

Villa Park REVIEW

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CHRIS FOX PHOTO Villa Park Review

Warriors return to the state tournament

Willowbrook's flag football team defeated Addison Trail 20-6 in Saturday's championship game of the West Suburban Gold-Plus Conference Tournament in Villa Park. Members of the team are pictured as they accept the tournament's championship trophy from Willowbrook athletic director Ed Sullivan. The Warriors went 5-0 and didn't allow a single point during their five regular-season conference games. Willowbrook advanced to the tournament's championship game with a 68-0 win over Larkin in a tournament semifinal contest on Oct. 14. Addison Trail drove for a touch-

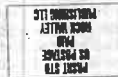
down on its opening drive of Saturday's game to end the Warriors' streak of shut-out performances. Willowbrook then scored 20 first-half points to build a 20-6 lead by halftime. Neither team scored during the second half. Winning the conference tournament propelled the Warriors to this week's state tournament at the Chicago Bears' Halas Hall facility in Lake Forest. The Warriors will play a quarterfinal game at the state event this Saturday. One year ago, during the Willowbrook flag football program's inaugural season, the Warriors won the 2022 state title at Halas Hall.

INSIDE:

Opinion 4 Sports 18-19
Police 8 Classifieds 22



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Sports

Warriors finish regular season with a 49-12 victory

Willowbrook will face Yorkville in this Friday's Class 7A playoff game in Villa Park

The Willowbrook football team wrapped up its regular season with Friday's 49-12 West Suburban Gold Conference win over Leyden in Villa Park.

The Warriors finished their regular season with five straight wins to post a record of 7-2. Willowbrook placed second in the West Suburban Gold Conference standings with a mark of 5-1. Downers Grove South won the conference title with a perfect 6-0 record against West Suburban Gold opponents.

Downers Grove South, Willowbrook and Addison Trail will represent the conference in the playoffs. Addison Trail (6-3) joins the Warriors in the 32-team Class 7A level. Downers Grove South (6-3) is one of the 32 teams competing in the Class 8A playoffs.

Willowbrook will open the IHSA Class 7A playoffs with this Friday's home game against Yorkville (6-3). The contest will begin at 7 p.m. in Villa Park. The winner will face either Auburn High School of Rockford or Rockton's Hononegah High School in the second round.

The Warriors are seeded No. 15 in the Class 7A level. Yorkville is the No. 18 seed.

Willowbrook led Leyden (2-7 overall; 2-4 in the conference) 21-0 after one quarter and 35-6 at halftime. The Warriors scored two third-quarter touchdowns to take a 49-6 lead. The advantage of at least 40 points triggered a running clock for the rest of the game.

Senior quarterback Arthur Palicki scored Willowbrook's first touchdown of the night on an 18-yard run. Junior Brandon Lopez then made the extra-point kick to give the Warriors a 7-0 lead. Lopez would add six more extra-point kicks during the game.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS/Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's football team finished its regular season with Friday's 49-12 West Suburban Gold Conference win over Leyden in Villa Park. The Warriors ended the regular season with an overall record of 7-2 and a conference record of 5-1. Willowbrook finished second to Downers Grove South in the conference standings. Senior quarterback Arthur Palicki of the Warriors threw four touchdown passes and ran for a pair of touchdowns during Friday's contest. Palicki is pictured (above left) while running for a touchdown in the final minute of the second quarter. Another photo (above right) from Friday's game shows Willowbrook senior Carter Ferguson, who made a pair of touchdown receptions during the first half. The Warriors will play an IHSA Class 7A playoff game against Yorkville (6-3) this Friday in Villa Park. Willowbrook is one of 32 teams in this year's Class 7A playoff field. If the Warriors beat Yorkville, they will meet either Auburn High School of Rockford or Rockton's Hononegah High School in a second-round game.

Senior Carter Ferguson scored Willowbrook's next two touchdowns of the game. Ferguson caught a 30-yard touchdown pass from Palicki with about seven minutes left in the first quarter. Minutes later, Ferguson hauled in a 15-yard touchdown reception from Palicki.

Leyden scored a second-quarter touchdown to cut Willowbrook's lead to 21-6. Palicki's third touchdown pass of the game—a 14-yard connection with junior K.J. Rhodes—helped the Warriors raise their lead to 28-6 with about three minutes left in the second quarter.

Palicki delivered his second touchdown run of the game in the final minute of the first half. His 1-yard run with 15.9 seconds left in the half helped the Warriors to their 35-6 halftime lead.

Palicki threw a 38-yard touchdown pass to Rhodes with about

eight minutes left in the third quarter. Senior DaeVeon Madison of the Warriors added a 2-yard touchdown run with about four minutes to play in the third quarter.

Madison's touchdown generated a running clock for the rest of the game.

Warriors beat Blazers to win the conference tournament

Willowbrook earns a trip to this week's state quarterfinals at Halas Hall

The Willowbrook flag football team won the championship of the West Suburban Gold-Plus Conference Tournament on Saturday. The Warriors defeated Addison Trail 20-6 in Saturday's title contest in Villa Park.

With the win, Willowbrook earned a berth in this week's state tournament at the Chicago Bears' Halas Hall facility in Lake Forest. The Warriors will play a quarterfinal game at the state event this Saturday. The championship battle will take place this Sunday.

One year ago, during the Willowbrook program's inaugural season, the Warriors won the state title at the Bears' facility.

Willowbrook went 5-0 during its regular season in the West Suburban Gold-Plus Conference. The Warriors finished the regular season with a 32-0 win over Addison Trail on Oct. 7. Willowbrook and the Blazers

both entered that contest with conference records of 4-0.

The Warriors and Addison Trail both advanced to the conference tournament's championship game with semifinal victories in Villa Park on Oct. 14. Willowbrook crushed Larkin 68-0 in the semifinal round.

The Warriors didn't allow a single point in any of their first six victories of the season. Addison Trail, however, ended that streak by scoring a touchdown on its opening drive of Saturday's championship game. The Blazers scored their touchdown on a pass on a fourth-and-goal play from the Warriors' 3-yard line.

Sophomore quarterback Marli Smrz scored Willowbrook's first touchdown of the championship game on a running play. Smrz then completed a one-point conversion pass to freshman Liz Pettinger to give the Warriors a 7-6 lead.

"It wasn't easy. I think we came out a bit nervous. Frankly, I'm glad it happened. Now it's out of our system. We've just got to be a bit more tough mentally."

— Rachel Karos, Willowbrook coach

Moments later, Smrz intercepted an Addison Trail while playing on defense for the Warriors. She then finished an offensive drive with her second touchdown run of the game. Smrz completed another one-point conversion pass to Pettinger to extend the Warriors' lead to 14-6.

Senior Emma Anderlik of Willowbrook intercepted an Addison Trail pass later in the first half. The Warriors then scored their third touchdown of the game on a run by Pettinger to raise the lead to 20-6 by halftime.

Neither team scored during the second half.

Smrz was shaken up in a collision during the opening half. She remained on the sideline for the rest of the game.

"It wasn't easy," said Willowbrook coach Rachel Karos after Saturday's win over the Blazers. "I think we came out a bit nervous."

Karos added that she wasn't terribly upset that the team's streak of holding its opponents scoreless came to an end.

"Frankly, I'm glad it happened," Karos stated of the Warriors' lengthy shutout streak. "Now it's out of our system. We've just got to be a bit more tough mentally."

See photos on page 9.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Taking the field

Willowbrook High School's varsity dance team held a dance camp for kids last week. The camp's participants joined the dance team on the field during Friday's performance at halftime of the Warriors' football game against Leyden. One photo from the performance shows Willowbrook senior Francesca Cico (above left) with some of the young campers. Another photo shows a few campers with Willowbrook sophomore Maddy McEllin (above right).

Police Reports

The Villa Park Police Department recently reported the following arrests and citations.

Readers are reminded that an arrest does not constitute a conviction, and that suspects are considered innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. Persons charged with domestic battery are not named in order to protect the privacy of victims.

Juveniles age 17 or younger are not named.

Oct. 14

A complainant at a store in the 900 block of S. Route 83 reported that a suspect removed multiple items from display shelves and left the store without paying.

Oct. 13

Cariel L. Flor, 26, of Chicago, was charged with retail theft on the above date for an alleged incident that occurred Dec. 23, 2017, at a store in the 900 block of S. Route 83.

A complainant at a rental store in the 700 block of S. Route 83 reported at 8:05 a.m. that an unknown suspect shattered a window on the south side of the building. Suspects entered and removed several tools from the building.

A complainant in the 300 block of N. Illinois reported that an unknown suspect entered their unsecured home and removed multiple items.

Oct. 12

Kayla M. Bowen, 23, of Sumava Resorts, Ind., and Destiny J. Millender, 23, of Valparaiso, Ind., were charged with prostitution at a hotel in the 1-100 block of W. Roosevelt at 8:23 p.m.

A complainant at a store in the 300 block of N. Ardmore reported that suspects removed beer cans from the display shelves and left without paying. Officers located the suspects and items were returned. The suspects were trespassing.

A complainant in the 300 block of S. Ardmore reported an unknown subject damaged plants on the south side of the building.

Oct. 10

Police said Omayra Torres, 54, of Villa Park, was arrested on an original complaint and warrant on the above date for an alleged incident that occurred July 6.

A complainant in the 1-100 block of N. Addison reported they located pieces of wood on their property with obscenities written on them.

A complainant at a restaurant in the 200 block of W. North reported that a suspect who they have an order of protection against was in the parking lot close to them. The suspect was gone upon an officer's arrival.

A complainant in the 700 block of N. Addison reported that juvenile suspects were attempting to enter vehicles that are parked in the parking lot.

Oct. 9

A complainant in the 300 block of N. Ardmore reported that an unknown suspect damaged the driver's side door of a vehicle that was parked in a parking lot.

Oct. 8

Daniel S. Murphy, 35, of Lombard, was charged with battery/making physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature and disorderly conduct/breach of peace in the 400 block of S. Harvard at 7:11 p.m.

Oct. 5

A complainant in the 200 block of W. Vermont reported that a suspect battered them. The complainant did not want to press charges.

Oct. 4

A complainant in the 300 block of N. 2nd reported that a suspect threatened them.

Fraud, identity theft

According to information provided by the Villa Park Police Department, police reported five incidents of residents being a victim of fraud or identity theft.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Musicians celebrate everything Halloween at Montini Catholic fall concert

Montini Catholic's auditorium was alive with fall holiday themed music and song for its first concert of the school year at the high school's Halloween themed fall concert on Tuesday, Oct. 17. Parents, faculty and friends were treated to a special evening of fall/Halloween themed songs including "October Twilight," "The Spider" and "Nightmare Before Christmas Medley." The evening began with the "National Anthem," sung by Montini's Concert Choir and it was the Chamber Choir that enchanted its audience with the somber, but beautiful, "Autumn Leaves." From left to right are three junior members of the Chamber Choir: Nolan Ferris, Katherine Filkowski and Olivia Welland of Villa Park.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Fundraising for Freya

A lucky raffle contestant shows off his new framed picture of the Chicago Skyline at DeMito's Saloon in Villa Park on Sunday, Oct. 15, while celebrity DJ Matt Kissane announces the latest winner. The event was for the Friends of Freya Spooktacular, and it raised thousands of dollars for Freya and her family in efforts to raise autism awareness. Freya is a 6-year-old nonverbal autistic child. She has made great advancements in all areas thanks to therapy, technology and sensory tools/toys. She is the founder's daughter and the inspiration behind this cause. Visit www.friendsoffreya.org for more information.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Warriors beat the Blazers

Willowbrook's flag football team won the West Suburban Gold-Plus Conference Tournament title on Saturday in Villa Park. The Warriors beat Addison Trail 20-6 in Saturday's championship contest. Sophomore Marli Smrz ran for a pair of touchdowns before leaving the game after she was involved in a first-half collision. Smrz is pictured (top right) during her first touchdown run of the game. Freshman Liz Pettinger (No. 5 - bottom right) scored Willowbrook's third touchdown on a running play. The Warriors are pictured (above) with the tournament's championship trophy after Saturday's victory, which secured a berth in this weekend's state tournament at the Chicago Bears' Halas Hall facility in Lake Forest. Willowbrook will play a quarterfinal game at the state tournament this Saturday. The tournament will end with Sunday's championship game.



Warriors' girls team earns a sectional berth

Ojeda's fourth-place individual finish leads Willowbrook to fourth-place honors at the Lyons Township Regional

Willowbrook's girls and boys cross-country teams participated in Saturday's IHSA Class 3A regional at Lyons Township High School's south campus in Western Springs.

The Warriors' girls team advanced to this week's Hinsdale Central Sectional at Katherine Legge Memorial Park. While Willowbrook's boys squad did not earn a team berth in the sectional, three members of the team did secure individual berths in this week's event.

Junior Amelie Ojeda led Willowbrook's girls team with her fourth-place individual finish in Saturday's regional. Ojeda completed the 5,000-meter (3.1-mile) race in 19 minutes, 7.89 seconds.

She finished about 10 seconds behind the individual champion—Downers Grove North senior Sarah Paul (18:57.76).

Sophomore Mariangela Popoca (20:37.51) raced to a 22nd-place finish for the Warriors. Junior Malin Meecker (21:41.72) placed 30th for Willowbrook. Sophomore Allyson Stefani (22:09.92) and junior Molly Brown (22:27.75) finished 36th and 38th, respectively, for the Warriors.

Juniors Rosemary Kling (23:01.08; 42nd) and Holly Harris (26:14.39; 55th) completed Willowbrook's regional lineup.

Downers Grove North won the regional title with its 25-point total. Five Trojans earned top-10 finishes in the race. The team swept the top three individual places in the race.

Lyons Township finished second with 44 points, while Hinsdale Central claimed third with 63 points. Willowbrook tallied a 130-point total in its fourth-place finish at the regional, which included

eight full teams.

Riverside-Brookfield (150 points) and Reavis (178 points) placed fifth and sixth, respectively. The top six teams advanced to this week's Hinsdale Central Sectional.

Willowbrook finished seventh in the team standings of the regional's boys competition. The boys event included eight full teams.

Sophomore Miteku Branch was the Warriors' first finisher in Saturday's boys race. He negotiated the 3.1-mile course in a 34th-place time of 17 minutes, 22.8 seconds.

Willowbrook juniors Adriano Quintero (17:43.76) and Jake Skibbie (17:53.7) finished 39th and 40th, respectively.

Branch, Quintero and Skibbie earned individual berths in this week's Hinsdale Central Sectional.

Freshman Mike Garner (18:12.92) ran to a 43rd-place finish for the Warriors during Saturday's regional. Junior Kasen Blain (18:14.85) turned in a 44th-place finish for Willowbrook, while junior Omar Arenas (18:24.35) landed in 47th place. Senior Evan Weder (18:48.2; 50th) rounded out the Warriors' regional squad.

Downers Grove North's boys team won the regional title at Saturday's event with its 21-point total. Riverside-Brookfield finished second with 57 points, while Lyons Township placed third with 72 points.

Hinsdale Central (87 points) finished fourth, while Morton (143 points) landed in fifth place.

Reavis (171 points) qualified for the sectional with its sixth-place showing at the regional. Willowbrook posted a seventh-place regional total of 198 points. Argo (242 points) finished eighth.



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•Broncos (Continued from page 10)

17-10 lead.

St. Laurence scored a touchdown on its first drive of the second half. The Vikings made the extra-point kick to tie the score at 17-17.

The Broncos completed what turned out to be the game-winning drive when Marre ran 18 yards for a touchdown late in the fourth quarter. Stumbaugh's extra-point kick pushed the lead to 24-17.

Montini sealed its victory when Irion intercepted a St. Laurence pass near midfield in the closing minutes. Irion intercepted two passes during the game.

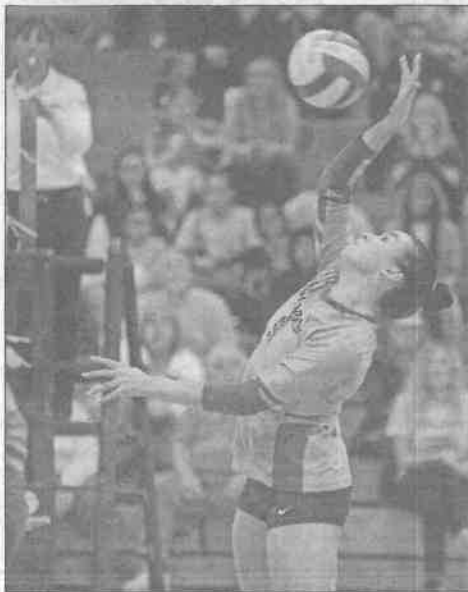
Marre rushed for 129 yards and two touchdowns on 22 carries. He also made two receptions for 11 yards.

Carbonara completed 13 of 23 pass attempts for 174 yards and one

touchdown. He didn't throw any interceptions. Junior Jolo James of the Broncos made five receptions for 56 yards.

Junior Jeremiah Peterson made a team-leading 16 tackles for Montini. He also caused a fumble.

"It was an up and down game," said Bukovsky. "We played very physical. That was a big difference in the game."



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Warriors head to the post-season with a 34-1 record

Willowbrook's girls volleyball team won two matches last week to complete its regular season with an overall record of 34-1. The Warriors beat Hinsdale Central 20-25, 25-14, 25-17 in a non-conference match in Villa Park on Oct. 16. Willowbrook closed out its regular season with a 25-11, 25-14 West Suburban Gold Conference victory at Leyden on Oct. 18. The Warriors won the 2023 conference title with a perfect 6-0 record. Willowbrook senior Calli Kenny (No. 9 - above) supplied 10 kills, 11 assists, 12 digs and two aces in last week's win over Hinsdale Central. Junior Hannah Kenny provided four kills, 12 assists, 11 digs and three aces for the Warriors. Senior Elle Bruschuk delivered seven kills, while junior Anna Marinier contributed three kills, nine digs and two aces. Bruschuk (No. 12) is pictured below while celebrating after the Warriors won a point in the third game. Senior Eliza Chivilo made 12 digs for Willowbrook. Senior Karl Ostrowski had four digs. Calli Kenny piled up 11 kills, 10 assists, four digs and three aces in last week's win at Leyden. Hannah Kenny had five kills, 10 assists and 10 digs against the Eagles. Bruschuk and senior Eliza Ramey hit three kills each. Chivilo made eight digs. The Warriors are hosting an IHSA Class 4A regional this week. Willowbrook likely earned a win in a regional semifinal earlier this week to advance to tonight's regional final against either Nazareth Academy or Chicago's Jones College Prep School.





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PREP FOOTBALL: DOWNERS GROVE SOUTH 46, ADDISON TRAIL 20

Downers Grove South explodes for 6 first-half TDs

Mustangs capture WSC Gold title for second straight season

By SCOTT SCHMID
Shaw Local News Network correspondent

DOWNERS GROVE -- The halftime Homecoming fireworks extravaganza wasn't the only thing to light up the sky Oct. 20 in Downers Grove.

Downers Grove South exploded for six touchdowns in the first half and cruised to a 46-20 victory over Addison Trail in the regular-season finale.

Overcoming an 0-3 start for the second year in a row, the Mustangs (6-3, 6-0) captured back-to-back West Suburban Gold conference championships with the win while also clinching the program's fourth consecutive playoff appearance.

"It's really special," senior running back Deon Davis said. "The coaches were talking, the last time we won conference two years in a row was when we were 5 years old. I'm happy we did it, but I'm more happy for the sophomores that are going to be juniors and the juniors that will be seniors. We are trying to set a foundation and a culture for the guys coming up."

Davis found the end zone twice on runs of 37 and 9 yards and has 10 touchdowns over the past four games. The senior gained 106 yards on only eight carries against Addison Trail.

"We didn't expect to win this game without doing the work," Davis said. "We had a great week of practice and we believed that if we executed, we would win the game."

"After those first three games, we raised our standard and our expectations. And we haven't taken our foot off the pedal since."

Backfield mate Kayden Smith also had a night to remember, tallying three touchdowns. He scored on runs of 68 and 20 yards and caught a 38-yard touchdown pass from Will Potter on a flea-flicker. Smith finished with 119 yards on only eight carries.

"When we get our offense rolling, I feel like nobody can really stop us," Smith said. "In those first three weeks, I think we were playing more as individuals. Once we started to play as a team, that's when I feel like we really took off. It's really special [to win conference two years in a row] and I'd like to do it again next year."

Potter was 7 of 7 through the air for 129 yards and connected with Keon Maggit for a 23-yard touchdown. Potter added a 21-yard scamper for a score. Connor Kelly contributed an interception on defense.

"We did it [win conference] for a lot



Downers Grove South's Kayden Smith looks for running room against Addison Trail on Oct. 20.

Photos by Karen Naess for Shaw Local News Network

of years," said Downers South coach Mark Molinari, whose team has scored 28 or more points in every contest during the six-game winning streak. "And then we had a lull. We feel we are starting to get back to where we were under Coach [John] Belskis in the late '90s and early 2000s."

"After our start, we still had goals. Conference was one of them as well as hosting a playoff game. To do that, we will have to win [this] week. We went through this [an 0-3 start] last year. Just keep the wheels on the bus and stay focused. And you have to give a lot of credit to our seniors. They earned the right to be the leaders of this team."

Despite the loss, all is far from lost for the Blazers (6-3, 3-3), who will be making their first trip to the postseason since 2014. That also marked Addison Trail's last winning season.

Noah Cruz hauled in two touchdown catches from quarterback Nico Dill and Dominic Renc added a 32-yard interception return for a score. Dill was 13 of 20 for 150 yards. Cruz and Raja Corhn each had five receptions. Casey Carlson caught three passes for 71 yards.



Addison Trail's Noah Cruz carries the ball against Downers Grove South.