October 1, 2018

Dear Superintendent Morse:

It is my pleasure to inform you that Mast Way Elementary School in Oyster River Coop School District has been recognized as an Exemplary High Performing Schools National Blue Ribbon School for 2018 by U. S. Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program award recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students either achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements in closing the achievement gap. Since 1982, the U. S. Department of Education has sought out and celebrated great American schools. The National Blue Ribbon School award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content.

Two representatives (school principal and teacher or staff member) from Mast Way Elementary School are invited to Washington, DC for the November 7 and 8 recognition ceremony where each school will be presented with a National Blue Ribbon School plaque and flag as symbols of its achievements. If there has been a change in school principals this school year, the principal at the time of nomination and application is also invited. School representatives are responsible for the costs of their travel, hotel lodging and related expenses.

As superintendent, you are invited to attend the recognition events to support your school. Ceremony registration can only be done through the principal so, if you plan to attend, please have Principal Vaich add you as one of the official school representatives. For planning purposes, you must be registered for the November 8th awards ceremony and luncheon by Friday, October 26th, 2018.

For additional information about the ceremony and celebrating schools, please refer to: https://nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov/current-ceremony/. School profiles of all 2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools can also be found at https://nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov/awardwinners.

Congratulations and thank you for your commitment to excellence in education for all children.

Respectfully Yours,

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Oyster River Middle School Recognizes International Day of Peace

To culminate a week’s work of peace-themed activities, Oyster River Middle School students created a peace sign on the school's field. (Courtesy Photo Oyster River)
DURHAM — Principal Jay Richard is pleased to announce that Oyster River Middle School students recognized International Day of Peace last month through a number of activities and lessons.

Observed on Sept. 21 every year, International Day of Peace provides a globally shared date for people to put differences aside and commit to a culture of peace. In 2013, the Secretary-General of the United Nations dedicated the day to peace education -- a key measure in preventing conflict and war.

Throughout the week, students engaged in several meaningful activities to further their understanding of the value of peace. Activities included:

- Learning a song of peace with accompanying sign language
- Creating origami peace cranes
- Making world maps using peas to fill in the continents
- Writing pledges of peace in class and on a large sign displayed in the cafeteria
- Sharing international food representing students' and staff's heritages

To culminate the week's work, students formed a large peace sign on the school field.

"Students, teachers and staff really enjoyed dedicating time in their day to reflect on what peace means to them and this nation," Principal Richard said. "We know that education is a powerful tool and together we will continue to work to build peace within our school community and beyond."

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**A message from the Oyster River Cooperative School District**

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Bobcats rally to tip feisty Coe-Brown

With a win Friday, OR can sew up No. 2 seed for Division II playoffs

By Mike Whaley
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NORTHWOOD – The Oyster River High School volleyball team may have momentarily lost the momentum, but the Bobcats were able to get it back when it counted.

After Coe-Brown came back to tie the Division II match at two a piece with a strong effort in the fourth set, OR regrouped and then proceeded to dominate the decisive fifth set to win a key match on the road.

The scores were 26-24, 20-25, 25-21, 16-25, 15-5.

The Bobcats (13-2), who have won seven straight, jumped out 3-0 on Kathryn Cohen's serve in the fifth set — and never let the Bears gain any traction.

After a sideout made it 3-1, Oyster River rattled off seven straight points, six on Jackie Carter's serve, to make it 10-1.

Coe-Brown (6-9), which had looked so poised in the fourth set, suddenly lost its composure. The Bears had eight errors in the set and were never able to mount any sort of attack.

See BOBCATS, B2
Carter served 25 for 26 for the Bobcats, who can sew up the No. 2 seed with a win Friday night at home against Hanover. She also had six aces and 28 digs.

"I was aiming for seams and making the players move," Carter said of her serve. "That was the big thing. (Cohen) was doing it as well."

Cohen added 24 assists, Quaglieri had 13 kills and Gibb chipped in with eight kills and 13 digs.

Jerome and Sylvester paced Coe-Brown's attack with 16 and 14 kills, respectively. Jerome also had 11 digs. Kaithlyn Miller totaled 37 assists and libero Drew Ceppetelli had 20 digs.

"It was the first set where we started to pay attention to the score instead of worrying about the one ball in front of us," said Coe-Brown coach Renee Zobel.

"Every other set we kept focused on the right thing, play that ball and then worry about the next one... They got on that little run and we started to play scared and play not to lose, instead of playing to put the pressure on. We had the pressure on them all night."

The Bears had their three-match winning streak snapped in falling to 6-9. They end the regular season Thursday at Plymouth. They will finish as one of the last two seeds in the tournament (ninth or 10th).

OR pulled out the first set after trailing 20-18. A 4-0 run gave it a 22-20 lead, but the Bears came back to tie it at 23-all on a Ceppetelli kill and an ace by Skylar Ward.

It was tied again at 24-24, but then the Bobcats for the final two points for the win on a Quaglieri kill and a C-B error.

Sylvester and Jerome combined for seven kills to spark Coe-Brown in the second set.

In the fourth set, the Bears jumped early to 10-3 and then 16-8. OR got as close as five points (21-16), but Coe-Brown got the final four points, three on Jerome's serve.

"Playing like we did against Milford Friday night, we came in here and made a lot of hitting errors," said OR coach Cassie Sweatt. "We free-balled a hundred thousand times and our serve-receive was just weak. We couldn't attack off the serve and that was our biggest issue tonight... It took them a long time to find that fight and that heart tonight. But they found it. It's about finding it a little earlier."
Cavicchi paces OR, which stays perfect in Division II at 4-0

By Mike Whaley
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DURHAM — The Oyster River High School volleyball team exhibited the patience good teams need to excel.

The Bobcats battled feisty Somersworth in Division II action on Monday, and when they found a chink in the Hilltoppers' serve receive, they made the visitors pay.

The result was a D-II sweep for unbeaten OR (4-0), which won by scores of 25-18, 25-14 and 25-11. Somersworth slipped to 1-2.

"Our strategy is always to target their weakest link," said OR senior setter Kathryn Cohen, who served for 10 straight points in the third set to help her team pull away.

The Bobcats found one stretch in each set where they capitalized on their ability to effectively attack a weak link in Somersworth’s serve receive.

Sophomore Ella Cavicchi located the weak spot in the first set. Her kill cut Somersworth’s lead to 18-6, and then she stepped to the service line and tacked off the final nine points of the set with four aces to put OR up 1-0.

Cavicchi also figured prominently in the Bobcats’ win in the second set. With the score tied at 8-8, she served for eight straight points with two aces to put her team up 16-8. Vanessa Varney had two kills to aid the surge.

Katherine Smith had three of her seven kills to help the Hilltoppers make a 5-2 run to cut the lead to 20-14, but OR’s Cassidy Gibb halted that with a kill and then she served for the last four points to make it 2-0.

“We had some young girls out on the court," said OR coach Cassandra Sweatt, who played without senior outside hitter Jackie Carter (college visit). "It took us a little bit of time to get going. Consistency is our goal and we're working towards that. In sets two and three we showed that we can be a little more consistent."

Despite those big service runs in each set, Sweatt noted that the Bobcats still had an uncharacteristic 10 service errors.

In the final set, Oyster River led 11-10 when Cohen’s turn in the service rotation came about. She made the Hilltoppers pay with 10 consecutive points, two on aces. Somersworth had seven errors.

VOLLEYBALL
Division II
Oyster River 3
Somersworth 0

See VOLLEYBALL, B2

Oyster River’s Vanessa Varney, back, hits the ball past the block of Somersworth’s Katherine Smith during Division II action Monday in Durham. [MIKE WHALEY/FOSTERS.COM]
Oyster River's Elia Cavicchi, back, goes up for a hit over Somersworth's Angelina Oroh during Division II action Monday in Durham. [MIKE WHALEY/FOSTERS.COM]
Clippers rally to break four-game scoring slump

By Dan Doyon
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DURHAM — Both the Portsmouth and Oyster River High School field hockey teams entered Tuesday’s matchup looking for an elusive win.

In Portsmouth’s case, the Clippers were still seeking their first goal after being outscored 14-0 through the opening four games of the season.

Portsmouth finally broke through in a big way in the second half with a five-goal flurry, closing out a 5-1 Division II victory. Senior Ellie Hunkins netted a pair of goals for Portsmouth (1-4), including the first goal of the season nearly two minutes into the second half.

“I had an open shot and I took advantage of it and we needed it to go in the goal to get everyone pumped up,” Hunkins said. “In the second half, we kept on pushing because we really wanted that win. We switched up our lineup so that we had more pushing up to help the forwards, and it worked.”

Ellie Hunkins, twin sister Clara Hunkins and Tory Liebel are tri-captains and the only seniors that returned from last year’s 8-7-1 team that lost in the Division II quarterfinals.

“It certainly feels good,” Portsmouth coach Sara Carpenter said. “We tried some new things with our lineup configuration in our last game against Sanborn (a 1-0 loss). We made steps in the right direction and it finally clicked today in the second half.”

Portsmouth controlled the first
half, but Oyster River goalie Gabbie Haug came up with seven of her 14 saves to keep the game scoreless.

Ellie Hunkens' goal to begin the second opened up a barrage of goals from freshman Olivia Hammer and Liebel to give Portsmouth a 3-0 cushion with 23 minutes left in regulation.

"We all came out with intensity and it showed. We kept the ball to our feet, and we really wanted the win today," Liebel said. "We didn't play that bad our first four games, we just couldn't get that first goal in."

Clara and Ellie Hunkens each added goals before Oyster River (5-4) got on the board with 13 seconds remaining, when Elizabeth Murch beat Portsmouth goalie Victoria Watson (nine saves).

The Bobcats have been outscored 16-3 on the season and are back action at home on Wednesday against Souhegan (3-3).

"They got those opportunities," Oyster River coach Anne Golding said of the Clippers, "and it was like a floodgate."

Carpenter had seen her young team compete in 1-0 losses to Souhegan and Sanborn. The Clippers were also outclassed in losses of 4-0 to Derryfield and 8-0 to Kennett. The hope now is that a taste of success can carry over through the rest of the schedule, which continues with a tough road game on Thursday at Plymouth (6-1).

"It's been a struggle for us offensively," Carpenter said. "We hadn't had a lot of opportunities to score in the first few games. It felt like a big weight being lifted off, but we can't get too excited. We have time to turn our record around. They work hard every single game. We're young and we're learning. I had heard a lot of positivity on the field and that's what we need."
Oyster River adjusts, then runs away from Coe-Brown for some Division II vengeance

By Mike Whaley
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DURHAM — Plan A didn’t seem to be working, so the Oyster River High School boys soccer team resorted to Plan B. Bingo.

With the Coe-Brown defensive effectively stuffing the Bobcats’ attack through the middle of the field, OR moved its area of operations to the outside. The result was three second-half goals, all set up by crosses from the right wing, as the Bobcats won 3-0.

Caden Leader scored the first two goals and Joe Morrell added the third as OR (10-2) avenged a season-opening loss to the Bears (6-3-1) in Division II action.

After a scoreless first half, Leader finally broke the deadlock with a nifty one-timer at 64:16 off a beautiful cross from Caleb Chinburg, who sent the ball from the right end line to the middle of the box. Leader finished it off for the 1-0 lead.

Leader added his second goal seven-plus minutes later at 71:41, heading in a well-directed run and cross from Raphael Ridelguez to make it 2-0.

Morrell added the third goal in the 78th minute, partially a result of Coe-Brown gambling and pushing up. Quinn Wilson sent it from the right wing to the middle and Morrell was there to direct it home.

Leader said working in crosses in practice paid off on both his goals.

“I zoned out and focused right on the ball and made perfect contact,” Leader said of the first goal. “That’s when I knew it was going in.”

The header for the second goal, Leader was able to place bottom left corner. “The goalie couldn’t get to it, which was good on my part and hard on his part,” he said of the play. “We...
were all pretty excited at the end. It was a great win for us."
OR controlled the second half, putting good pressure on the Bears who did all they could to keep the score at 3-0. Goalie Hogan Cain had six of his seven saves in the final 40 minutes, including two diving gems. One by Reed Leader, he just got his hands on and deflected it off the left post. The other was a free kick just outside the 18 by Tucker Henry that Cain managed to dive and swipe away to the right.
"We couldn't finish in the first half," said OR coach Akan Ekanem. "I tried to mix up the front to see if we could change things around. I finally settled on the Brothers Leader and in Leaders we trust. They finished it."
Ekanem said most of the OR offense has been generated from the middle this season, but it wasn't working on Wednesday, so they moved the ball outside to the wings.
"After the loss to Bow (4-3 on Sept. 27), this was the litmus test," Ekanem said. "It tested our mettle against a team that has shown us it can beat us. We were able to do it."
Nicolas Cornejo Mora stopped four shots for the Bobcats, all in the first half.
Coe-Brown played without standout forward Cayden Donoghue, who had to sit out a game after receiving a yellow card in the previous C-B game. He had a hand in both Coe-Brown goals in the 2-0 win over OR back in August.
Oyster River enjoyed a 6-2 advantage on corner kicks.
"Those were good plays on their part," said Coe-Brown coach Christian Gompert. "They got guys into the box, and if we don't pick those guys up, they put them away and there's nothing our keeper can do about it... They had us pinned in pretty good in the second half. We didn't generate much."
Both Leaders had one very good chance in the first half, while Henry's header early in the game inside the 18 just went over the crossbar.
Coe-Brown's best offense came from Elijah Hinrichsen, who was one step away twice from beating Mora to the ball inside the 18 on rushes.
The Bobcats host Kingswood Thursday. Coe-Brown is back in action Friday, welcoming Kearsarge.
OR makes statement

River's Cassidy Gibb, right, hits the ball past the block of STA's Mady Buchalski during Division II volleyball action Tuesday in Durham. [MIKE WHALEY/G. COM]

VOLLEYBALL

Division II
Oyster River 3
St. Thomas 0

School volleyball team delivered a statement that it is here and ready to challenge at the top of Division II.

The Bobcats issued their dictum against Seacoast rival St. Thomas Aquinas on Tuesday, sweeping the Saints to move to 10-2 in D-II with their fourth straight win. STA fell to 9-2 with its second loss in three matches.

The set scores were 25-22, 25-15, 25-21. For OR, the win avenged a four-set loss at St. Thomas last month.

"Tonight was all about executing a game plan," said OR coach Cassie Sweatt. "We watched the tape from the first game we played against them. We had a plan and we executed that plan.

See OR, B2
Tonight they played their smartest volleyball game."

OR proved its mettle throughout the match. It jumped out big in the first set, 18-7, and weathered a withering STA 14-4 spurt to lead 22-21 (paced by Mady Buchalski and Madi Freese) before finishing off the set behind two Corinne Quagliieri kills and an ace by Ella Cavicchi.

In the second set, the Bobcats fell behind early, 10-3, but then went on a blistering 22-3 surge to go up 2-0.

Kathryn Cohen was pivotal in the set. She served for 10 straight points with two aces, helping to transform a 14-12 STA lead into a convincing 23-14 OR advantage.

Cohen unleashed a new serve she'd been working on. "At first when I was going on my run, I was just focusing on keeping it in," she said. "But toward the end, once I got more comfortable, I was just targeting seams."

Cohen served 21 for 22 for the match with five aces to go with her 18 assists.

"We just got really excited because we have all been working on our serves," Cohen said. "We weren't missing a lot. It was just something to get us amped up ... We just came in with a lot of grit."

The third set was close from the start.

OR was up by four twice (16-12, 17-13), but the Saints rallied to cut the lead to one at 17-16, 19-18 and then 21-20.

Cohen's kill made it 22-20, but STA closed again to one on a Bobcat error.

STA had an error if its own to fall behind 23-21. Quagliieri's ace made it 24-21 and another STA error ended the set and match.

"We've been talking about grit for two seasons in this gym," Sweatt said. "It's finally something they're understanding the concept of, not ever giving up and not expecting anyone to give you anything. You don't deserve anything. Go out and take it and earn it. It's taken a couple of years, but this group of girls is fighting for everything. They don't give up."

In addition to Cohen, Oyster River received strong play from Cassidy Gibb, who had eight kills and 12 assists. Quagliieri added 12 kills and 11 digs.

"We have a very even hitting attack," Quagliieri said. "Everyone in the front is considered a hitter, which not every team has. We are able to trust everyone in the front row. Everything kind of came together tonight."

Mady Buchalski led STA with 12 kills, while Madi Freese added seven. Emma Gould chipped in with 17 assists and 10 digs. Kateri True had 24 digs.

"We definitely got down on ourselves," Buchalski said. "We needed more energy; just a lot of unforced errors. They're a great team. They are always great competition. They just didn't make a lot of mistakes tonight and that's what got us."

STA plays at Hanover Thursday. OR is off until next Wednesday at Souhegan.

"They made fewer errors and were definitely hitting stronger than we were tonight," said STA coach Kristie Holtz. "We're excited. We hope to see them again."

That just might happen in the state tournament.