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High school sports

Seton's Royer, Ritter sweep all-city honors

Consistency results in third straight state title

BY CAREY HOFFMAN
Enquirer Contributor

Consistency. If there's a pivotal word for the top honors on this year's Enquirer all-city volleyball team, it's consistency.

For the Coach of the Year, Seton's Mary Jeff Ritter, that consistency manifests itself in three straight Ohio Class AAA championships. And for the Player of the Year, Seton middle hitter Julie Royer, her on-court performance makes her, according to Ritter, "the most consistent player I've ever coached."

Ritter is being honored for the fourth straight year as the Enquirer's Coach of the Year. Her team has been to the finals of the state tournament in each of those seasons.

This year's state championship team was a challenge to coach.

"They liked to come from behind a lot," Ritter said of her 30-0 team. "Last year's team usually went ahead and stayed ahead. This team had a lot of close games, and came from behind a lot more. It

Volleyball

made it interesting to coach.

"I had to do a lot more coaching this year than in the past," Ritter said. "It was exciting, though, and I enjoyed it. When we did win state, it was a real neat feeling again. This was something I knew that I had worked for, as well as the players had worked for."

Royer, a three-year starter, was a leader in this year's state championship push.

"It stems back to our seniors," said Ritter of the mental toughness that allowed Seton to win every close game this year. "Ann Fuburg (a first-team all-city pick) and Julie are not very verbal on the court. Their leadership comes from within. They led the team by what they showed out there."

A third Seton player, Janet Hansenberg, was named to the all-city volleyball team. First-team choices were Miki Harris of Roger Bacon, Holly O'Leary of Finneytown, and Keri Schrad of McAuliffe.

passing, her hitting, and her serving, they were always consistent. Coaching recognition was never a concern for Royer.

"I just tried to be consistent," she said. "It didn't matter if people noticed me, as long as I did my best, well, then I would know it."

Royer was a team player. From the start of the year, she felt a responsibility to lead the team, and help overcome the loss of graduated stars Barb Mann and Kelly Kerner.

"You could tell a lot of people thought we weren't going to be that good this year because we lost Barb and Kelly," said Royer. "I thought we would have a couple of losses, but I figured we would peak by tournament time, because that's how Mrs. Ritter plans it every year. Ann and I knew it would be our job to lead us to a good year, and we did."

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Mary Jeff Ritter, Seton Coach of the Year

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Football

NewCath loses, 21-20

BY KELLY VILLIERS
Enquirer Contributor

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Coach Bob Schneider said he didn't regret his decision to go for a two-point conversion in overtime — even after Newport Central Catholic's stunning 21-20 loss to Mayfield for the Kentucky Class AA title Friday afternoon at Cardinal Stadium.

In overtime, each team gets four downs to attempt to score from the opponent's 10-yard line.

Mayfield, which lost the coin toss, went first and scored a touchdown to take a 21-14 lead on a 1-yard touchdown run by Tony Brown. NewCath came back with a 5-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Gary Gabbard to tight end Frank Jacobs to make the score 21-20.

A pass on the two-point conversion attempt from Gabbard to Jacobs sailed high and tipped off Jacobs' hands out of the end zone, sending Mayfield into a wild celebration and sending many of the sobbing NewCath players onto the artificial turf.

"I'd go for two points a hundred times out of a hundred times in that situation," Schneider said, "because they're (Mayfield) so strong . . . and they've got an excellent kicking game. Everything was in our hands by going for it."

The pass play was designed to go to fullback Terry Sandfoss, but Sandfoss was covered and Gabbard went for Jacobs instead.

"That's a tough decision," said Jacobs. "I probably would've gone for two points. It's a gamble and it's a tough decision for anyone to make."

Gabbard, who would have been the pick for the potential tying point, sided with Schneider. "We were all beat up," said Gabbard, aware if his team could have survived much longer with the bigger Cardinals. "It was a good decision."

For one instant, Jacobs wasn't sure of where to go on the play. "I didn't know where to run. I guess I panicked. I was trying to get open," said Jacobs, a 6-foot-5 all-state senior who's sure to be on a few All-American lists. "I was trying to keep my feet in bounds, but I think I was out of bounds already."

Gabbard felt that if anyone could come down with the ball, Jacobs would be the one.

"Frank's done it all year," said Gabbard. "There's always hope when you throw it to him."

Needless to say, it wasn't the kind of play on which the all-state tight end wanted to close out his fine high-school career. Nonetheless, the 6-foot-5 senior had a big day, with five receptions for 60 yards and two touchdowns.

"I'd give anything to have that play back — anything," he said. NewCath, which finished 10-3, had won the state title in 1984 over Fort Knox, but Mayfield 12-1, took away the title from the Thorngreens with an 18-0 victory in 1985.

"We knew Newport was a good football team and we expected a real good game," said Mayfield coach Jack Morris, who let Mayfield to close championships in 1977 and 1978. "But I don't know if I can stand another one like that."

Through the first quarter, the Thorngreens appeared to be in control, building a 14-0 lead. NewCath scored its first touchdown with 9:02 left in the quarter, when Brian Haggis grabbed a fumble and ran it back 53 yards for a touchdown.

Shortly after that, NewCath's Tom Webster recovered a fumble at the Mayfield 13. The Bears were set back by some penalties, but Gabbard fired a 25-yard touchdown pass to Jacobs with 5:42 left in the first quarter for a 14-0 lead. The tide turned when Mayfield's Steve Carman intercepted Gabbard pass at the NewCath 49 with 9:37 left in the second quarter.

On the next play, quarterback Kent Mathis threw a 49-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Lee Johnson.

Mayfield then tied the game, 14-14, when Matty threw a 51-yard touchdown pass to Johnson with 2:48 left in the first half.

Neither team scored until overtime.

NewCath's final score: 21-20.

Mayfield's final score: 21-20.

Defense wins titles, awards

BY MARK MASSARO
Enquirer Contributor

Do it with defense. It was a motto that defined the success of the Ohio boys' Class AAA championship and helped Indian Hill achieve AAA runner-up honors.

Therefore, it is fitting that defense is the common denominator among the Enquirer's Coach of the Year, John Basalyga of Turpin, and Co-Players of the Year, Indian Hill's Ian Meyer and Turpin fullback Brad Campbell.

Campbell, who's been a four-year starter, was the motor in their teams' back wall defenses. Neither club allowed more than two goals in a match. Both teams posted a 0.6 goals-against-average this year.

"It's great. I never thought I'd get Player of the Year," said Campbell, "but it adds to a great season."

"I've worked a long time for it," Meyer said of his share of the award. "It's nice to get the recognition, but it wasn't a one-man show. I can't say enough about our defensive line . . . (Dan) Cox, (Mike) Eaton and (John) Robertson."

During Campbell's tenure, Turpin posted a 60-12-2 record and 11 shutouts. To Campbell's credit, the shutouts came despite the Spartans' use of a new goalie this season. Also, the team's goals-against-average dropped from 1.9 to 0.6, and goals scored were cut in half (15-7) in the past four seasons.

From day one, he was his sweeper," Basalyga said of Campbell. "I knew going into games that teams wouldn't score a lot of goals against us. He was that settling factor back there."

Shutouts were also frequent at Indian Hill. Meyer recorded 29 career shutouts, including 11 this season. In addition, the two-goal limit spurs the Braves' past two seasons.

"He's the best keeper I've ever seen in his five years of coaching," Indian Hill's Jim Vockler said of Meyer, who is a black belt in karate and a jazz musician. "He's dedicated to the position and demands respect back there."

"I felt confident that our defense, and him in particular, would keep us in the game," he added. Basalyga would like to see his award bestowed with the name of every player on his roster.

The kids did it. The kids won the state tournament and I was hanging on their shirt tails," said Basalyga, whose career record is 86-26-50. "These kids practiced alone in June, three workouts a week. I told them they would only play as well as they practiced in summer, and they came to me in July."

"Not to make it sound easy," he added, "but I hammered into their minds that they would have to play as a team."

Of the Spartans' 19 varsity players, 16 scored at least one goal during the season.

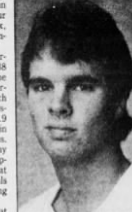
Nevertheless, defense is the name of the game at Turpin. Basalyga's system uses only two forwards and emphasizes defense with four midfielders and four fullbacks. Campbell and midfielder Bob Craner, another four-year man, were the defensive trigger.

"The game is won in the mid-field," explained Basalyga. "We

Boys soccer



Ian Meyer, Indian Hill Co-Player of the Year



Brad Campbell, Turpin Co-Player of the Year

only score one or two goals a game, but we hope to dominate the middle of the field and not let you get off a shot."

Basalyga takes his coaching seriously. He is a rare breed among his modern-day peers considering he is a head coach in three sports.

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Ian Meyer, Indian Hill
CO-PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Brad Campbell, Turpin

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Midfielders — Bob Craner (Turpin) and Matt Barnes (Wilmington).
Fullbacks — Brad Campbell (Turpin), Tony Youngblood (St. Xavier), Tony Watson (Forest Park) and Mike Wise (Oak Hills).

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Forwards — Mike Schaefer (Harrison), Greg Cox (Cincinnati), Alan Haggard (Green Hills), Rob Hart (Lakota), Alex Krutz (Wilmington), Alex Haggard (Finneytown), Greg Cox (St. Xavier), Alan Krutz (Wilmington).

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HONORABLE MENTION
Goalies — Dan Bennett (St. Xavier), Mattie Leonard (Oak Hills), Greg Murphy (Turpin), Rob Pearson (Finneytown).
Forwards — Mike Schaefer (Harrison), Greg Cox (Cincinnati), Alan Haggard (Green Hills), Rob Hart (Lakota), Alex Krutz (Wilmington), Alex Haggard (Finneytown), Greg Cox (St. Xavier), Alan Krutz (Wilmington).

Phalen, Lawson hit top

BY CAREY HOFFMAN
Enquirer Contributor

Leading a team to the top is the mark of a champion, and both the Enquirer's Player and Coach of the Year in girls soccer helped take their teams to new heights in 1986.

Dave Lawson of Turpin High School led his squad to the Ohio girls' soccer title, an effort which garnered him the title of Enquirer Coach of the Year. Sweeper Helene Phalen kept a