

---Courier News --- 9/5/18

Student's film on Polish WWII teen hero earns praise, accolades

By Rafael Guerrero

Danuta "Inka" Siedzikowna's story of perseverance, resistance and survival appealed to Zuzanna Lapa almost immediately. Inka was an orphaned 15-year-old who joined her native Poland's Home Army to resist German occupation during World War II and later the Soviet occupation postwar. The teen soldier was captured and executed by the Soviets a week before her 18th birthday. "I found this girl, curly hair, she sort of looked like me," Lapa said. "When I looked at her story, it was phenomenal." Lapa, 15, made a short film on Inka and her incarceration. The three-minute film not only indulged the South Elgin High School student's love for filmmaking, history and her Polish heritage, it earned her unexpected recognition. Lapa took first place in the film category of the Remembrance Committee of Capt. Witold Pilecki's annual recognition of Poland's "cursed soldiers" of World War II. The competition is named after Pilecki, a World War II Polish army captain who helped infiltrate the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1940. Lapa's film, titled "Inka," centers on the girl's incarceration leading up to her execution. The Polish-language film is available to view on YouTube. Lapa flew to Warsaw this spring for the awards ceremony, Student's film on Polish WWII teen hero earns praise, accolades By Rafael Guerrero Courier-News Zuzanna Lapa, left, has received recognition for her film on Danuta "Inka" Siedzikowna, an orphaned Polish girl who became part of the Polish Home Army resistance movement during World War II. LAPA FAMILY Turn to Film.

she said. The recognition didn't stop there — School District U46 gave Lapa an "Accent on Achievement" certificate at its Aug. 20 school board meeting. When U46 announced Lapa's recognition via a news release, South Elgin English teacher Jane Besch described the student as a "model for the student every teacher wants in class. She works diligently to understand the principles in the work assigned and when she needs further directions, she asks questions to further her understanding." Lapa describes herself as a "history geek." Working on media projects is another one of her passions. Lapa is a sophomore at South Elgin's Beacon Academy of Media and Digital Arts. These types of projects are one way of combining her interests, she said. It also presented an opportunity to show off a moment in Polish history, a culture with which she is familiar. Her parents are Polish immigrants, and she speaks fluent Polish and attends Polish school on Saturdays. The short film did require significant research and work to make it a reality, Lapa said. She shot the project in her aunt's basement. The project took a couple of months to shoot, write and edit earlier this year, she said. "I'm used to being someone behind the camera, not in front of it," Lapa said about her on-camera appearance as Inka. Inka's story resonates today and was worth sharing, Lapa said. It's the story of a girl her age doing dangerous things that few 15-year-olds today would do simply because it was what she believed in. "She didn't back down for her country, she fought for it," Lapa said. "People want to fight for what they believe in. There's people who fight for women's rights. There's people who fight for immigration rights. All of them

put their all into it if they really want that change, like Inka did." raguerrero@tribpub.com
Twitter @rafaguerrero14

---Daily Herald--- 9/5/18

Girls volleyball: Fisher, South Elgin slug past West Aurora

John Lemon

Hayley Fisher fittingly put the finishing touches on South Elgin's victory over West Aurora Tuesday night in a battle of two teams expected to compete for the Upstate Eight Conference championship.

Fisher started the match slamming a bad Blackhawks pass down for a kill, and she ended the night pounding a ball off the West Aurora block and down to cap a 25-16, 25-23 victory.

Her 12 kills topped both teams and were more than half of the Storm's 21 total.

"It's always fun to get the last point," Fisher said. "It's always fun to end with a good hit. I was excited about that.

"We all have individual goals and our big team goal is to win the conference."

The Storm (6-3, 2-0) are just getting started on that goal now that the UEC is no longer split into two divisions.

"This is definitely a big win for us," South Elgin coach Joni Plach said. "I'm really excited for one conference and one conference champion."

South Elgin actually played in West Aurora's tournament on Saturday and went just 2-3 while the Blackhawks (9-4, 1-1) went 5-0 to win the tournament.

It was a different story Tuesday from the get-go. After Fisher's kill, West Aurora made the first of its 14 attack errors.

Kendall Richardson followed with a kill and McKayla Geraghty served an ace for a 4-0 South Elgin lead.

West Aurora didn't get closer the rest of the set which Sierra Lewand closed with a kill.

"We had a lot of energy," Plach said. "They were ready to play on their home court. They all did their job tonight. Certain players have certain roles and they all did their role. Defense was amazing, blocking was amazing. This is the best blocking I've seen from us this year."

That blocking really picked up down the stretch of the second set to help the Storm rally from a 18-14 deficit.

South Elgin closed the match on an 11-4 surge, starting when the Blackhawks hit long two straight points, mishandled a pass, then hit into the net for 4 straight errors and an 18-18 game.

A block by Richardson put the Storm up 19-18, and they took the lead for good at 22-21 on Rylee Pompa's tip. Pompa followed with another block, and Fisher ended the Storm's last 2 points with kills.

In addition to her 12 kills, Fisher led the Storm with 13 digs and served 2 aces. Pompa (5 kills, 3 blocks), Richardson (2 blocks, 11 assist, 2 aces), Anna Skrzpach (9 assists, 11 digs), McKayla Geraghty (9 digs) and Emily Wellman (11 assists) all contributed.

"They are a very mature team. They have played a lot of club ball, they have played a lot of high school volleyball," Plach said. "We have a lot of girls that have played a lot of varsity volleyball. This is the year it should come together, all the hard work."

West Aurora will try to bounce back Wednesday against Neuqua Valley. The Blackhawks, playing without outside Chloey Myers (ankle injury), were led by Kendra Battle's 6 kills, 3 blocks and 6 digs, and Lauren Greenwood's 10 digs.

"We were a little bit off tonight," West Aurora coach Kevin Mortlock said. "Can't point to one single thing. Just made too many unforced errors to come back from."

---Daily Herald--- 9/5/18

Bartlett rallies from 2 down for 1st victory

By Craig Brueske



Bartlett goalkeeper Jeremy Taylor and teammates Matthew Tobin and Hernan Garcia tangle with South Elgin's Jack McCall and Victor M. Chagoya in a boys soccer game at Bartlett High School Tuesday. *John Starks | Staff Photographer*

Trailing South Elgin 2-0 early in the second half, Bartlett's soccer team needed some sort of spark. Senior forward Rudy Reyes turned out to be the right guy for the job. Reyes rocketed a 30-yard shot into the back of the net to get the Hawks (1-3-1, 1-1) on the board and a little more than 5 minutes later notched the equalizer off a corner kick from Amine Medmoun.

With 14:29 remaining, senior defender Matt Tobin's penalty kick gave the Hawks their first lead of the match as the home team escaped with a 3-2 victory over the Upstate Eight Conference rival Storm (1-5-1, 0-3) Tuesday afternoon in Bartlett.

"As soon as Rudy put his laces on that ball, everyone looked around and knew that was in," said Hawks assistant coach Vince Revak. "You could tell on the field that the energy level increased exponentially at that point."

"I felt like it was a spark for the whole team to wake up and push forward," said Reyes, whose header a few moments later tied the game at 2-2 and continued the monumental momentum shift.

"Again, the shortest guy on the field with the beautiful far post header (off the corner kick)," said Revak. "He just wanted it."

After Hawks senior forward Omar Chavez got taken down in the box, Tobin's name was called upon to take the go-ahead penalty kick.

"Initially, I wasn't going to take the PK -- it was going to be Kevin Nava I think," said Tobin. "I've been playing at a defensive position for most of my high school career so I haven't had many opportunities to score.

"When my team called me to take the PK, it meant so much to me that my teammates had that much trust in me."

Tobin sent a low blast just to the right of Storm goalkeeper Christian Andrew (5 saves), whose partial deflection couldn't quite thwart the attempt.

"When I was up there, I was like, 'I've done this a million times in practice -- I just have to hit it and I'll be fine.' When I got up there, my legs were shaking but I couldn't let nerves take over."

Tobin's second career goal helped provide the Hawks with exactly what they needed most -- their first victory.

"It's huge," said Revak. "That first win can really prove to these kids that we are a better team than we've shown. I think this win will give us momentum going into the rest of our season."

Junior Lucas Reutimann and sophomore Victor Chagoya scored goals for South Elgin, which led 1-0 at halftime.

"It was a very poor second half," said Storm coach Simon Brinklow. "Up 2-0, you would expect us to seal up the win but we didn't manage the game very well in the second half.

"We've been conceding goals on corners all season long. If we keep conceding soft goals from corners, we're going to be in the same situation. I can't fault the effort but when you're winning 2-0, you need to manage the game properly and see it out."