

# Sports

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## Yonkers teams merge

### Local squad will play as Roosevelt Indians

By Leslie Beth Feffer  
Staff Writer

Lacrosse isn't exactly the most popular sport in Yonkers.

Although Roosevelt and Gorton each fielded teams last season, they merged with Saunders and Lincoln this year, and will play as the Roosevelt Indians.

"There weren't enough kids at either of the schools (Roosevelt and Gorton) to really be able to run an offense or defense," said Tom Henvey, athletic director of the Yonkers City

### Boys Lacrosse Preview

School District.

John Ventura, Roosevelt's athletic director, explained that Roosevelt and Gorton merged two years ago.

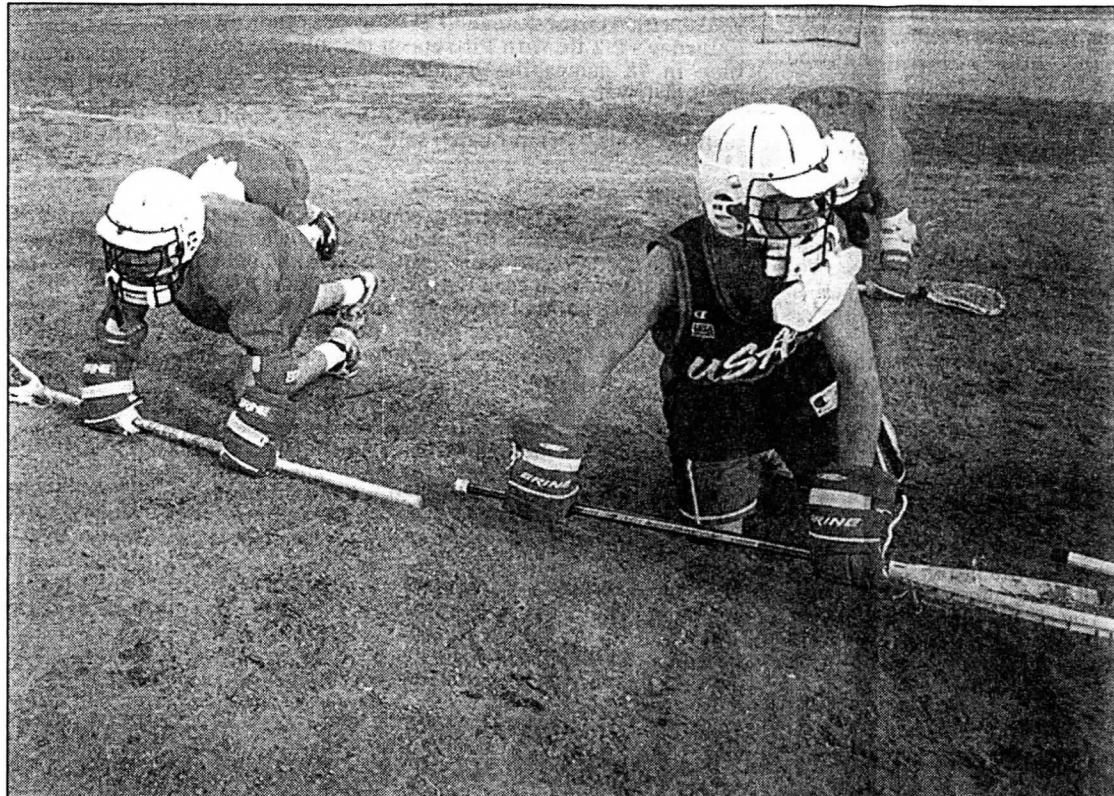
"Then, Gorton's numbers went up, so last year they had their own team and we had our own team."

It's not uncommon for neighboring schools to merge from time to time in any sport. Dobbs Ferry and Hastings have combined for football, wrestling and swimming. Schools must apply to renew mergers annually.

The team's coaches, Frank Nucaro and Peter Buongiorno, aren't exactly new to Roosevelt lacrosse — they coached there together in the 1980s. After the less than stellar records that Roosevelt (1-11) and Gorton (0-12) compiled last year, the coaches know they face an uphill battle.

"We set our goals pretty high," Nucaro said. "We're looking for some improvement and to be competitive, and we've been getting a lot of support from the schools."

The coaches are pleased that the players have quickly blended and that they have good attitudes and work ethics. Nucaro noted that his team still has to improve their fundamentals and



Staff photo/Jesse Mobley

Roosevelt boys lacrosse players engage in some pushups during a recent practice at Roosevelt.

experience.

**Rye's** veteran team has lofty expectations.

"We should be right up there with the best teams in the league," said first-year coach Michael Anfuso. "The program has been doing the same offense and defense for years, but now I'm going to put my own signature on it with some slight changes."

With 13 returning seniors, mostly attackmen and midfielders, Anfuso is optimistic about the season, but concerned about his defense and uncertain about who will be his starting goalie. Although he realizes that it takes time for the players to adjust to a new coach, he is pleased that the transition has been a smooth one.

**Mamaroneck's** new coach, Gary

Levitan, is enthusiastic about his team, which is comprised of mostly sophomores and freshmen. Although he has set a goal of reaching the .500 mark this season, he is patient.

"I'm trying to teach them a whole new offense and a whole new defense, so everything is new to them," said Levitan. "Our starting 10 are strong, but after that, we're going to have to hide some weaknesses."

Graduation last spring hit **New Rochelle** hard, taking away a key defenseman. This season, a top attackman has suffered a season-ending injury.

"Last year's team was very young," coach Patrick Swift said. "Hopefully, they've developed."

He notes that the team's work

ethic and desire to win is a major strength of theirs.

"They are focused, energetic and they work hard," Swift said. "My kids have a lot of heart."

"We're inexperienced and we don't have a home field this year," said **Pelham** coach Dan Callahan of the uphill battle that his team faces this season.

Although the Pelicans will field a team of only 14 players — including seven who never picked up a stick before this year — he praises their work ethic. Callahan also has two or three players whom he believes will make an impact this season, including Stefano Casandra, who the coach thinks may be one of the best in the county.

"But we need more than that," Callahan said.