A November Not Like Any Other – '3-0 would be a fun weekend!'

In a word, triumphant is the best way to describe November 2018. Extraordinary athletic accomplishments by our Raider student-athletes inspired a level of school and community pride, culminating with an amazing display of support at Heinz Field. The following are recollections from a journey well worth the distances traveled.

Friday, November 2 – Fox Chapel H.S.
Standing on the sidelines prior to the start of our WPIAL football first round game, I was speaking to a former colleague and made a simple comment that "3-0 would be a fun weekend" in reference to our football game on Friday and double-header soccer games on Saturday. I knew the likelihood, while possible, was a formidable challenge, but I was anxious to see how our student-athletes and coaches would respond. After spotting Central Catholic 14 points in the first 10 minutes of the game, the Raider football team settled in and, quite simply, dominated the Vikings, scoring 15 unanswered points to win a game many thought not likely. My most vivid memory of the evening was watching a Raider defensive unit slowly take control of the line of scrimmage, force multiple "three and outs," come up with a key turnover to put our offense in the position to score the game deciding points and hold the Vikings scoreless the final 10 minutes. At 10:04 p.m. on Friday evening, the Raiders were 1-0 on the weekend.

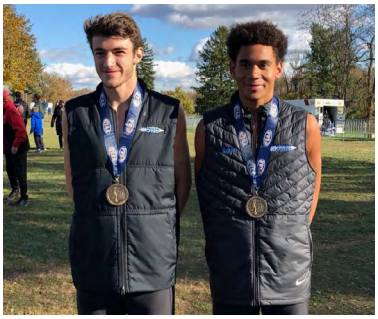


Saturday, November 3 – Highmark Stadium
For any high school soccer player in western Pennsylvania, the pinnacle of their season is the privilege of playing for a WPIAL title at Highmark. Following regular seasons where the girls and boys teams won section titles and earned the top-seed in their respective playoff brackets, it was a night of Columbia blue and black on the South Side. Raider girls' soccer, under head coach Mark Perry and assistants Laura Sauer and Deb Klinefelter, squared off with Peters Township with an ending best described by the popular Jim McKay phrase - "the thrill of victory and agony of defeat." Breana Valentovish tied the game off a direct kick with 0:03 left on the clock and the Raiders won the title 1:40 into overtime on a Lauren Sileo header. At 5:52 p.m. on Saturday evening, the Raiders were 2-0 on the weekend.





While standing on the sidelines waiting for our girls' team to begin play, assistant athletic director David Fuhrman sent me results from Hershey, PA – our boys cross country team finished fourth in the state on the strength of top-30 finishes by seniors Sam Owori (10th), Seth Ketler (14th), and Connor Volk-Klos (30th). A remarkable conclusion for a senior class of boys with two WPIAL titles and two WPIAL runner-up trophies in addition to PIAA top 10 finishes by a team in three consecutive seasons. On the girls' side, Seneca Valley was represented by sophomore Bailey Royhab and senior Megan Aaron, making her fourth consecutive appearance at the PIAA championships. Another outstanding season for our cross-country programs under the direction of head coach Steve Strelick and his assistants – Ann Cheman and Justin Dosch.





Back to soccer action at Highmark, it took the Raider boys' team 38 seconds to set the tone for the evening. Luke Rupert started the scoring and by the end of the evening his two goals along with goals by AJ Mills, Jackson Wotus and Zach LaValle secured the program's first-ever WPIAL boys soccer title. During the post-game medal ceremony, it was shared that some of our goals scored this evening were the best we have ever seen! That is a tribute to the excellence and dominance of our boys' team on this night. Congratulations to head coach George Williams and his assistants Jay Roman and Scott Stewart on preparing a team for their moment. After making sure our team was safely on their way home, and while walking back to my car, it dawned on me – at 9:08 p.m. on Saturday evening - Seneca Valley had done the unimaginable and went 3-0 in the past 24 hours!

Tuesday, November 6 – Hempfield H.S.
I have always said the hardest game to win in the state bracket is the opening round of PIAA championships when you have just won a WPIAL title. The turnaround is quick (Saturday to Tuesday) and the emotional letdown is a given. The benefit of winning, however, is you get to play a game in the WPIAL district boundaries and this evening saw both our girls and boys teams at Hempfield High School. The boys started the evening at 5 p.m. and needed goals by Luke Rupert and Jackson Wotus to send the game to overtime where Keegan McVicker scored the game-winner in the second OT to advance Seneca Valley into the PIAA quarterfinals.





If winning in overtime at Highmark on Saturday was not suspenseful enough, our girls finished this evening with a game decided by penalty kicks. No doubt, the hero of the evening was junior goalkeeper Morgan Sinan who not only made crucial saves but also scored the game-winning PK to help advance the Raiders to the PIAA quarterfinals.



Friday, November 9 – North Allegheny High School
#RevengeTour stop number two. In the regular season Raider football lost three games – at Central Catholic, at North Allegheny, at Pine-Richland – and they embraced this playoff season as a chance at redemption – they could revenge each regular season loss in succession. In what may very well have been their most complete and convincing win of the season, Seneca Valley marched out of Newman Stadium with a decisive 31-14 victory over the host Tigers, earning a return trip to Heinz Field for the WPIAL championship game.

Saturday, November 10 – Chambersburg High School
Blustery might be an understatement to describe the playing conditions on the day. Raider girls' soccer squared off with Souderton with each team scoring a goal "with the wind." Following double overtime, we were faced with penalty kicks for the second time in three games and as sport teaches us, the ball does not always bounce your way. A tough 4-3 loss to eventual state champion Souderton brought to close a very memorable and successful 2018 campaign.

While the winds died down a bit for the boys' game which followed, the competition was tough and the game quite physical. At 28:24 of the second half, Jackson Wotus scored the game's only goal and the Raiders were on their way to the PIAA semifinals with a 1-0 victory over Abington.

Tuesday, November 13 – Chambersburg High School
This is not a typo – yes, the Raiders were right back at Chambersburg High School for a semifinal clash with Radnor out of District One. On this night, Seneca Valley fell to a quality opponent 3-0, ending one of the most successful seasons in program history.

Saturday, November 17 – Heinz Field
#RevengeTour final stop. I know this to be true – when the Raiders are playing at Heinz Field, the Seneca Valley community shows up! For the second time in three seasons, it was Seneca Valley playing at Heinz for a WPIAL title. Unfortunately, the Raiders came up against a Pine-Richland squad who seized control of the game in the second half preventing SV from capturing the program's first-ever WPIAL title. While the outcome is not what any of us wanted, the one-year turnaround of this program – from 3-6 in 2017 to 9-4 this year – cannot go unnoticed. We congratulate Coach Butschle and his entire staff for a great run!

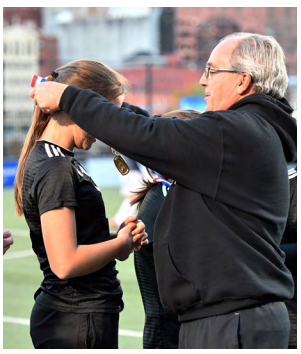


Behind the Scenes
Success does not happen without the help of so many folks and this space is dedicated to recognizing all of those who make the events happen. In no particular order, I would like to thank the following:

- Athletic Department Staff – David Fuhrman, Marcie Peaco, Sherry Codispot
- Soccer Event Management – Megan Meeder, Diana McCauley
- Football Event Management – George Trew, Tammy Gill, Ray Peaco, John Fetchko, Matt Durst, Mike Lutz, Megan Meeder, Kory Jones and our Stick Crew, and our ticket sellers and takers.
- Boosters – For all of those boosters groups who staff concession stands, video games and provide game management support in announcing, spotting and stats.
- District Staff – Bob Cook, Jack McDermott, the entire buildings and grounds crew, and our security staff.
- Athletic Trainers – Tara Bayer and Marissa Johnson who put in countless hours taking care of our student-athletes in rehabilitative and preventive efforts.
- Coaches – All of our coaches who go above and beyond for our student-athletes. I say this all the time: "Our District is blessed to have the quality coaches we do."





Cheering on SV
The Seneca Valley Competitive Cheerleading Squad attended the Miami Valley Regional UCA competition on Oct. 28. In their third year of existence, and their very first attempt in competing at the Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) level, the team placed third in the medium varsity division and received a bid to compete at the National High School Cheer Competition for their game day routine. "We are incredibly proud and very excited to have this opportunity to showcase what Seneca Valley can do," exclaimed Seneca Valley Cheerleading Coach Laura Wise. In an effort to offset costs per cheerleader, they have set up a GoFundMe account.



TRI-STATE ORTHOPAEDICS – Athletes of the Month, September, October, November 2018

Seneca Valley Athletics is pleased to partner with Tri-State Orthopaedics to sponsor a male and female Raider Athlete of the Month. This year marks the third year of a three-year partnership with Tri-State Orthopaedics and the Athletics Department is pleased to announce the Athletes of the Month for September, October and November.

September - 2018



The Female Athlete of the Month for September 2018 is senior golfer Lexi Tofanelli. Lexi was a senior leader and team captain of the Raider Girls Golf program and was a medalist in 15 of 16 matches this season. In only her third season playing golf, Lexi qualified for the WPIAL Individual Championships where she finished in the top half of the tournament finishing with an 87 on a tough Diamond Run course. Her WPIAL Championship score was the best 18-hole finish of her career. Congratulations Lexi and well played this season!

The Male Athlete of the Month for September 2018 is senior Zach Brown, another fine golfer in our District. Zach led the varsity golf team to seven victories by shooting five rounds out of eight matches at or under par. Zach and his teammates finished four in the WPIAL team golf championships. Congratulations Zach on a fantastic season and Raider golf career.

October - 2018





The Female Athlete of the Month was junior forward/midfielder Breana Valentovish. Breana, who was also a team captain, helped lead the girls' soccer team to a WPIAL 4A Section 1 title and a WPIAL 4A championship. Breana scored 18 goals and 7 assists (through October) and has been a vital part of the team's success this season. Breana was recently named 1st team Big 56 Conference, WPIAL All-Section team, and All-WPIAL team. For her accomplishments and leadership on and off the field, we were pleased to recognize Breana as our Female Athlete of the Month for October. Well done Breana!

The Male Athlete of the Month is senior forward Jackson Wotus. Jackson was the team's leading scorer with 12 goals and 6 assists (through October). Jackson was recently named 1st team All Big 56 Conference and WPIAL All-Section team. Jackson has played a significant role in his team's success this season. The Raiders have won the WPIAL 4A Section 1 title, WPIAL 4A championship, and were PIAA state semifinalists in boy's 4A soccer. For his outstanding work ethic and tremendous attitude, we were pleased to recognize Jackson as our Male Athlete of the Month for October. Congratulations, Jackson!

November – 2018





The Female Athlete of the Month is junior soccer goalkeeper Morgan Sinan. Morgan was a key fixture in the Raider's march to a WPIAL title and PIAA top-8 finish. On the season, Morgan started 20 games and finished with a 17-3 record. In those 20 games, Morgan allowed only 20 goals and recorded seven shutouts. Throughout the playoffs in November, Morgan was the winning goalkeeper for a WPIAL title, stopped three of four penalty kicks by Central Dauphin while scoring the game-winning PK to advance SV to the quarterfinal round of PIAAs. For her efforts all season, Morgan was honored as 1st team All-Big 56, All-Section and All-WPIAL. For a remarkable month and season, we recognize Morgan as the November Athlete of the Month. Congrats!

The Male Athlete of the Month is senior football captain Jake Stebbins. Jake was a two-way standout as a linebacker and tight end for the Raider football team this season. He led the team in tackles registering 163 tackles—114 solo and 49 assisted. In addition, he had six sacks, 21 tackles for a loss, one forced fumble and one interception. On the receiving end, Jake was second on the team in receptions (29), yards (485) and average yards per catch at 16.72. He also caught two touchdown passes. For his efforts, Jake was honored as 1st Team All-Big 56 as a tight end and was recently named to the Post-Gazette's 2018 Fabulous 22 squad. Earlier in the season, Jake made a verbal commitment to attend Cornell University and continue his football career with the Big Red. Congratulations Jake on a fabulous career.

All-Conference Selections Announced in Fall Sports

The Big 56 Conference recently announced its fall sport honorees in football, boys' and girls' soccer and girls' volleyball and the Raiders were well represented. The following Seneca Valley student-athletes were recognized for their excellence on the field and court.

FOOTBALL

1st Team	2nd Team	Honorable Mention
Saige Ley, LB	Brennan Hayes, DB	Marcus Might, T
Jake Stebbins, TE	Josh McLean, DB	Jake Mineweaser, RB
	Josh Kaltenberger, C	Drew Robertson, DE
	Tyler Proctor, DT	Seth Winters, K
	David Tkatch, G	

BOYS SOCCER

1st Team	2nd Team	Honorable Mention
Will Gallagher, GK	Austin Myers, F	Marshall Malin, M
Keegan McVicker, D	Ben Francis, M	
Jackson Wotus, F		

GIRLS SOCCER

1st Team	2nd Team	Honorable Mention	Coach of the Year
Madeline Neuschwander, D	Ashley Rea, M	Norah Seibel, M	Mark Perry
Julia Redilla, M			
Morgan Sinan, GK			
Breana Valentovish, F			

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

1st Team	2nd Team	Honorable Mention
Sarah White, S	Anna DeGraaf, OH	Rachel Broskey, L