Kellen Hatheway and Michael Aberman
Start the Byram Hills Victory Celebration
After Beating Defending Champion Rye
in the Section One, Class A Title Game
By Andy Jacobs

It didn't require an abundance of clairvoyance to expect that the Byram Hills baseball team might be meeting Rye for the Class A championship this season.

So it wasn't much of a surprise when the two teams took the field under a mixed sky at Provident Bank Park late Saturday afternoon with a sectional title up for grabs.

"I think we've been on a collision course for this for probably a year in the making," said Bobcats coach Scott Saunders.

"I mean," added Byram Hills shortstop Kellen Hatheway, "we figured it was gonna happen since the beginning of the season. We always thought it was gonna be us and Rye in the finals."

The inevitable showdown of the two best teams in Class A was delayed more than 90 minutes by the 14-inning Class B marathon game that preceded it, but the Bobcats won't be complaining anytime soon. With Frankie Vesuvio pitching a five-hitter and striking out eight Garnets to earn MVP honors, Byram Hills overcame an early deficit to win 4-3, dethroning the defending champs and capturing the first baseball title in school history.

"We were waiting for this for so long, it just feels great," said Vesuvio amid the postgame euphoria after retiring Rye in order in the bottom of the seventh to preserve the Bobcats' precarious one-run lead. "We went down early, but we couldn't stop there. We had to fight. You knew it was gonna be a battle."

" Couldn't have scripted it any better," said Saunders. "I have nothing but respect for Rye and Coach (Michael) Bruno. He's a fantastic guy, a fantastic coach. But this year was our turn."

Still, the Bobcats, who had handed top-seeded Rye its first loss midway through the season, found themselves in a 2-0 hole after a couple of innings. Garnet starting pitcher Tim DeGraw retired the first six Byram batters, while his counterpart, Vesuvio, struggled at the outset.

DeGraw led off the bottom of the first inning with a booming double to the gap in left-center field and soon moved to third on a sacrifice bunt by Tim Hale. Sam Lubeck then laced the first pitch he saw into right for an RBI single that quickly got Rye on the scoreboard.

"I think after that long wait at the beginning of the game when we were so antsy to get going, we just kind of had to get the cobwebs out," said Saunders. "That first game took so long."

The second-seeded Bobcats bounced back in the top of the third as Michael Aberman smacked a one-out single to center. After Nick Sapone fouled out near the plate, Byram Hills designated hitter John Spadafino took a mighty cut early in Saturday’s title showdown with Rye.

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Bobcats Dethrone Rye in the Class A Championship Game

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the Bobcats’ dugout, Vesuvio crushed a DeGraw offering over the head of left fielder Matt Bruno for an RBI double. Gagliardi grounded to second to end the inning, but the Bobcats would get even an inning later.

Leaving off the top of the fourth, Hatheway, who set the school record for career hits this season, blasted a double all the way to the wall in right-center field. One out later, he moved to third on Nick Contillo’s long fly to center. Jake Stuckelman then reached out and dumped a bloop double into left field to score Hatheway and tie the game.

The inning should have ended when Kevin Wietsma grounded to second, but the ball was booted. A wild pitch scored Stuckelman with the go-ahead run and Aberman followed with an RBI single to right that just eluded second baseman Lubeck. Ryan Anderson took over for DeGraw on the mound and retired Sapone to finally end the inning.

“We said before the game we had to be patient,” said Saunders. “We had to make sure we made the most of our opportunities. That inning, certainly we did.”

Rye was retired in order in its half of the fourth, but the Garnets moved to within 4-3 an inning later as DeGraw singled with one out and, one batter later, came all the way around on a hit by Lubeck that got past charging right fielder Sapone. But Lubeck was cut down trying to reach third base on a call that took about a minute for the umpires to make.

“Unfortunately, we had the error,” said Saunders. “But we always talk about making sure we don’t compound the error. We kind of stop the bleeding where it’s at. He got the relay in and we got the guy at third, got us out of the inning.”

In the top of the sixth, the Bobcats had an opportunity to regain their two-run lead, but pinch runner Anthony Russo was thrown out at home trying to score on Vesuvio’s infield hit up the middle. In the bottom of the inning, the Garnets’ Bruno ripped a one-out single, but Vesuvio got Ryan Ciardiello to bounce into a quick 4-6-3 double play turned by Gagliardi and Hatheway.

“That was the biggest play of the game,” said Vesuvio, “because it they got another

Pinch runner Anthony Russo takes a lead off second base during Saturday’s Class A title game vs. Rye.

The Bobcats’ Jake Stuckelman swings the bat at Provident Bank Park.

Second baseman Tom Gagliardi stays ready late in the Bobcats’ championship game vs. Rye.

his giddy players. “We believed. We just believed. We started working, probably in September when we got back to school. And this is the fruition of all that work. These boys deserve it, man. I’m really, really happy for ’em. I’m really proud of ’em.”

Asked how long it had been since the last Bobcat baseball title, Saunders admitted he really didn’t know.

“It’s unclear,” he said. “1970, we have a banner in the gym. But our historian says that we didn’t win it that year. So we’re not quite sure. But we know we won it today.”

Byram Hills first baseman Nick Contillo tracks a pop fly in the seventh inning.

Byram Hills head coach Scott Saunders heads the semis, “said Vesuvio, who figures to be back on the mound again when the Bobcats play in the state regionals on Saturday, either in Saugerties or Binghamton. “We just had to get past it, had to battle, and came out and won it.”

“This is great,” said Saunders, moments before being doused with Gatorade by

Kellen Hatheway runs to second base after hitting a long double in Saturday’s sectional final vs. Rye.

Bobcat players, left to right, Frankie Vesuvio, Kevin Wietsma, Kellen Hatheway, Anthony Russo and Nick Contillo celebrate with the championship plaque after defeating Rye.

Byram Hills shortstop Kellen Hatheway throws to first base to complete a sixth-inning double play in the Class A title game.

Tom Gagliardi of Byram Hills celebrates following the last out of Saturday’s championship game at Provident Bank Park.
Valhalla Softball Dynasty Stopped by Rye Neck

By Monica D’Ippolito

A rematch of last year’s Class B sectional final pitted top-seeded Valhalla against second-seeded Rye Neck on Saturday morning at North Rockland High School. The Vikings overwhelmed the Panthers in their one meeting during the regular season, but couldn’t get enough offense stirring this time to claim their seventh consecutive championship.

“I think they knew it’s two of the best programs going at it and they had nothing to lose,” Valhalla coach John Hayes said about the victorious Panthers after their surprisingly one-sided 8-2 win. “They played a little bit more relaxed. They put the bat on the ball on us and the pressure was more on us than on them.”

Valhalla struggled offensively against Rye Neck ace Diana King, collecting only five hits in the game. But the Vikings managed to get on the board in the first inning by taking advantage of Panther miscues.

After Brandi Coon led off with a walk, Jenna Saldi followed with a hard bouncer to second base, which the Panthers’ Olivia Dunne couldn’t handle, allowing Coon to get to third base and Saldi to second. Two batters later, King threw a wild pitch, enabling Coon to score from third with the game’s first run.

King made up for her error by blasting a deep shot over the fence in center field in the top of the third inning, tying the game at 1-1. An RBI hit to shallow center by Sam Yannuzzi gave Rye Neck the lead for good.

Defense was a little shaky for the Vikings, who committed numerous errors with overthrow and some miscommunication in the field. Eventually, Rye Neck took advantage.

“Most definitely, we cracked at the end,” Hayes said. “We were not sharp on defense and that led to them in situations. We held on early, but they got the big hit when we gave them a few outs, and you can’t give a team four outs. They’ll hurt you.”

Most of the damage came in the top of the fifth inning, which started with King’s leadoff single. After a bunt moved her over to second base, Dunne hit a hard grounder toward the right side of the infield. Kristin Colabatistto made a nice diving stop, preventing any runs from scoring.

But it didn’t make a difference, as Yannuzzi came through again with runners in scoring position, hitting a blooper toward center field, scoring King, The Panthers tacked on three more runs in the inning. They’ll hurt you. “Honestly, putting the ball in play hard,” Hayes said was the difference between the regular-season matchup and Saturday’s game. “In the opening round (and) in the beginning of the season, that is what we did. We did not do that today. We didn’t really challenge the defense. We got a couple hits in there late, but it was just a little too little, too late.”

Rye Neck added two more runs in the top of the seventh and were soon jumping up and down on the field in celebration after dethroning Valhalla as Section 1 champs.

“I mean, they came out ready to play,” said Coon, a senior captain, after the game. “They hit today and they’re a great team. They deserve it. They work hard.”

The loss puts a dent in a Viking dynasty that has won multiple championships, many of them earned with contributions from this year’s senior class of Coon, Holtz, Colabatistto and Amanda Dolan, all of whom helped establish a winning legacy before playing their last game for the maroon and white.

“They’ve been here four or five years,” said Hayes. “Losing them is just the toughest part. And, again, they’ve carried on a great tradition and, I don’t know, losing them will be tough. But we’ll not rebuild, but try to reload.”

Coon, who led the Vikings on Saturday by reaching base three times and scoring a run, leaves behind a program that will remain a part of her for a long time.

“Honestly, the best part about this team is how close everyone was,” Coon said. “It’s not the game that you’re going to remember, but it’s the memories that you made. And I can honestly say I’ve left with friends that I’ll be with for the rest of my life.”
Panthers Overwhelm Rondout Valley in the State Playoffs

By Monica D’Ippolito

The Pleasantville boys’ lacrosse team came out in its Class C state regional matchup against Section 9’s Roundout Valley on fire. The Panthers scored 10 goals in the first period alone en route to a 17-3 victory Saturday at Lakeland High School.

“We hoped we would,” Panthers coach Chris Kear said of the torrid start. “But we knew they were a pretty good team. They have some pretty good players, so we scouted them pretty good. So we hoped if we came out and played a good game, we’d have a good start.”

Utilizing a multitude of players on face-offs, Pleasantville was able to gain control of most of them against the overmatched Ganders. A rotation of Josh Della Puca, Nolan McAndrew and Jack Howe dominated at the ‘X’. The large early lead helped Kear find plenty of playing time for his reserves to help gain confidence and experience entering the next round.

“We tried a lot of different guys, but Nolan (McAndrew) did a really great job,” Kear said. “We’re trying to get him in rhythm for the next game. He’s coming along. He’s only a sophomore, so it’s taking him a little time, but he’s getting there.”

The Panthers won the opening face-off and soon Della Puca was scoring the first of his four goals. Shortly after, Brian Reda got in on the action, using the cage as a screen and scoring Pleasantville’s second goal less than a minute later.

Lucas Cohen and Bryan Arcidiacono also scored goals in the opening quarter, but most of the damage came from Reda and Della Puca, who combined to score seven goals.

“We were just going in expecting a good game,” Reda said. “Because obviously they’re a good team and Coach always preaches to us, ‘Come out firing for every game,’ and that’s what we did, and we took advantage of our opportunities early.”

Because of the large lead, Kear had the luxury of putting in some of his younger players and other reserves for the rest of the game. Kear was pleased with a lot of the guys who stepped up, complimenting the defensive effort, which only allowed three goals and kept Rondout Valley off the scoreboard for nearly the entire first half.

“I thought our defense did great,” Kear said. “Guys like Jack DeMarree and Tommy Browne. Backup goalie Brendon Casey had a nice game. So they had a good game all around, especially the defense.”

The Ganders’ first goal didn’t come until just 1:31 remained in the first half, and the Panthers spent the intermission with a 13-1 cushion. In the third quarter, Declan McDermott, Hayden McBride and Brian Halloran each netted a goal, stretching the lead to 16-2. In the final 12 minutes, Ryan Drillock added one more goal for Pleasantville.

“We try to work with our face-off guys mostly, try to get in rhythm and try to teach some of our backup guys our sets and make sure through game experience,” Kear said of things he tried to get done with the large lead. “Especially through next year, it helps with next year. Getting some guys up from JV some experience going into next season, going forward, 2016.”

Reda finished with three goals and three assists, while McDermott recorded two goals and two assists. Senior Baylor Rosenbaum assisted on three Panther goals.

After the easy victory Saturday, now comes a difficult matchup Wednesday afternoon in the quarterfinal round against Long Island’s Cold Spring Harbor at Middletown High School.

“We’re just going to play our game, nothing different,” Reda said. “Just going to scout them and see. Obviously they’re a really great team. Should be a really fun game and we’re just going to play our game and we’ll see how it goes.”

Cold Spring Harbor also easily got through its regional final, defeating Section 11’s Babylon 15-5.

Pleasantville’s Jack Drillock takes the ball up the field in the first half of Saturday’s regional game at Lakeland High School.

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Foxes Blanked by Roy C. Ketcham in the Class AA Semifinals

By Andy Jacobs

If there's a better pitcher in Section One than Tim Zehnbauer, chances are, the Fox Lane baseball team would not want to face him.

For the second time this season, the Roy C. Ketcham ace silenced the Foxes' lineup, pitching the top-seeded Indians to a 2-0 victory last Wednesday in a Class AA semifinal playoff game that took over four hours to complete and ended some seven miles away from where it began.

A severe thunderstorm that arrived in the fifth inning caused a two-hour delay, left Ketcham's field unplayable and forced the two teams to make the short drive over to Dutchess Stadium, where Zehnbauer continued his mastery over the fifth-seeded Foxes in drizzle under the lights.

In a rematch of last year's sectional final, also won by Ketcham, the Indians took advantage of a costly Fox Lane error in the first inning to provide Zehnbauer with the only run he would need. Nearly seven weeks after blanking the Foxes by the same score in an early-season showdown, Zehnbauer struck out 11 batters and yielded just three hits.

"When you make a mistake, and a mistake leads to a run, you know you've got yourself an uphill battle against a pitcher like that," said Fox Lane coach Matt Hillis shortly after the game's final out. "There's absolutely no doubt about it. But the bottom line is, you know what, we didn't score a run. And we're not gonna win any baseball games not scoring a run."

Zehnbauer had managed to escape a bases-loaded, no-outs jam in the seventh inning when he shut out the Foxes back in early April. This time, with the stakes much higher, a challenge from Fox Lane never really materialized. He quickly retired the Foxes in order in the top of the first and then RCK got on the scoreboard in the bottom of the inning.

Fox Lane pitcher Andrew Workman gave up back-to-back singles to Justin Squarzini and Zehnbauer, who both moved up a base on a groundout. When cleanup hitter Nick Merrill and Matt Lynch reached on one-out singles and, after Workman fanned Robert Clerc, David Henry smacked an RBI double just slid in with the game's first run.

"Yea, very frustrating," admitted Hillis about the called third strike on Fraioli. "Obviously the game is always gonna be full of what ifs. That would be the only one I think we could really truly truly point to in this particular game. It's just a tough pill to swallow. But the bottom line is, we didn't hit, we didn't score. So we're not gonna win any games that way. We have, for the most part, no one to blame but ourselves for this one."

The Indians, who wound up relinquishing their title to Mamaroneck in Saturday's championship game, scored their second run in the bottom of the fourth as Stephen Merrill and Matt Lynch reached on one-out singles and, after Workman fanned Robert Clerc, David Henry smacked an RBI double down the left-field line.

In the top of the fifth, with a menacing sky getting darker and darker, Zehnbauer retired the first two Foxes and had a 1-2 count on Passarelli when lightning struck. The game was halted and the teams were forced to wait over an hour before the decision was made to finish the last few innings on the turf field at Dutchess Stadium.

When play finally resumed nearly four hours after the first pitch back in Wappingers, Zehnbauer immediately served notice that he was far from finished despite the long delay. Passarelli was called out on strikes to end the fifth inning and Zehnbauer added a pair of strikeouts in both the sixth and seventh innings. He wound up retiring the last 11 Fox Lane batters, getting Fopeano on a pop fly to end the game.

As it turned out, facing Zehnbauer earlier in the season didn't help the Foxes at all, much to the disappointment of Hillis.

"I mean, after a 1-5 start, a ton of errors, things definitely were not looking great," said Hillis. "And we turned some things around, started playing some better baseball. They started to look much, much better. We had a nice first two rounds and then we just kind of laid an egg here, offensively, today."
**TRACK & FIELD**

State Qualifying Meet
Day One – May 28, 2015
Arlington High School

Pleasantville standout Patrick Watts has the lead in the 800.

Westlake's Peter Vogel tries to clear the bar in the high jump.

Horace Greeley's Gwen Rauch competes in the pole vault.

Pleasantville’s Drew Dorflinger is on his way to victory in the 3200.

Abvoe: Sophia Gelard of Briarcliff finished third in Division 2's 100.

Left: Westlake's Kristen Avilles clears the final hurdle.

Fox Lane's Vicky Martinez runs in the D1 3000.

Pleasantville’s Drew Dorflinger is on his way to victory in the 3200.

Pleasantville’s Dan Gottlieb competes in the hurdles.

Above: Caroline Pennacchio of Briarcliff was second in the D2 3000 race.

Left: Alynne Jeanty of Pleasantville hits the finish line in the 800.

Briarcliff’s Michael Terilli turns a corner in the Division 2 3000.

Briarcliff’s Michael Terilli turns a corner in the Division 2 3000.

Horace Greeley's Gwen Rauch competes in the pole vault.

Above: Sophia Gelard of Briarcliff finished third in Division 2's 100.

Left: Westlake's Kristen Avilles clears the final hurdle.
Valhalla’s Brandi Coon and Sydni Holtz Stand Dejectedly on the Playing Field After the Vikings’ Six-Year Title Streak Ends With a Surprising Loss to Rye Neck