

A SEASON OF DEDICATION FOR SHIMME

The varsity boys' soccer team won its third state title in the last seven years, defeating Lacey 3-1 in the NJSIAA North Jersey Group III championship game November 22 at Trenton State College.

The goals were scored by Tony Perfilio, his first of the season; Josh Winneker, on a penalty kick, and Zahid Quraishi on a 12-yard shot.

With the victory, the Raiders capped an emotional season, dedicated to teammate Shimme Wexler, who passed away on September 27 shortly before a game against Toms River North.

"It's our third state championship and I have to consider it the greatest tribute to what the kids have been through," said Coach Tom Breznitsky, who passed 250 victory total during the season. "It just shows how much they wanted it for Shimme and for themselves."

During the season, the SPFHS soccer field was re-named "Shimme Wexler Memorial Field." Written on the wall adjacent to the field is a brief message by the team which reads, "We love you, Shimme." Also, in Shimme's honor, the players wore black armbands with his name and number 17 on it.

The Raiders finished with a record of 18-3-1, including 12 shutouts, with junior Brackie Reyes in goal. The team allowed only 13 goals, an average of less than one per game while scoring 84 goals, an average of nearly four per game. Eric Ruano led the way with 19 goals, while Avi Horev scored 11, and Winneker 10.

The Raiders won their fifth consecutive Watchung championship. They attained their fourth North Jersey, Section 2, Group III title in seven years with a dramatic 1-0 victory over West Morris. Before they became state champs, the Raiders routed Hoboken 6-1 in the semifinals.

"Hopefully, Shimme can see what we did for him," tri-captain Jeff Rezza said.



Varsity Team: Top Row, L-R: Coach Tom Breznitsky, Shimme Wexler, Sean Hudson, Josh Winneker, Avi Horev, Amit Dogra, Erik Bowser, Eric Finley, Peter O'Connor, Michael Marcovecchio, Garr Stephenson, Michael Vitale, Eric Ruano, Asst. Coach Jeffrey Grysko. Bottom Row, L-R: Matthew Hogan, Donald Lewis, Keith Joy, Corey Brelinsky, Jeffrey Rezza, Brackie Reyes, Erik Klein, Zahid Quraishi, Gregory Kowalczyk, Michael Alchus, Jose Sanchez-Mariscal.

