

## Nova headed to Final Four

By **TERRY TOOHEY**  
 Journal Register News Service

BOSTON — Scottie Reynolds was not about to have Villanova's season come to an end. Reynolds' driving layup with five-tenths of a second left on the clock gave Villanova its first berth in the Final Four since 1985 with an improbable 78-76 triumph over Big East rival Pittsburgh Saturday night in the East Regional Final at TD Banknorth Garden. Reynolds saved the day after the Wildcats (30-7) squandered

a 76-72 lead with 10.6 seconds to go in the game. Dwayne Anderson paced four Villanova players in double figures with 17 points. Reynolds had 15 points, Dante Cunningham 14 and Shane Clark 11 to send the Wildcats to the Final Four for the fourth time in school history. Sam Young paced Pittsburgh with 28 points. DeJuan Blair added 20 points and 10 re-



**PITTSBURGH GUARD** Brad Wanamaker (22) has a shot blocked by Villanova guard Corey Fisher (10) on Saturday night.

## Wright now a coaching legend

BOSTON — He hugged his wife, high-fived his kids, and then checked the scoreboard one last time just to make sure no one had recalculated the final totals. Then, Jay Wright went on a mission. "Where is he?" he said, racing in front of the press table, looking desperate for the first time all night, just seconds removed from Villanova's 78-76 victory over Pitt, winner of a spot in the Final Four, his still sweat-free head seemingly on a swivel. "Where is Coach?" Wright was searching for Rolie Massimino, and until that mo-



**JACK MCCAFFERY**

ment that was the proper designation around Villanova basketball. Massimino was "Coach", the man who designed the perfect plan to defeat Georgetown in 1985. He was one of Wright's earliest bosses, back

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# Shall We Dance?

North Penn track team must choose between prom and Continental meet

By **MARY JANE SOUDER**  
 For The Reporter

TOWAMENCIN — The baton handoff between North Penn's Lauren Bond and Lynn Beatty was a bit more clumsy than usual, but wearing a prom dress to run a relay can have that effect.

Bond and Beatty were part of a group of seniors who wore prom dresses to Friday afternoon's track practice, and no, these young ladies weren't trying to make some sort of fashion statement. Rather, they were simply trying to drive home a point — they do not want to choose between their Senior Prom and the SOL Continental Conference championship meet.

"We have to sacrifice one of the things," Bond said. "One is our Senior Prom, which is something I have been personally waiting for since I was a little girl, and to not go to leagues is letting down your team that we have been with for three years. None of us want to do that either."

North Penn's Senior Prom is scheduled for Friday, May 8, and so is the initial portion of the Continental Conference championship meet. Instead of a one-day event as the Maidens had been accustomed to as members of the National Conference, the Continental Conference holds its meet over two days.

"Our coach said if we don't go to the meet on the day of the prom, then we can't finish the season," said senior Melanie Ruff, a state qualifier in two individual events last season. "I'm banking on that for scholarship money, and if I don't finish my season, then I won't get that money."

In a compromise, the league has agreed to move up the start time of Friday's meet to 3 p.m., but even in a best case scenario, that will not allow the seniors to do all the things that are typically part of the prom experience.

"I had two older sisters, and I was always part of theirs — watching them get ready, watching them get their hair done, and getting pictures was always a big family event," Beatty said. "I won't have time to get my hair done, I won't really have time to get pictures taken at my house."

"We won't have time to enjoy riding in the limo with our friends."

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**LYNN BEATTY** (left) and Lauren Bond practice on Friday in their prom dresses at North Penn.

DONNA WEAVER/FOR THE REPORTER

## BOYS SWIMMING ATHLETE OF YEAR

# NP's Nees stood alone

By **KEV HUNTER**  
 Staff Writer

Zac Nees has come a long way since he was a wiry kid competing at North Penn for the first time.

"When I came in as a freshman, I was a nobody because I hadn't been diving for that long," he recalled.

Just about everybody knew who Nees was at the state championships earlier this month. Over his four-year career for the Knights, he had built a reputation as one of the best divers in the state, and he capped that career in fitting fashion.

Chosen as *The Reporter's* Athlete of the Year for boys swimming and diving, Nees finished off his diving days at North Penn by winning a silver medal at the PIAA State Championships at Bucknell University.

Nees racked up a score of 533.05, one of the best in the history of the event.

"I'm happy with my score," the senior said afterwards. "I would have liked to come out with a gold my senior year, but who doesn't want that?"

In a funny moment as the medals were being awarded, Nees was having his silver draped around his neck, and the medal slipped off the clip and fell into the pool.

One of the swimmers would dive in and retrieve it. He smiled as he finally got his reward, a symbolic sign of how his patience paid off. And his dedication was huge too.

Along with working with NP diving coach Sue McDonald, Nees was up on the board even more this season. "I've been practicing a lot more than in past years," he said. "I have a second diving coach now, and I have almost two practices every day."

Nees wants to dive in college but is undecided where he will attend. The senior was key in helping the Knights win the Suburban One League Continental Conference this year, and he also went on to win the SOL Conti-



**ZAC NEES**

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## Richards sparks Flyers' rally past Islanders

Captain sparks third-period comeback

By **ANTHONY J. SANFILIPPO**  
 Journal Register News Service

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — Someone needed to tell the Flyers: You're not good enough to take a night off against an inferior opponent and still win.

Good thing Mike Richards sent that message between the second and third period.

With his team down two goals, Richards led his teammates know how poor they were playing, how unacceptable it was, and how crucial it was to do something about it in the final period.

Three goals in less than four minutes ensued, and ultimately Richards picked up the game-winner in the shootout as the Flyers survived a too close for comfort game against the New York Islanders 4-3 Saturday.

Joffrey Lupul scored twice, including his 100th career goal, and Scott Hartnell banged home the rebound of a Jeff Carter shot, highlighting the Flyers comeback.

The trio was put back together in the second period after four

games on separate lines, and they responded with the three goals.

Meanwhile, Marty Biron made 30 saves and two more in the shootout to defeat the Isles for the 11th consecutive time, the longest streak by any goalie ever against New York.

Biron kept the Flyers in the game while his teammates were jollygagging through the first couple periods.

For two periods it looked like the Flyers thought they could breeze onto Long Island, sleepwalk past the team with the worst record in hockey, climb two points closer to the playoffs



**PHILADELPHIA FLYERS** goaltender Martin Biron, left, blocks a shot attempt by New York Islanders' Josh Bailey on Saturday.

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