By Heather Lewis,
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THE APPRECIATION FOR SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE



It has become customary for to witness countless moments of excellence in our academics, arts and athletics. The start of the 2024-25 school year has been no different. Senior cross-country runner Max Smith will be making his third straight appearance at the PIAA State Championships the first weekend in November. At the recent WPIAL 3A championship race, Max concluded his season with a 10th-place finish and a 5K (3.1 mi) time of 16:01.6. As a junior, Max finished in 16:26.3; during his sophomore year his time was 17:21.8, and as a freshman he ran an 18:24.0. The evolution of Max's excellence is in the numbers and the reward for his dedication and commitment is another trip to Hershey! Well done, Max!

Raider girls soccer returned to championship form winning their first section title since 2018 and 12th overall. Head Coach Mark Perry's squad went undefeated in section play with a 7-0-1 mark and finished their regular season with an overall record of 13-2-2, good enough to earn the No. 2 seed in the WPIAL championship bracket. The mark of this year's squad is the selflessness in their play and connectivity as teammates. We congratulate Raider girls soccer on another outstanding season and will watch with excitement as they advance through postseason play.



Beyond the athletic arena, I am blessed to also see the artistic brilliance of our Raider Marching Band. The synchronicity we all take for granted is a result of countless hours of preparation and commitment from devoted performers. Mr. Varden Armstrong and the entire marching band staff foster an uncommon pride in wearing the Raider Marching Band uniform and our students, in return, dedicate their attention, time and efforts to performances worthy of all their accrued accolades. Joining the spirit of #SVRaiderNation is head coach Laura Wise's cheer and dance squads. They begin their journey well ahead of others, spending countless hours in the gym refining stunts, coordinating routines and training their minds and bodies for two long seasons. We value their school pride and are grateful to our cheerleaders and dancers for bleeding the Blue & Black, lifting the spirits of all and wearing the SV with pride.

This is the privilege of my job: witnessing our students discover their true potential and to reach heights not imagined as a young ninth grader. Thank you for the honor of sharing in each of your individual and collective journeys.

ATHLETES OF THE MONTH EXCELLENCE



The Female Athlete of the Month for September was senior girls volleyball captain Sadie Reese. A setter and outside hitter, Sadie paced the Raiders to a 6-4 record to start the season along with a first-place tournament victory at the Butler Spike Fest. Over the first month of games and tournaments and 47 sets played, she tallied 21 aces (tied for first on the team), 226 assists (first on the team), 113 digs (second on the team) and 26 kills. Sadie also had outstanding serve and hitting percentages of 89.2% and 47.2%, respectively. We recognized Sadie as the September Female Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Sadie.



The Male Athlete of the Month for September was boys golfer Marcos Lopez. A junior, Marcos was a pace setter for the Raider boys golf team. He led the team with an average score of 37.7 and also had the lowest individual score in five matches, including a season low of 33. Steller play between him and his teammates ensured the Raiders finished section play in second place, thus securing a spot in the WPIAL 3A Boys Team Championship. Marcos was one of four SV golfers to qualify out of the section individual championships and make it through WPIAL semifinals to compete in the WPIAL 3A Boys Individual Championships at Oakmont where he shot a respectable 82 on the day. For an impressive month, we recognized Marcos as the September Male Athlete of the Month. Congratulations, Marcos!

FALL SPORTS UPDATES

The following is a partial recap of our fall sports season. A final recap of those fall sports still in postseason competition will be shared in the November issue of Raider Pride.

CROSS-COUNTRY – Boys and Girls (Head Coach Steve Strelick)



The boys and girls cross-country teams finished as section runner-up to North Allegheny and their respective seasons culminated at the WPIAL Championships held on Oct. 24, at White Oak Park. The boys team finished fifth overall and the girls came in at No. 13. The Top 5 boys places in the 5K championship race were Max Smith (10th, 16:01.6), Julian Varlotta (35th, 16:40.4), Sawyer Shoup (38th, 16:44.4), Hunter Petersen (50th, 16:59.6) and Ian Wahl (51st, 17:00.2). The future outlook is bright as Varlotta, Petersen and Wahl are all sophomores and will return to anchor a lineup which will return four of its top seven.

In the girls championship race, the Raiders were paced by Sydney Heltzell (45th, 20:14.2), Hannah Jones (57th, 20:34.6), Elyse Cilik (73rd, 20:50.2), Drew Kirchner (79th, 20:57.8) and Siena Varlotta (100th, 21:33.3). Unfortunately, one of our top runners all season, Paige D'Amico, took a fall during the race and was unable to continue. As with the boys team, we look forward to the return of Cilik, Jones, Varlotta and D'Amico to anchor a strong returning core in 2025. Congratulations, Raiders, on another good run!



FOOTBALL – (Head Coach Ron Butschle)

Raider Football has secured their first playoff berth in three seasons and their opponent for the Nov. 8, WPIAL 6A semifinal contest will be the Vikings of Central Catholic. At the time of this writing, the location of the semifinal contest was yet to be determined. A full season recap will be provided in November. Good luck, Raiders!

GOLF – Boys (Head Coach Dean Leventopoulos)

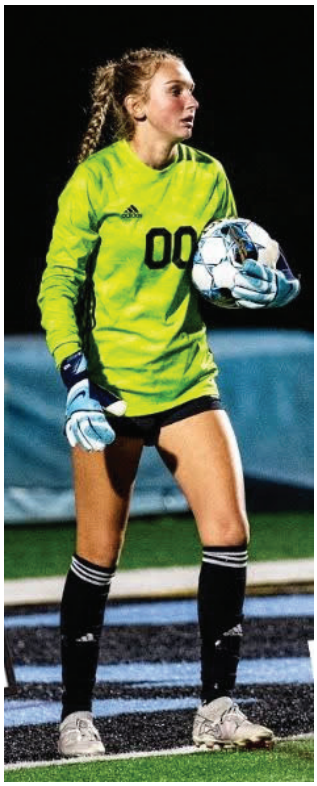
Boys varsity golf had an impressive postseason showing with four individuals qualifying through sectionals and the first round of WPIAL Individual Championships to find themselves standing on the No. 1 tee box of Oakmont on Oct. 1, in the WPIAL Individual finals. All four played exceptional golf on one of the world's most challenging courses. The two-day aggregate saw Brody Pirt narrowly missing the PIAA state championships by two strokes. On the day, Pirt shot a 79 at Oakmont and teammate Anthony Cardosi shot a 78. Rounding out the quartet were Marcos Lopez (82) and Tyler Garvin (84). Not a bad day on the links where the 2025 U.S. Open will be contested! In WPIAL team championships, the Raiders were unable to advance to the finals round, finishing fifth out of seven teams at their semifinal site of Indian Run. Congratulations, boys – many memorable rounds in 2024!

SOCCER – Boys (Head Coach George Williams)



The Raiders finished the regular season with a mark of 13-5 and 6-4 in section play, good enough to earn the No. 7 seed in the WPIAL 4A bracket. Following an impressive 6-0 win over the No. 10 seed Mt. Lebanon in the opening round of playoff action, the team headed to Peters Township on Saturday, Oct. 26 for a quarter-final showdown with the Indians. The Raiders got on the board early when Mark McConahy finished a Tyler Prex cross less than two minutes into the game. Peters tied the game three minutes later and scored the eventual game-winner with 11 minutes to play. Despite playing a great team game of soccer, the result was not in the Raiders' favor, and their season came to an end. We congratulate the team on another outstanding year; we thank our seniors and wish them all the best.

SOCCER – Girls (Head Coach Mark Perry)



As noted earlier, the girls finished the season winning their 12th section title and earning the No. 2 seed in the WPIAL 4A bracket. Their overall record was 13-2-2 and their section mark was 7-0-1. Following a first-round bye, the Raiders hosted seventh-seed Upper St. Clair and came away victorious 1-0 following a magical Karly Majeski goal in the minute 51 of play. At the time of this writing, SV will square off against Canon-Mac on Monday, Oct. 28, with the winner advancing to Highmark Stadium to play for a WPIAL title. A final recap will be provided in November.

TENNIS (Head Coach Eric Grove)

For the second consecutive season, Head Coach Eric Grove's girls tennis squad qualified for the WPIAL team championships. The Raiders finished their section play with a 5-3 mark, good enough for third place. Overall, they were 8-6 and those season results placed them as the No. 13 seed. Unfortunately, the team squared off against a talented fourth seed in Upper St. Clair and their season ended following a 5-0 defeat. We congratulate the squad on their postseason appearance and look forward to continued ascension in WPIAL girls tennis.

VOLLEYBALL (Head Coach Brett Poirier)

It is hard to imagine a section any tougher than WPIAL girls 4A volleyball section II. Despite an overall record of 10-7 and two tournament championships (Butler Spike Fest and Norwin), the girls section mark of 4-6 left them on the outside looking in at WPIAL playoffs. Only the top three teams of each section advance to postseason play and, unfortunately, the Raiders found themselves in the fourth spot. Despite missing postseason play, we congratulate this team on their fortitude to overcome significant injuries and still finish with ten wins and two tournament titles.



REMINDERS FOR WINTER SPORT PARTICIPATION

- Nov. 6, 2024: Final Drug & Concussion Testing and Athletic Physicals for Winter Sports in Senior High School
  - 30 physicals offered 2:45 – 5:15 pm
- Nov. 7, 2024: **Deadline** for winter sport paperwork; all papers due in athletic office.
- Nov. 15, 2024: First official day of winter sports – mandatory tryouts begin this day.
  - For tryout schedule, please contact the coach directly. Coaches contact information is located on the athletics website under **Participation Information** tab.

REMINDERS for 2024-25:

- ALL paperwork for winter sports is due in the athletic office no later than **Thursday, Nov. 7, by 3 p.m.** Coaches cannot accept paperwork at the first day of tryouts.
- The PIAA mandates the CIPPE Section 6 form as the only permissible form for doctor's signature.
- All required paperwork for 2024-25 athletic participation is available on **Parent Portal** or Athletics website. Paperwork includes PIAA CIPPE Sections 1, 2, 5, & 6 and Drug Test Consent Form.
- IF a student played in a fall sport, the only paperwork needed is PIAA CIPPE Section 7 and, if applicable, PIAA CIPPE Section 8 – these forms can be dated no earlier than Oct. 4, 2024.
- All student-athletes must register in the **Parent Portal** under "Sports Registration" before the start of each season.
- Tryouts are mandatory. Student-athletes are expected to attend every tryout session.