as a player and as a man, I just don't think it aids that growth and the development to address it in open settings such as this," Tomlin said.

Tomlin added that the decision to curb Pickens' playing time was communicated to him before the Dallas game and that Pickens did not have an issue with it.

The reality is the Steelers need Pickens to be engaged and on the field if they want to have a balanced offense. Production from the receivers behind him on the depth chart — a list that includes Van Jefferson and Scotty Miller — has been modest at best. Pickens' 23 receptions through five games is more than the combined total from

his sixth straight start on Sunday against Las Vegas (2-3). Russell Wilson is expected to be a full participant in practice on Wednesday for the first time since aggravating a calf injury just before the season opener in Atlanta. Fields will practice with the starters on Wednesday, with Wilson working with the backups.

Tomlin, as he has for weeks, declined to get into what he considers a still unnecessary discussion about Wilson reclaiming the starting job he won out of training camp.

"Until Russ gets to a point where we're comfortable with what we're looking at, he's able to execute all schematics, he's able to put together back-to-back consecutive days and so forth. I just think that's a hypnother-

LOCAL SCHEDULE

(all events begin at 5:30 p.m. unless noted)
Wednesday, Oct. 9
GIRLS SOCCER
Carrollton at Harrison Central, 7 p.m.
VOLLEYBALL
Wheeling Central at Steubenville Catholic
Buckeye Local at Martins Ferry
CROSS COUNTRY
Harrison Central Quad at Harrison Central, 4:30 p.m.

FOOTBALL CARD

(all games start at 7 p.m. unless noted)
Friday, Oct. 11
PREP
Madonna at Beallsville
Indian Creek at Beaver Local
Edison at Buckeye Local
Shadyside at Caldwell Valley at Cameron
Rosecrans at Bridgeport
Bellaire at East Liverpool
Marietta at Fort Frye
Strasburg at Buckeye Trail
Waterford at Harrison Central
Valley Christian School at Southern Local
Keyser at John Marshall
Frontier at Magnolia
Wellsville at United
Cambridge at Martins Ferry
Barnesville at Monroe Central
Martinsburg at Morgantown
Tyler Consolidated at Oak Glen
Shenandoah at River Brooke at Frankfort
Conotton Valley at Toronto
St. Clairsville at Union Local
Steubenville Catholic at Wheeling Central
East Fairmont at Weir
Huron Heights at Steubenville
Hundred at Paden City
Wheeling Park at Fairmont Senior
Saturday, Oct. 12
COLLEGE
Wheeling at Charleston, noon
West Liberty at UNC Pembroke, 1 p.m.
Westminster at Bethany, 4:30 p.m.
Ohio State at Oregon, TBA
Iowa State at WVU, TBA

MLB PLAYOFFS

DIVISION SERIES (Best-of-5)
American League
New York 1, Kansas City 1
Saturday, Oct. 5: New York 6, Kansas City 5
Monday, Oct. 7: Kansas City 4, New York 2
Wednesday, Oct. 9: New York at Kansas City, 7:08 p.m. (TBS, truTV, Max)
Thursday, Oct. 10: New York at Kansas City, 8:08 p.m. (TBS, truTV, Max)
x-Saturday, Oct. 12: Kansas City at New York, 8:08 p.m. (TBS, Max)
Cleveland 1, Detroit 1
Saturday, Oct. 5: Cleveland 7, Detroit 0
Monday, Oct. 7: Detroit 3, Cleveland 0
Wednesday, Oct. 9: Cleveland at Detroit, 3:08 p.m. (TBS, truTV, Max)
Thursday, Oct. 10: Cleveland at Detroit, 6:08 p.m. (TNT, Max)
x-Saturday, Oct. 12: Detroit at Cleveland, 4:38 p.m. (TBS, Max)
National League
Los Angeles 1, San Diego 1
Saturday, Oct. 5: Los Angeles 7, San Diego 5
Sunday, Oct. 6: San Diego 10, Los Angeles 2
Tuesday, Oct. 8: Los Angeles at San Diego, 9:08 p.m. (FS1), late
x-Wednesday, Oct. 9: Los Angeles at San Diego, 9:08 p.m. (FS1)
x-Friday, Oct. 11: San Diego at Los Angeles, 8:08 p.m. (FOX)
New York 1, Philadelphia 1
Saturday, Oct. 5: New York 6, Philadelphia 2
Sunday, Oct. 6: Philadelphia 7, New York 6
Tuesday, Oct. 8: New York 7, Philadelphia 2
Wednesday, Oct. 9: Philadelphia at New York, 5:08 p.m. (FS1)
x-Friday, Oct. 11: New York at Philadelphia, 4:08 p.m. (FS1)

NFL STANDINGS

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

Thursday's Games

Atlanta 36, Tampa Bay 30, OT

Sunday's Games

Minnesota 23, N.Y. Jets 17, London, GBR
Baltimore 41, Cincinnati 38, OT
Chicago 36, Carolina 10
Houston 23, Buffalo 20
Jacksonville 37, Indianapolis 34
Miami 15, New England 10
Washington 34, Cleveland 13
Arizona 24, San Francisco 23
Denver 34, Las Vegas 18
Green Bay 24, L.A. Rams 19
N.Y. Giants 29, Seattle 20
Dallas 20, Pittsburgh 17
Open: L.A. Chargers, Tennessee, Detroit, Philadelphia

Monday's Games

New Orleans at Kansas City, late

Thursday, Oct. 10

San Francisco at Seattle, 8:15 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 13

Jacksonville vs Chicago at London, GBR, 9:30 a.m.
Arizona at Green Bay, 1 p.m.
Cleveland at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Houston at New England, 1 p.m.
Indianapolis at Tennessee, 1 p.m.
Tampa Bay at New Orleans, 1 p.m.
Washington at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
L.A. Chargers at Denver, 4:05 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Las Vegas, 4:05 p.m.
Atlanta at Carolina, 4:25 p.m.
Detroit at Dallas, 4:25 p.m.
Cincinnati at N.Y. Giants, 8:20 p.m.
Open: Kansas City, Miami, L.A. Rams, Minnesota

Monday, Oct. 14

Buffalo at N.Y. Jets, 8:15 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 14

Buffalo at N.Y. Jets, 8:15 p.m.

OVAC FOOTBALL

Table with columns: Class, School, W, L, TG, CP, AVE. Includes Class 5A and Class 4A.

OVAC VOLLEYBALL

Table with columns: Class, School, W, L, T, Pct, PF, PA. Includes Class 4A, Class 5A, and Class 1A.

Thursday's Games

Atlanta 36, Tampa Bay 30, OT

Sunday's Games

Minnesota 23, N.Y. Jets 17, London, GBR
Baltimore 41, Cincinnati 38, OT
Chicago 36, Carolina 10
Houston 23, Buffalo 20
Jacksonville 37, Indianapolis 34
Miami 15, New England 10
Washington 34, Cleveland 13
Arizona 24, San Francisco 23
Denver 34, Las Vegas 18
Green Bay 24, L.A. Rams 19
N.Y. Giants 29, Seattle 20
Dallas 20, Pittsburgh 17
Open: L.A. Chargers, Tennessee, Detroit, Philadelphia

Monday's Games

New Orleans at Kansas City, late

Thursday, Oct. 10

San Francisco at Seattle, 8:15 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 13

Jacksonville vs Chicago at London, GBR, 9:30 a.m.
Arizona at Green Bay, 1 p.m.
Cleveland at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Houston at New England, 1 p.m.
Indianapolis at Tennessee, 1 p.m.
Tampa Bay at New Orleans, 1 p.m.
Washington at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
L.A. Chargers at Denver, 4:05 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Las Vegas, 4:05 p.m.
Atlanta at Carolina, 4:25 p.m.
Detroit at Dallas, 4:25 p.m.
Cincinnati at N.Y. Giants, 8:20 p.m.
Open: Kansas City, Miami, L.A. Rams, Minnesota

Monday, Oct. 14

Buffalo at N.Y. Jets, 8:15 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 14

Buffalo at N.Y. Jets, 8:15 p.m.

OVAC FOOTBALL

Table with columns: Class, School, W, L, TG, CP, AVE. Includes Class 5A and Class 4A.

QUEEN BEES BRINGING SPOTLESS RECORD TO TOURNEY



The Queen Bee 8U softball team, pictured, went 10-0 in their fall regular season, and recently went 3-0 in their first tournament, the PA Lady Knights Round Robin in Houston Pennsylvania, to remain undefeated. The Queen Bees outscored their opponents 52-15 in the tournament. The Queen Bees will next participate in the Pumpkin Smash tournament in Glen Dale on Saturday Oct. 12. Head coach of the 8U Queen Bees is Doug Brown.

Alonso, Manaea Lead Mets To 7-2 Win vs. Phillies, 2-1 NLDS Lead

NEW YORK (AP) — Pete Alonso launched another homer off Aaron Nola, and Sean Manaea took a two-hit shutout into the eighth inning as the New York Mets beat the Philadelphia Phillies 7-2 on Tuesday in Game 3 of their NL Division Series.
Jesse Winker also went deep and Starling Marte had a pivotal two-run single to help the wild-card Mets, playing their first home game in 16 days, grab a 2-1 lead in the best-of-five series.
Game 4 is Wednesday, with All-Star Ranger Suarez scheduled to start for Philadelphia against fellow lefty Jose Quintana. A win advances New York to the National League Championship Series to face the Los Angeles Dodgers or San Diego Padres.
The Mets have never had a clinching celebration at Citi Field, which opened in 2009.
'It would be fantastic to get it done, but we've got to stay within ourselves,' Alonso said.
After reaching the 2022 World Series and Game 7 of last year's NLCS, the NL East champion Phillies are on the brink of an early playoff exit at the hands of the rival Mets.
'I know it got out that I had spoken to the team,' manager Rob Thomson said. 'Basically it's just very simple: You come in here tomorrow, and I told them it's the most resilient club I've ever been around. That's what they're all about. They're all about toughness and fighting and playing together. That's what we need to do, and just focus on one game.'
Manaea was lifted after allowing an infield single to start the eighth. The big left-hander, who blossomed into New York's ace during the second half of the season, received hearty pats on the chest from teammates and a standing ovation from the towel-waving crowd of 44,093 as he strolled off the mound.
Aided by Tyrone Taylor's terrific throw from deep center field that cut down a runner at second base in the fourth, Manaea earned his first playoff win after entering 0-3 with a 10.66 ERA in his postseason career. He struck out six and walked two.
'Felt like he wanted this moment,' teammate Francisco Lindor said. 'He gave everything he had.'
Clinging to a 2-0 lead, Manaea escaped major trouble in the sixth. After issuing consecutive walks to start the inning, he received a mound visit from pitching coach Jeremy Hefner and

struck out star slugger Bryce Harper on three off-speed pitches.
'Just went right after him,' Manaea said.
Nick Castellanos then lined into an inning-ending double play, as the Mets' middle infield doubled off Kyle Schwarber at second base. A pumped-up Manaea screamed 'Let's go!' as he bounced off the mound.
Alonso sent Nola's first pitch of the second deep to right field. He flipped his bat high in the air on his way to first base when the ball reached the front row of the second deck.
It was Alonso's second home run of the series and third in New York's past four playoff games. All of those have been to the opposite field — the slugger went the other way on only four of his 34 homers during the regular season.
'Wherever it goes out, if it does, I'm just happy it does,' Alonso said. 'If I'm hitting balls the other way, it's a pretty good sign.'
Nola and Alonso have been squaring off since their college days in the Southeastern Conference, but the matchup has been one-sided in the majors. It was Alonso's sixth career homer off the right-hander, after entering with a .320 batting average and 1.050 OPS in 54 career plate appearances against him.
'He knows me. I know him. He's a great, talented pitcher,' Alonso said. 'He's a tough AB. I'm just happy I was able to come through for the team.'
Thomson left Nola on the mound in the sixth to face Alonso, who drew New York's second consecutive walk following Mark Vientos' leadoff single.
With the bases loaded, Orion Kerkering replaced Nola and got two outs before Marte's two-run single made it 4-0.
Brandon Nimmo and Alonso drew back-to-back walks to load the bases again in the seventh before Jose Iglesias added a two-run single off Jose Ruiz with two outs.
Harper and Castellanos each hit an RBI single in the eighth, but Ryne Stanek retired slumping Alec Bohm to end the inning.
Lindor, playing his first home game since Sept. 8 because of a back injury, delivered a run-scoring double in the bottom half to make it 7-2.
The exuberant Winker connected for a solo shot in the fourth and watched the whole way from home plate as his first career postseason homer soared into the second deck in right.

AP TOP 25 POLL

Table with columns: Division, Region, Rank, Team, Record. Includes Division III and Division IV.

SPORTS ON TV

Wednesday, Oct. 9
COLLEGE FOOTBALL
7:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — New Mexico St. at Jacksonville St.
COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL (WOMEN)
8:00 p.m.

MLB To Air Local Games For

Wednesday,
October 9, 2024

UL girls heading to finals

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

MORRISTOWN — Sometimes a team, no matter what sport, needs a wake up call. Top-seeded Union Local got one Tuesday night in the second set of its OVAC Volleyball Class 3A semifinal versus No. 4 Monroe Central.

Leading one set to none, the short-handed Seminoles were a point away from knotting the match at 1-all. However, the Jets (18-2) reeled off the final seven points to stun the visitors, 26-24, and take a 2-0 lead en route to a 3-0 sweep by scores of 25-15, 26-24 and 25-21 inside 'The Hangar' on the Union Local Schools campus.

The victory allowed Union Local to advance to its third consecutive OVAC Championship match and fourth in the last five years. The Jets won the title in 2022 in a 5-set nailbiter against Shenandoah. They will face No. 2 Linsly on Saturday at 5 p.m. inside the ECO Center. The Cadets outlasted third-seeded Martins Ferry in five sets.

"I think the back-to-back losses to Meadowbrook and East Liverpool a couple of weeks ago was kind of a wake up call for the girls," Union Local head coach Kaye Sechrest said. "We beat Buckeye Trail in five sets at their place. I think that gave the girls some much-needed confidence and then we beat Oak Glen, so they were ready for whatever tonight."

Trailing 24-20 late in the middle set, Union Local used two kills each by Ella Pietranton and Olivia Wortman to spark the rally. Wortman made it 24-21 and Pietranton followed for a 24-22 reading. After Monroe Central hit the ball into the net to make it 24-34, a vicious spike by Wortman deadlocked the contest at 24. Pietranton's ensuing kill put the hosts ahead, 25-24, before her final volley was

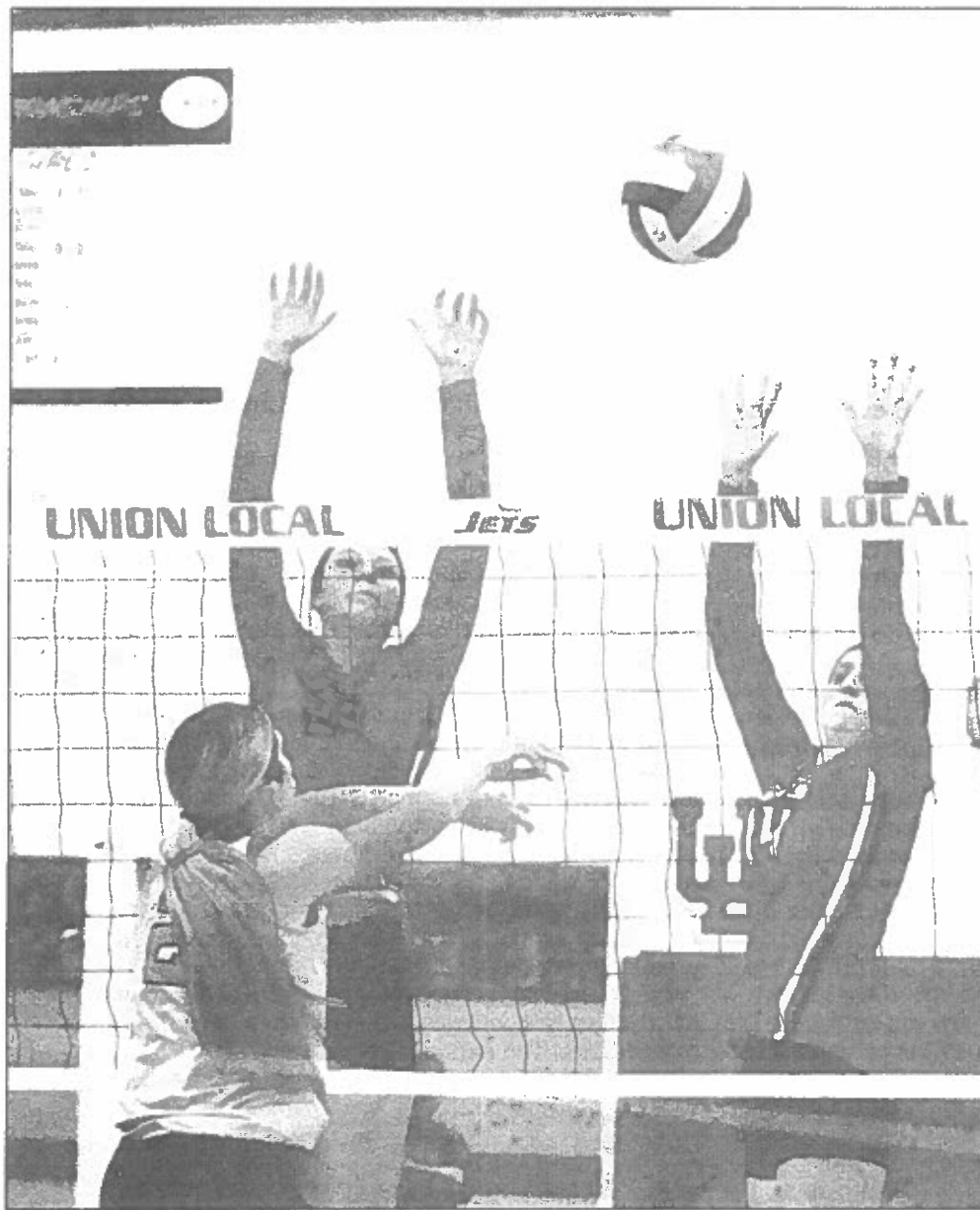


Photo by KIM NORTH

UNION LOCAL'S Laken Vinskovich (22) and Emma Yager (14) react to a volley by Monroe Central's Adalyn McGuire (2) during Tuesday night's OVAC Class 3A Volleyball semifinal inside 'The Hangar' at Union Local High School. The Jets advanced to the finals on Saturday with a hard-fought 3-0 sweep over the Seminoles.

returned out of bounds.

"We had Homecoming over the weekend and I think the girls were still in that funk," Sechrest noted. "They were a little rusty, but guess what? They got the kinks out and we're back in the finals."

It seemed the Jets were going to soar to the finals as they led 23-15 only to watch the Seminoles stave off elimination time and time again until they drew to with-

in 23-21 as Olivia Bettinger excelled around the net with several kills and a couple blocks.

A finesse shot by Emma Yager snapped the Monroe Central run and set up match-point at 24-21. Another long return by the Seminoles allowed the Jets to breathe easier.

See **FINALS**, Page B2

Mike Tomlin doesn't think the Steelers have a George Pickens problem as wideout's playing time slips

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Pittsburgh Steelers coach Mike Tomlin doesn't believe wide receiver George Pickens is becoming a distraction, even as Pickens' public displays of dissatisfaction suggest otherwise.

The talented but enigmatic Pickens, who leads the Steelers (3-2) in receptions and yards, played a career-low 34 snaps during Sunday night's 20-17 loss to the Dallas Cowboys. Pickens caught three passes for a season-low 26 yards on seven targets but also spent a significant chunk of the game

as a spectator.

Tomlin called the dip in time for the 23-year-old Pickens an example of load management.

"Most players, particularly in today's game that have specialized skill sets, they play positions like receiver (and) they don't play every down," Tomlin said Tuesday. "They don't play every down because you need them in significant moments. You need them at the back half of the season. You need them in the second half of football games and those weighty downs."

Maybe, but Pickens didn't appear to handle the decision particularly well.

Wearing eye black with the phrase "always (expletive) open" written in front of a national television audience, Pickens sat motionless and alone for long stretches while his teammates met with coaches.

At the end of one offensive possession that included quarterback Justin Fields over-throwing him on a crossing pattern, Pickens slammed his helmet so hard coming off the field that it bounced over the

bench.

After the game's final play — a last-gasp series of laterals that went nowhere — Pickens grabbed at the facemask of Cowboys cornerback Jourdan Lewis, who later called Pickens "weak" while heading back to the Dallas locker room.

Pickens declined to speak to reporters after the game and brushed them off again on Monday, retreating to the team's equipment room during the 45-minute media window.

See **STEELERS**, Page B2

St. C. girls soccer takes down Oak Glen

By MIKE HUGHES
For The Times Leader

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Senior night at St. Clairsville featured a matchup between the host Red Devils and visiting Oak Glen Golden Bears. Both teams feature solid back lines with capable keepers.

Entering Tuesday's match-up, the Red Devils surrendered only 1.3 goals per game. Their counterpart was close behind at allowing 1.6 per game.

Through nearly the entirety of regulation, neither team managed to get a legit scoring opportunity. That is until the 3:20 mark of the second half.

Sophomore Elizabeth Morgan took the ball on the left side and passed into the middle to classmate Emma Gasber.

Gasber took a couple dribbles to the right and fired upwards from the 15-yard-line, just overtop the outstretched hands of Cameron Michaud for the eventual game-winner.

The win improves the Red Devils to 10-4-1 heading into tonight's regular-season finale on the road at John Marshall.

St. C. recently earned the top seed in the East District 1 tournament. They await the winner of Wednesday's East Liverpool vs. Cambridge sectional opener. Either the Potters or the Bobcats will face the Red Devils on Monday, October 21.

The hosts nearly went ahead 1-0 in the first half with 34:15 showing when sophomore Ashlyn Lednik hit a hard line drive toward that ringed off the right-side post and bounced harmlessly to the opposite side of Michaud where her defense alertly cleared the ball.

That was the only legitimate scoring opportunity for either team in the first half.

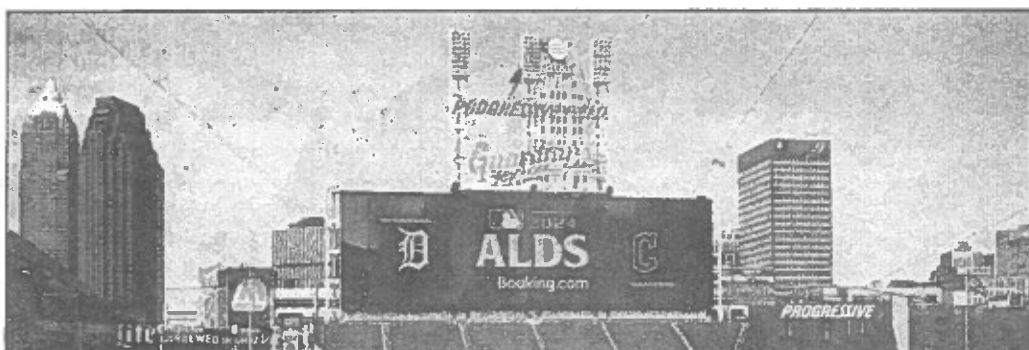
Oak Glen had a couple of changes on corner and direct kicks, but never quite got the placement for a shot on St. C. keeper Kiya Kycr, who totaled just two saves for her second-straight shutout after a 0-0 tie against highly touted John Glenn on October 1.

See **SOCCER**, Page B2

MLB will air local games for Guardians next season

(AP) — Major League Baseball announced Tuesday it will produce and distribute local broadcasts for the Cleveland Guardians, Milwaukee Brewers and Minnesota Twins next year. All three teams had contracts with Diamond Sports Group that expired at the end of the regular season.

The Texas Rangers, whose deal also expired last month, also announced they will no longer be partnering with Diamond. They are assessing their options



• Finals

Continued from Page B1

"They played well and they played tough," Sechrest said of the Seminoles. "They battled."

Losing a toughie like that, Monroe Central could have folded in the third set, but to their credit, the Seminoles hung tough and nearly duplicated the miraculous comeback.

Union Local built a 23-14 margin

and seemed to be on cruise control until Monroe Central chipped away little by little, finally pulling to within 23-21 on back-to-back kills by Bettinger.

But it wasn't to be as a touch shot by Emma Yager made it 24-21 and a return by the Seminoles was long.

"We came in here and fought," Monroe Central head coach Jeanette Schwall said. "We had two freshmen start for us tonight that have not played

varsity all year because we had two starters injured. In my opinion, we played exceptional under the circumstances. We have a lot of grit and talent and we are very excited for the future."

Ameera Saunders and Laken Vinsakovich had 11 kills apiece to fuel the Jets, while Wortman charted 10. Delaney Butler added 22 assists and half-a-dozen digs, while Brooklyn Burley finished with 19 digs. Myah

Martin added a dozen digs, two more than Yager. Alayna Logan charted 15 assists.

No statistics were available for Monroe Central.

Before playing for the OVAC Class 3A championship, the Jets will host East Liverpool on Thursday with the Buckeye 8 crown at stake. The JVs begin at 5:30 p.m., with the varsity to start at approximately 7.

• Games

Continued from Page B1

Rick Schlesinger, the president of business operations for the Brewers, said he expects more teams could be partnering with MLB by the opening of next season.

"This has been a long process. It's a very deliberative process," he said. "We've done this through a lot of work, a lot of analysis. I think this is going to be a huge game changer for us, for our content."

By taking over the broadcasts, MLB expects to increase the market reach of its teams by at least 2 million households in each market. The Diamondbacks went from being available in 930,000 households on a regional sports network to 5.6 million homes through a combination of being on local cable systems, satellite and direct-to-consumer streaming.

"With the media landscape continuing to evolve, Major League Baseball is committed to serving our fans by ensuring they can see their favorite clubs, removing blackouts where we can, and ultimately growing the reach of our games," Noah Garden, MLB deputy commissioner for business and media, said in a statement.

The Twins took a public relations hit in Minnesota for cutting their 2024 player payroll coming off a division title and their first postseason series win in 22 years, in light of the reduced rights fee coming from Diamond. They will lose the rights fee altogether with this MLB-produced model, but team president Dave St. Peter said this announcement would not have an effect on player spending for the upcoming season.

"We've spent a tremendous amount of time with Major League Baseball trying to better understand this marketplace, trying to better understand what a model like this will ultimately provide to the team.

• College

Continued from Page B1

Landmark lawsuit settlement

On Monday, a judge approved a plan that sets in motion the system for schools to eventually make direct payments to athletes. It will change the fundamental nature of college sports, and the two biggest conferences will feel as big an impact as anyone.

Specifically, the athletic departments will have to figure out how to replace up to \$21.5 million they could be paying athletes as part of a first-of-its-kind revenue-sharing agreement. This is where payouts from the football playoff and even revenue from an extra marquee regular-season game could come into play, though that won't fully solve the problem.

"There's two ways to get there," Illinois athletic director Josh

Whitman said at the Big Ten's recent basketball media days. "You can either make more money or you can spend your money differently, and we're working very aggressively on both of those fronts to put ourselves in a position to fully participate in the revenue share when it opens up next year."

The leaders also have to take educated guesses about how other legal and legislative action could impact them in the future. For instance, if players are deemed to be employees of the schools, it would add another layer of expense for the schools while potentially giving athletes access to school-funded health insurance and other benefits.

One news tidbit that could become a trend: Last month's announcement that Tennessee was slapping a 10% "talent fee" onto

We also have studied closely what's happened in San Diego, in Arizona and in Colorado. We've gotten comfortable in those economics. They are where they are," St. Peter said.

"We do expect that there will be a reduction in local revenue coming to the Twins in 2025. I think that's a fact. That said, over the long haul we have tremendous confidence in our content and believe, while maybe we'll take a dip for '25, that over time the viewership and those economics related to that viewership will increase."

Cleveland games were available on approximately 1.45 million households on its regional sports network. That reach is expected to increase 235% to 4.86 million households. Minnesota's will go up 307% from 1.08 million homes to 4.4 million.

Schlesinger said the Brewers had 800,000 households that could receive games this past season, but he also expects to see significant growth with the new model.

"From a fan perspective, it's great because you're going to have total access and no blackouts," he said. "There's a lot of staffing, a lot of infrastructure, a lot of decisions have to be made, a lot of people to be hired, a lot of sponsors to contact. This is the right time to do this. It's a good jumping point, platform to make sure when the calendar turns to 2025, we're already fully immersed in this and that we know when the first game starts, that we're ready to go and the product's going to be outstanding."

MLB could be taking over more teams as Diamond Sports Group continues to go through bankruptcy proceedings. The nation's largest owner of regional sports networks could be down to doing only Atlanta Braves games in 2025.

the price of next year's season tickets to help offset costs associated with the revenue-sharing plan.

Could the Super League be coming?

Though not on their agenda, the possibility of a super league hovers over everything in college sports these days.

Earlier this month, a group called "College Sports Tomorrow" unveiled its vision for a two-tiered, 136-team mega-league with divisions and a 24-team playoff.

"This is not trying to create minor league professional football," one of the group's leaders, former MLS deputy commissioner Mark Abbott, told the Wall Street Journal. "This is about the student athlete and actually trying to enhance the college experience for everybody."

• Soccer

Continued from Page B1

This is St. Clairsville's best season since finishing 14-3-3 back in 2021, a season in which the Devils fell to rival Big Red in the postseason.

The Golden Bears (6-10-3) return to New Manchester on Thursday to face Edison with

a chance to build a little momentum before the postseason begins with a contest against cross-county rival and OVAC 4A champion Weir looming.

In two matches against the Red Riders this season, Oak Glen fell both times by a narrow 2-0 verdict.

• Steelers

Continued from Page B1

This isn't the first time in his career that Pickens has found himself in the middle of a maelstrom because of a perceived lack of effort. He was chastised late last season when cameras caught him opting not to block downfield when teammate Jaylen Warren broke off a long run, a decision Pickens at the time attributed to injury avoidance.

Tomlin has repeatedly backed Pickens publicly, saying in September that he "absolutely" believes Pickens would handle adversity both on and off the field more positively as he enters his third season.

Asked on Tuesday if he still feels that way after a series of perceived missteps were outlined, Tomlin said "in those instances, no, but largely it's been an improvement in those areas, certainly."

Perhaps more tellingly, Tomlin reiterated his long-held belief that he has no interest in making whatever issue he might have with a given player fit for public consumption.

"This business between he and I, in terms of his growth and development as a player and as a man, I just don't think it aids that growth and the development to address it in open settings such as this," Tomlin said.

Tomlin added that the decision to curb Pickens' playing time was communicated to him before the Dallas game and that Pickens did not have an issue with it.

The reality is the Steelers need Pickens to be engaged and on the field if they want to have a balanced offense. Production from the receivers behind him on the depth chart — a list that includes Van Jefferson and Scotty Miller — has been modest at best.

Pickens' 23 receptions through five games is more than the combined total from Jefferson, Miller and Calvin Austin III (18).

It didn't help Pickens that quarterback Justin Fields had perhaps his shakiest performance of the season against Dallas, completing a season-low 55% (15 of 27) of his passes, though he did throw a pair of second-half touchdowns, including a shovel pass to tight end Pat Freiermuth that gave the Steelers the lead with less than five minutes to go.

Fields will likely make his sixth straight start on Sunday against Las Vegas (2-3). Russell Wilson is expected to be a full participant in practice on Wednesday for the first time since aggravating a calf injury just before the season opener in Atlanta. Fields will practice with the starters on Wednesday, with Wilson working with the backups.

Tomlin, as he has for weeks, declined to get into what he considers a still unnecessary discussion about Wilson reclaiming the starting job he won out of training camp.

"Until Russ gets to a point where we're comfortable with what we're looking at, he's able to execute all schematics, he's able to put together back-to-back consecutive days and so forth. I just think that's a hypothetical conversation," Tomlin said. "We'll continue to push forward with Justin until those things are legitimate."

NOTES: Pittsburgh's outside linebacker depth behind star T.J. Watt will be severely tested in Las Vegas. Alex Highsmith (groin), Nick Herbig (hamstring) and DeMarvin Leal (neck) are all expected to be out. ... RBs Cordarrelle Patterson (ankle) is also out while Jaylen Warren (knee) is doubtful.

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OVAC Volleyball Pairings Set

The pairings are set for the 2024 OVAC Volleyball Championships as Morgantown (Class 5A), Oak Glen (4A), Union Local (3A), Caldwell (2A) and newcomer Heartland Christian (1A) all claimed No. 1 seeds and will host a semifinal match on Tuesday against the No. 4 seeds.

In Class 5A, the Mohigans (19-1) will entertain cross-town rival No. 4 University (17-3) in one semi, while No. 2 Warren Local (18-1) awaits No. 3 Marietta (17-2).

In Class 4A, the Golden Bears (18-2) face No. 4 Harrison Central (12-7). No. 2 Beaver Local (16-4) hosts No. 3 East Liverpool (15-4).

The Class 3A bracket has the Jets

(17-2) hosting No. 4 Monroe Central (15-4) and No. 3 Martins Ferry (12-5) visiting No. 2 Linsly (17-2).

The Redskins (18-2) await No. 4 Clay-Battelle (15-5) in one Class 2A semifinal, while No. 3 River (12-7) heads north on Ohio 7 to face No. 2 Wellsville (15-4).

No. 4 Beallsville (12-7) heads to Columbiana to face the top-seeded Lions (13-5). No. 2 Conotton Valley (11-7) welcomes No. 3 Trinity (12-8).

The finals will be held on Saturday, Oct. 12 at the ECO Center west of St. Clairsville. The Class 4A title tilt will kick things off at 9 a.m., to be followed by the 5A (11 a.m.); 1A (1 p.m.); 2A (3 p.m.) and 3A (5 p.m.).

GET-GO

(Continued from Page C1)

around left end and Hariris made it 21-0 early in the second quarter.

Colten Florence, who was credited with a trio of quarterback sacks and several pressures, sacked Michael Dippel on a fourth-down play, giving the Red Devils the ball back. Schafer found Mikey Balgo on consecutive passes for 29 and 10 yards before Fogle ran over a Bellaire defender on his way to a 15-yard touchdown run. Harris made it 28-0.

"Coleton probably had his best game of the season," McLean noted. "The defense has been playing lights-out for the last three weeks. They have really come together and I couldn't be any more proud of them. We shuffle a lot of players in and out and it has allowed us to build up some depth."

Bellaire got on the board on the final play of the first half when Dippel lofted the ball into the right corner of the end zone where Luke Heatherington caught it amid a group of players. The same combination worked for the two-point conversion as St. Clairsville led 28-8 at the half.

The Big Reds touchdown was set up by an Alex Padgett interception.

On the fourth play of the third quarter, Schafer found Fogle in the right flat. The senior rumbled down the hash mark and into the promised lane to complete a 28-yard scoring play.

"I am really proud of Max," McLean said. "He does a lot of the grinding for us on offense ... a lot of the dirty work. For him to have three touchdowns on Homecoming, I'm sure he will remember tonight."

Florence sacked Dippel, forcing a fumble that Gavin Schoolcraft scooped up and returned to the Big Reds' 6. On the next play, Schafer and Balgo connected on another touchdown as the margin grew to 42-8 after Harris tacked on the PAT.

St. Clairsville capped the scoring when Luke Schafer ran in from 4 yards out in the fourth quarter.

For the game, Bellaire managed minus 7 yards on 26 carries. Dippel completed 7 of 18 for 92 yards. Heatherington and Pettigrew had two catches each.

"I don't really have anything to say," Bellaire head coach Mark Bonar offered. "We couldn't do anything right."

Schoolcraft led the Red Devils with 82 yards on 13 totes. They ran for 174 yards and five touchdowns, while Brady Schafer had 142 yards and two TDs on 11 of 16 accuracy. Balgo and Brody Saunders each had three receptions.

With the lop-sided victory, the Red Devils set up a battle of the unbeaten next week when they travel to Morristown to face Union Local who blitzed Cambridge to go to 7-0.

Barnesville Shuts Out Caldwell; Maroon Knights Win Third Straight

BARNESVILLE - Casey Carpenter passed for four touchdowns and ran for a fifth as Barnesville (7-0) extended its regular-season win streak to 33 straight games with a 44-0 pounding of visiting Caldwell on Friday night at Shamrock Stadium.

Carpenter completed 10 of 15 attempts for 203 yards and found Camden Carpenter and Bradey McIntire for two touchdowns each. Camden Carpenter caught three passes for 11 yards and touchdowns of 25 and 62. McIntire also snagged three aerials for 50 yards, with his TDs covering 37 and 8 yards.

Trey Toliver ran 11 times for 58 yards and a touchdown. The Shamrocks will travel to Woodsfield on Friday to meet fellow unbeaten Monroe Central.

WHEELING CENTRAL 55, RON BROWN 20

WHEELING - Isaac Martin ran for three touchdowns and Nico Kusic passed for three more as the Maroon Knights (4-2) rolled past the Monarchs at Bishop Schmitt Field.

Martin had scoring runs of 4, 1 and 3 yards while Kusic found Caleb Golden on an 18-yard strike and then connected with Troy Mortakis from 39 and Max Olejasz from 20. Kusic also ran for a 20-yard score.

Martin finished with 111 yards on 18 carries. Kade Koroneos had 11 rushes for 121 yards, including a 62-yard scoring jaunt.

Kusic only misfired on one of his 13 passing attempts for 232 yards. Mortakis had five catches for 79 yards. Olejasz caught four passes for 98 stripes.

Jordan Carter had an 80-yard TD run and returned two 80-yard kickoffs for touchdowns for Ron Brown.

MONROE CENTRAL 34, SHENANDOAH 0

SARAHSVILLE - The Seminoles (7-0) remained perfect with a blanking of the

host Zeps.

Tucker Howell threw two touchdowns and returned a fumble 55 yards for another six points. The senior found Chance Allen from 16 yards and Max Demchek from 29.

Tyler Whitacre added a 35-yard interception return.

Howell completed 12 of 19 passes for 180 yards.

AJ Rutter had a 1-yard TD run.

BRIDGEPORT 49, BEALLSVILLE 6

BEALLSVILLE - AJ Bishop ran for four touchdowns as the visiting Bulldogs (3-4) rolled past the Blue Devils (1-6) on Dave Caldwell Field.

Avery Jackson added a touchdown run for Bridgeport which led 14-0 after one quarter before exploding for 28 second-quarter points.

NO FURTHER DETAILS PROVIDED CAMERON 66, MADONNA 16

WEIRTON - In a key Class A match up at Jimmy Carey Stadium Friday night, visiting Cameron was able to find its groove and hand Madonna its second loss of the season.

The Dragons, now 5-1, turned a six-point lead into a 36-0 advantage at halftime and never looked back in a meeting of teams that both entered the week in playoff positions.

For the Blue Dons, now 4-2, Maddox Bowen fired a couple of long scoring tosses to KJ Ward in the second half, going for 56 and 73 yards.

Bowen finished with 156 yards in going 6 of 11 with the two scores and a pick. Ward tallied 130 receiving yards on three catches and Andre Crossland also made three catches for 26 yards.

Ward and Matthew Geer each made eight tackles on defense for Madonna.

The loss dropped the Blue Dons to No. 12 in Class A, while the Dragons jumped from 15th to 10th.

Madonna will look to bounce back next week when

it travels to Beallsville.

INDIAN CREEK 46, HARRISON CENTRAL 14

WINTERSVILLE - Even without its top rusher, the Indian Creek ground game was still firing on all cylinders in a win over Harrison Central Friday night at Kettlewell Stadium.

With Zion McGee, who passed the program regular season career rushing mark last week, sidelined, Creek still managed to rack up 378 yards and seven touchdowns on the ground.

Gavin Pownall led the way with 145 yards and two scores on 13 carries, while Jayce Nett also scored twice and Ian Starkey, Bruce Mazar and Skylar Longo also added scoring runs.

Starkey added 122 yards passing, giving Creek, now 6-1, 500 yards of offense in the win. His 78 rushing yards gave him a 200 yard night of his own.

The Redskins led 12-0 after one quarter and 33-7 at halftime. Pownall scored on runs of 20 and 31 yards in the opening half.

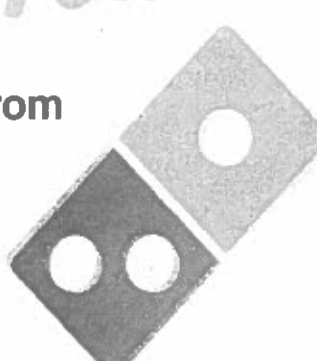
For the Huskies, now 1-6, Brady Hyre thre for 81 yards and score to Michael Stock and Blake Atkins ran for 54 yards and score on eight carries.

Creek hits the road next week with a trip to Buckeye 8 conference foe Beaver Local, while Harrison Central returns home to host Waterford.

In games not reported, John Marshall fell to Warren Local 24-12; Union Local stayed unbeaten 48-6 over Cambridge; Shadyside blanked River 20-0; East Liverpool nipped Edison, 21-20, in overtime; Tyler Consolidated roared past Magnolia 42-0; Toronto handled Buckeye Local 42-3; Paden City was shut out 14-0 at Van; Bridgeport (WV) throttled Brooke 54-0; Keyser pounded Weir 55-12 and Southern Garrett (Md.) defeated Hundred 40-13.

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