By Heather Lewis,
Seneca Valley Athletics & Activities Director

WINTER SPORTS FINAL RECAP

Girls Basketball

Fresh off their section title – the first in 48 years – the Raiders were the No. 3 seed in the WPIAL bracket and hosted a tough Mt. Lebanon squad in the first round of playoffs. It was apparent to all in the gym that the Raiders started off very cold from the field and found themselves down by 11 entering the fourth quarter. A valiant comeback in front of a raucous home crowd, SV tied the score and forced overtime. But the energy could not be sustained, and the Blue Devils found a way to go home with a 47 – 45 win, knocking SV out of the WPIAL tournament. One game does not define the season, and we congratulate this team on a great year. We thank seniors Gracie Cato, Lily Hudac, Legacy Joseph-Short and Lillian Sperry for their contributions over the years. They have raised the standard of this program.



Boys and Girls Swimming & Diving

The postseason has wrapped up for the boys and girls swimming & diving teams and listed below are the medalist performances from both the WPIAL and PIAA championships. On the team side, the girls program finished in fifth place overall at the WPIAL championships and the boys came in 15th.

Medalists from WPIAL & PIAA Championships:

Girls team WPIAL & PIAA medalists

- WPIAL Diving, 1m – Ali Waters, 4th place
  - PIAA – Ali Waters, 4th place
- WPIAL 200 Medley Relay – Lena Rothrock, Katie Bookwalter, Elle Alexander, Audrey Wolf – 6th place
- WPIAL 200 Free Relay – Audrey Wolf, Lena Rothrock, Alissa Wilson, Sasha Myers – 6th place



- WPIAL 100 Breaststroke – Katie Bookwalter, 3rd place
- WPIAL 400 Free Relay – Ava Walker, Mya King, Katie Bookwalter, Sasha Myers – 8th place

Boys team WPIAL & PIAA medalists

- WPIAL 100 Backstroke – Triston Sasala, 8th place

Boys and Girls Wrestling

WPIAL and PIAA postseason competition proved quite challenging for our Raider wrestling programs. The boys program sent three qualifiers to WPIALs – Riley Smith (107 lbs.), Bryce Berekstazi (114 lbs.) and Zach Hill (139 lbs.) – and all faced tough brackets in their attempt to qualify for the PIAA West regional. Unfortunately, luck was not on their side and all three fell just short of PIAA qualification. Nonetheless, it was a great season and we look forward to 2025-26 when all three return to bolster the lineup.

On the girls' side, five athletes qualified from WPIALs to the PIAA West Regional and all advanced to the "blood round" – Everly Harrell (100 lbs.), Adele Shih-Calabro (106 lbs.), Maddee Fischer (130 lbs.), Kaeleigh Tuell (155 lbs.) and Hannah Hornick (170 lbs.). Unfortunately, the competition was tough, and we sent only Hannah Hornick to Hershey for the PIAA 3A championships. For Hannah, wrestling at the Hershey Park Giant Center was a great opportunity to gain championship-level competition. While the results may not have gone Hannah's way, the matches will serve as incentive for the 2025-26 season, and another shot on the big stage! We thank senior Maddee Fischer for her talents and leadership in our girls program – it has been a joy to watch Maddee compete. We also wish graduating senior Jillian Atwood all the best in her future endeavors. The program will return the remaining four qualifiers in addition to a number of letterwinners from this past season. The future continues to shine bright for this program!



SPRING SPORTS ARE UNDERWAY

The seasons keep coming and, already, spring sport teams are in action – some evening facing section competition in mid-March. Here is a quick look at the upcoming spring season.

Baseball

Head Coach Eric Semega, entering his 25th season, fields a roster of 18, including five seniors. What the team may lack in experience they certainly make up in their camaraderie on and off the field. Watching the Raiders play this season, one will find a fundamentally sound team out on the field and a disciplined team at the plate. The team opened regular season play on Monday, March 17 vs. Sto-Rox.



Softball

Head Coach Marlesse Hames returns for her fourth season and returns a squad fresh off a WPIAL championship in 2024. The team will be led by seniors Lauren Folino, Bella Gross, Lexie Hames, Izzy Schall and Addison Winkle – all with plenty of experience to position SV to compete for another WPIAL title. The team opened regular season play on Tuesday, March 18 vs. Armstrong.



Flag Football

Head Coach Chris Eden, in his second year, returns a roster of 49 players intent on capturing their first-ever championship title. The 2025 season will be the program's final under the Pittsburgh Steelers' guidance and support. In the spring of 2026, girls flag football will become an officially sanctioned PIAA sport. The team opened their season on Sunday, March 30 at North Allegheny.

Boys Lacrosse

Dave Hall returns as head coach for Raider boys lacrosse and the team is excited to build upon last year's playoff appearance. Their goals include advancing further through the WPIAL championship bracket and they will rely on seniors Grant Adams, Landon Davis, James Erfort, Colton Garner, Sean Manns, Tristan Moeslein and Kaden Tuell to provide steadying leadership and game-decisive play. The team opened their regular season schedule on Friday, March 14 and came away with a 17-9 win over visiting Canon-Mac.

Girls Lacrosse

Katie Smolter, in her 14th season as head coach, leads a core of returning players from last season's playoff team. Seniors Bronwyn Burns, Zoe Craft, Gia DiTullio, Rachel Humphreys, Megan Marley, Julia Roy and Jillian Wise will be instrumental in leading a roster that includes 18 freshmen. The season started off on Friday, March 14 at Knoch, and the Raiders came home victorious, 17-5, with seven different goal scorers!



Boys Tennis

Head Coach Eric Grove, in his 25th season, opened regular season competition on Wednesday, March 12 vs. Riverside and the Raiders were successful 5-0. This year's squad combines tremendous athleticism with experience in key positions. Seniors include Liam Carney, Eric Chen, Andrew James, Mason Klingensmith and Paul Weis.

Track and Field

Both the boys and girls track & field teams - under head coach Ray Peaco, in his 17th season – opened their season with a section meet against visiting Shaler. The Titans proved no match for either squad as the boys won 123-27 and the girls 126-23. Both teams are 1–0 to start. Senior Aubrey Erdos set the school record in the pole vault at 12' 0" and numerous athletes found their way into the program's top ten list.

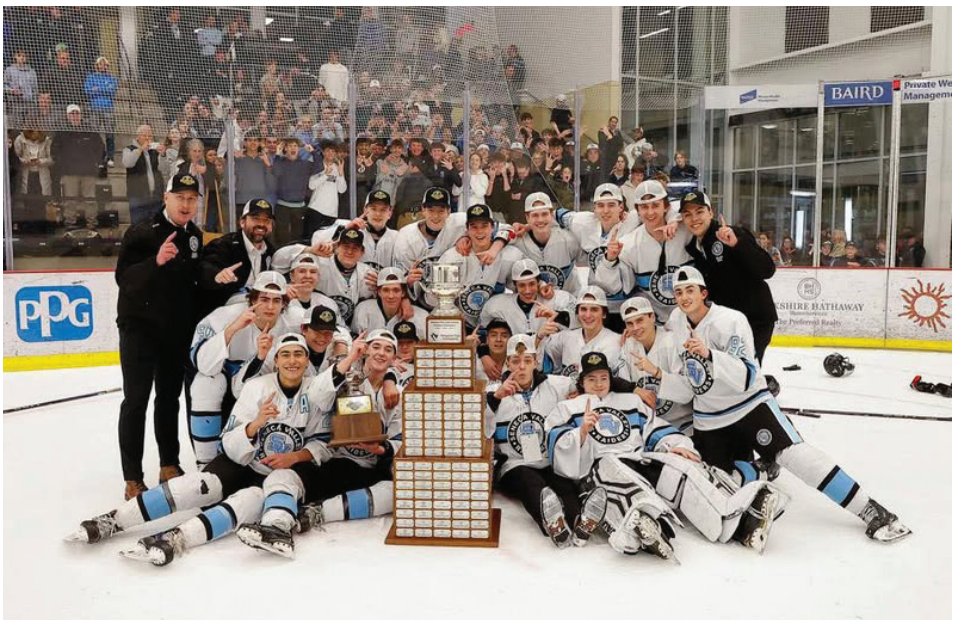
Boys Volleyball

Head Coach Brett Poirier, in his fifth season at the helm, has a team currently ranked No. 2 in the WPIAL preseason poll. Talk about a competitive section, the top four teams in the preseason rankings all come from the Raider's section; this will make great competition night in, night out. Seniors Mario Ardolino, Mason Chapman, Chase Crawford, Matt Dudash, Jordan Hoover, Jaxson Jeffers, Connor Matson, Abheek Nelikil and Brandon Suski provide the depth, talent and experience to position the Raiders for a chance at a WPIAL title. The team opened their season on Friday, March 14, with a 3-0 road win over Central Catholic.



HOW TWO GAMES TURNED INTO ONE TROPHY

I am not sure where you may have been on Monday, March 17, but if you were not at the UPMC Lemieux Sports Complex for the PIHL 3A Penguins Cup championship game between Seneca Valley and South Fayette – you missed out! So many words come to mind following this championship performance by Seneca Valley Raider Ice Hockey. The game broke the record for longest PIHL playoff contest – spanning three regulation periods and almost three, full overtime periods. In short, the Raiders played overtime that lasted almost an entire extra game. Marshall Hewitt's game-winning and trophy-clinching goal came at the 12:29 mark of the third overtime to clinch a 3-2 victory and bring the Penguins Cup Trophy home to SV – the first since 2018. Goaltender Chris Nichols recorded 48 saves on the night solidifying an outstanding defensive effort on display all evening. What all of us in the rink were fortunate to witness was an unbelievable display of guts, grit and pride. Not to mention, talented players and coaches worthy of calling themselves



CHAMPION! When adversity mounts, it is your teammate that will lift you up, inspire you to continue and be there to celebrate. Celebrations didn't stop there and on Saturday, March 22, the Raiders delivered again with a knockout 7-2 State Championship win over the Holy Ghost Prep Firebirds. On this night, there could not have been a more fitting display of teamwork than Raider Ice Hockey. Congratulations!

COLLEGE COMMITMENTS – CLASS OF 2025

Many Raider student-athletes made their college commitment official with the early signing period starting in mid-November. We congratulate these seniors in achieving their goals of continuing their athletic and academic careers at the next level. Each of you are tremendous representatives of Raider Athletics and we are proud of your efforts in the classroom, in competition, and in the community.

Name	Sport	College/University	Major
Lana Khilji	Golf	Allegheny College	Business