

SPORTS & OUTDOORS

Orioles are island Little League champs



MICHAEL GALVIN/The Independent

Pirate Jack Decker puts out Oriole John Balling at first, right. Oriole pitcher Sean Davis slides in safely at third base just under the tag of Pirate third baseman Mike Geddes, above. Davis pitched a complete game and struck out 10 batters in Saturday's win.

Despite being the victim of 15 overall strikeouts tossed by Pirates hurlers, the Orioles prevailed in Saturday's major league final, 5-2.

The Orioles scored one run in the first inning, but it was a three-run outburst in the third inning, keyed by Toby Earle's 2 runs batted in, that sealed the game. Buoyed by the 10-strikeout, complete game performance of Sean Davis, who also scored two runs, the Orioles limited the Pirates to two runs in the third inning.

Both teams settled down after that, as neither allowed a run over the third and fourth innings, with

Davis pitching well for the Orioles and Andrew Benson, who knocked in both Pirate runs, doing the same for the Pirates in relief of starting pitcher Will Ferreira.

Both coaches congratulated their teams afterwards. "I can't tell you how proud I am of you as a team," Orioles coach Chuck Davis said, before handing out game balls to Zach Moran and Earle.

For some, it's on to district games that begin this afternoon at 5 p.m. at the Delta Fields when the



Nantucket All-Star team faces off against its Sandwich counterparts. ■

— Steve Sheppard

U12 girls take soccer championship

BY LINDA WILLIAMS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Long after the echoes of "wolfy, wolfy, whahooooo" had finished resonating across the pitch, Nantucket Student Soccer Association's U12 girls coaches Shelly Brannigan and Lousia Crosby sat contentedly on the team bench talking quietly about their team's outstanding season that culminated in last Saturday's triumph over Dighton-Rehoboth for the championship.

Crosby and Brannigan agreed that even without the postseason play "it had been a real dream season" and "the girls had continued on the roll they had gotten on at the end of the last season to end this year with a perfect record." They seemed dazed by the win but felt that the girls deserved it. "They came out firing and passing unbelievably and executed all the stuff we had been working on all week," according to Brannigan. The girls picked up the rally wolf cry from Brannigan, who uses the hand sign for wolf to indicate "ears up and listening, mouths closed" in order to minimize the chit chat at practices. Both coaches felt that it worked and it showed.

It has been a Cinderella season for the 17-player squad. After failing to reach the playoffs last year due to a questionable league decision that left



Nantucket's undefeated soccer team takes time for a team photo.

Nantucket the team out in the cold after having tied for fourth place with two other teams, Nantucket blazed to glory this year with a perfect regular season record of 8-0-0, and leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that they deserved to be in the playoffs.

Having earned home field advantage throughout the playoffs, Nantucket proceeded to trounce Taunton in the first game and then fought through 60 minutes of regulation and two ten-minute overtime

periods to squeak by Westport, 3-2, to get to the championship round, the first ever played on Nantucket by an NSSA team in the almost 20 years the league has been in existence. Their opponent, Dighton-Rehoboth, had finished right behind Nantucket in the standings with their only blemish being a tie with Westport. Nantucket's girls were heard saying before the match that they were not as nervous as they "had played their championship game last weekend against Westport."

There were no nerves to be seen on the field this day.

The teams met in front of over 100 fans at 11 a.m. on Saturday with the outcome seemingly in doubt, given the parity between the two teams. Sixty minutes later, when the final whistle blew, Nantucket came out with the 3-1 victory and a record of 11-0-0. "It was a real team effort," Crosby said. "The girls started with their usual pre-game mantra of, 'Put the bread in the oven,' and finished with the bread having risen to perfection."

The girls came out firing, taking the action into the D-R end for all but a few minutes of the first half, with keeper Kate Freed relatively unchallenged but there when the team needed her to be. Alexa Crosby charged down from midfield to score for Nantucket at the seven minute mark off a nice feed from Taylor Kopp. D-R did not make it into Nantucket's end of the field until ten minutes into the first half. D-R had no answer for Sabrina Dawson as she sent shot after shot into the goal area and it was just a matter of time until she found the back of the net and put Nantucket up comfortably with a 2-0 lead at the half on a cross from near to far post that just caught the net area to bounce in.

With two complete eight-player

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