

Red Raider News

BY JAY FAWLER
SPECIAL TO THE FREE PRESS

The Senior Boys' Basketball team was upset by the Massey Mustangs 64-63 in the first round of the WECSSAA playoffs Feb. 19. The boys kept with the Mustangs the entire game, even when they found themselves down by seven with only five minutes remaining. Essex then forced four straight turnovers, all of which led to Raider points. The Mustangs took the lead for good with 15.1 seconds left by way of a free throw. A desperation driving lay up by Senior Dane Robinson fell short.

Leading the team in points was Jeremy Butler with 21. Butler also had 9 rebounds. Jeff Reed added 13 points and 6 rebounds, while Kevin Ellsworth had 10 points and 3 rebounds.

The Senior Girls' Volleyball team defeated the Riverside Rebels in WECSSAA quarterfinal action Tuesday. The Rebels stuck with the Raiders for most of the first set until consecutive skills by Janelle Balkwill put Essex ahead for good, taking the set 25-20.

Strong serving by Candace Garrod had the Raiders up by 10 midway through the second set. Fatigue had set in on the Rebels for the rest of the set and they committed numerous unforced errors, losing the second set 25-17. The girls sealed the match in convincing fashion with a 25-15 victory in the third set.

The girls faced off against St. Anne in the semifinals on Thursday. St. Anne had easily defeated Massey three games straight on Tuesday and knew they would be facing a much tougher opponent in the Red Raiders who were first place in their division.

The girls opened up the match with a 25-14 victory in the first set. Essex found themselves in unfamiliar territory in the second set and could not come back late in the set, eventually losing the thriller 23-25.

Knowing they had something to prove and a birth to the finals on the line, the girls took momentum and the match in the final two games with scores of 26-24 and 25-21.

The WECSSAA championship game pitted archrival Brennan against Essex on Sunday at St. Clair College. The Raiders came out firing, knowing they had to redeem themselves from the loss they had suffered to Brennan last week. If they did not, their season would be over.

After Essex took the first set 25-17, the Cardinals had no swagger left and couldn't generate any offence. Essex easily defeated Brennan three games straight and will face powerhouse Chatham-Kent in the SWOSSAA finals Tuesday in Essex.

The Boys' Hockey team was defeated Wednesday in the four point series by the Villanova Wildcats 4-0.

The first game on Monday saw the boys down 2-1 with only one minute remaining. Essex battled back despite constant pressure by the Villanova offence to tie the score at 2 with only 54 seconds to play. Raider Goalie Josh Charles played an outstanding game but was unable to stop the rush of the Wildcats, who scored with only 15 seconds left to take the lead for good. With the win, the Wildcats took the two points and the led the series 2-0.

Knowing that this could be the final game of the season, Red Raider Captain Michael Puempel returned to the ice Wednesday after separating his right shoulder one month ago.

"It hurt at times, but I needed to fight through it to help the team," said Puempel.

The game was scoreless until midway through the second period when bad positioning led to an easy two-on-one goal for Villanova. The game got out of hand in the third period after a shaky goal from the blue line by the Wildcats. Questionable penalty calls led to the ejection of both Brad Quinlan and Ben Uras of the Raiders. A scramble in front of the net made the score 3-0 for the Wildcats and with two of their best players gone, the Raiders could not recover, losing the game 3-0.

Gosfield North School News



TECHIES TAKE 2ND PLACE – Gosfield North Public School Grade 8 students earned 2nd place in a technical challenge at Essex District High School last week. The students had three hours to build a "mouse trap car" that utilized simple machines to move forward. From left, Connor McKinnon, Jordana Charlton and Lydia Congdon. Not pictured: Matthew Dresser and parent/coach Laurie Callandar.



A GIFT FOR GAB – An oral communications competition held at Gosfield North Public School drew speeches on a variety of topics from students, including "Why I'm proud to be a Canadian," "How to change a baby's diaper" and "Rollercoasters and amusement parks." The proud winners are: (from top left) Haley Wilson, Faith Porter, Chelsea Lopetrone; (from bottom left) Chelsea O'Neil, Ashley Amicarelli and Luke Tremblay.

Maidstone Central School News

The senior boys' basketball team has been on quite a winning streak over the past week. The boys tipped off against Gosfield North in our region's quarterfinals. Our boys came out strong, played as a team and defeated them 61-40, advancing to the semifinals.

Last Saturday the senior boys competed in EDHS's Red Raider tournament. Again our boys played wonderfully and defeated

Kingsville, Colchester and Maplewood to win the championship. In league championship semifinals, the boys played hard and came away with a big victory, advancing them to the championship game against Maplewood. The championship games were very close right down to the end. The senior boys were victorious and claimed the league championship. Congratulations boys!

The senior girls' basket-

ball team also played in the Essex Regional Tournament. Our girls played a tough game against Gosfield and won 22-16. Following this victory they played against A.V. Graham. It was close but our girls remained ahead and won the championship with a score of 25-19. The Maidstone ladies are to be congratulated as they have been the champions for three years in a row.

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