

# The Dallas Post

## SportsWeek

### From the Pressbox

by Dave Konopki

## Injured athlete's greatest pain isn't physical

Charlie Jacoby never asked to be injured. He never longed for the pain. He never wanted the seven-inch scar that now runs along his forearm.

Jacoby just wanted to do what he loved best. Wrestle. Not for the fame, the glory or the fans. But for himself.

Now, at the tender age of 17, a time in life when your biggest concern should be getting a pimple on the night of your senior prom, Jacoby just wants to be understood.

It was nearly nine months ago that fate dealt Jacoby a dirty blow. He was at his home away from home. The wrestling mat. A place he had occupied since the second grade. He had just captured the championship in his age group when he agreed to participate in an exhibition match.

Then it happened.

"I felt like I bent the arm the wrong way," recalled Jacoby, a senior at Lake-Lehman High School. "I couldn't straighten out my arm. I was having pain but the adrenalin was flowing and I really didn't notice it. But after the match, there was lots of pain."

Jacoby had a reason for the pain. In medical terms, Jacoby had a comminuted fracture of the elbow. In layman's terms, one of the two bones in his left forearm was completely shattered.

Six hours after the match, at a time when he should have been preparing to face his next opponent, Jacoby was lying in an operating room, facing a surgeon's knife instead. Doctors carefully removed the pieces of what used to be the head of his radius.

Attempts at physical therapy over the ensuing months met with even greater pain. But the worst pain was yet to come.

Three months ago, Jacoby began an attempt at a comeback, competing in a tournament at Wilkes University. He had little trouble with the opposition, advancing to the finals with a pin in the semi-final.

It would be the last match he would ever wrestle.

With 90 wins, just 10 shy of the elite 100-win plateau, Jacoby decided the pain was just too much. There were more important things in life than wrestling. His well-being was one of them.

It was a tough, agonizing decision for a young man not even old enough to vote.

"I thought about it a lot," said Jacoby, who placed third in last year's state meet and was the pre-season favorite to capture a state title this season. "It was one of the toughest decisions I've ever had to make."

There is no greater time than this when a person needs support and understanding. For the most part, Jacoby got neither. Instead, he was on the receiving end of a hard, undeserved slap in the face.

The same people who had cheered their mat hero over the last three years were now turning their back on him. They questioned his pain. They questioned his dedication.

The comments came from people of all ages, young and old alike. And they came from people who have never experienced any more pain than a sore throat.

Shame on them.

"Everybody kept coming up to me and saying, 'You have to come back,'" said Jacoby. "They didn't understand what I was going through. They just wanted to see me accomplish something they thought was important. Nobody cared about my arm. Every day somebody was saying something to me. They still do."

There have been times when Jacoby has wanted to hit back. Maybe apply one of the more painful wrestling moves he has learned over the past 10 years.

How does that feel? In pain? Now you know how I feel.

But Jacoby has kept those thoughts to himself, showing more courage and strength than the insensitive, uneducated jerks who make the comments.

Charlie Jacoby and I have something in common. I've been down the road he now travels.

Nearly three years ago I was involved in an automobile accident, sustaining serious injuries.

The days, weeks and months that followed consisted of more pain than I thought was humanly possible. But there were those who questioned my pain.

People I thought were my friends, even complete strangers, challenged my injuries. They thought they knew it all. They knew nothing. It took four surgeries and losing nearly the entire use of my left arm before they understood the seriousness of the situation.

But they never understood the pain. They never will.

I've had the love of an understanding wife and a merciful God to help me over the past years. I've learned to deal with the remarks of others.

I'll soon be 30 years old. Charlie Jacoby is just 17.

Jacoby has become self-conscious of the scar on his left arm. He wears long clothing in an effort to hide it. But it's the callous attitude of the people he once considered friends that has left the deepest scar.

Jacoby no longer attends the wrestling matches at Lake-Lehman High School. It's too painful. But it's not watching the others wrestle that bothers Jacoby. It's the stares. The insinuating glances. The whispers.

While his days on the mat may have come to an end, Jacoby is hoping that his involvement in the sport of wrestling has not. He wants to share with others the vast knowledge he has accumulated during the past 10 years.

Someday, he wants to be a coach.

"I really want to coach," said Jacoby. "I don't care if it's an official coaching job or not. I've learned so many things since I've been wrestling. There are moves that I learned that I've never even tried. I just want to teach kids how to wrestle."

Before you criticize Jacoby's decision to end his wrestling career, stop and think for a moment. Remember, we're talking about the health of a young man who has his whole life ahead of him. He's just begun to experience life.

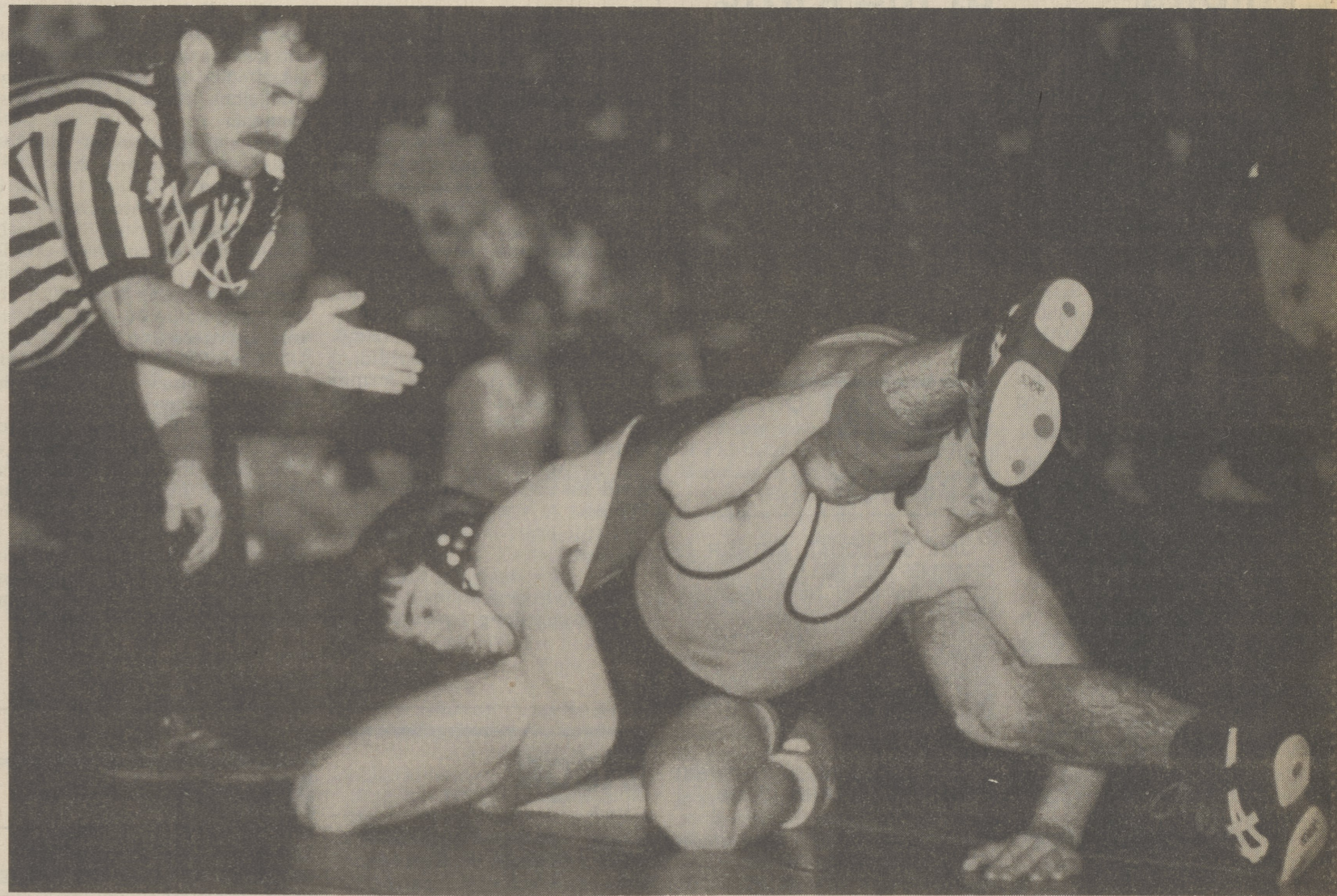
Then, get down on your knees and pray that something like this never happens to you, or one of your children.

Charlie Jacoby dedicated most of his youth to the sport of wrestling. He gave area wrestling fans, especially those at Lake-Lehman, someone to be proud of. But when he needed it most, he got little in return.

Jacoby has received support from his mother and a small circle of "true" friends.

"My mom has been there for me," said Jacoby. "She wants me to do what I think is best. I have two or three good friends who understand me. They understand me as Charlie the person, not Charlie the wrestler. I have a lot of acquaintances but only a couple of true friends."

He can count me as one of them.



ON THE WAY TO A PIN - Lehman's Tim Sayre worked on Harry Phillips during last week's wrestling match at Lake-Lehman. Sayre

eventually pinned his opponent. Lake-Lehman won the meet 48-14. (Post photo/Ron Bartizek)

## Lehman still king of local wrestling

### Knights dominate Dallas 48-14

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Sports Correspondent

While Americans watched the leadership of our country change hands in the nation's capital last week, wrestling fans in the Back Mountain saw the incumbent retain its stranglehold in high school wrestling.

Lake-Lehman retained their title as kings of the mat in the Back Mountain, defeating backyard rival Dallas, 48-14, last Saturday night before a large crowd at the Lehman gym.

The Mountaineers gave a Perot-like performance. Getting a few points here and there and turning some heads. But in the end, it was the Black Knights by a landslide.

"We're wrestling well right now," said Lehman co-coach Phil Lipski. "I thought we had two great meets on Saturday (the Black Knights defeated Catasauqua, 35-24, earlier in the day). I think that we're getting stronger with each meet."

The Black Knights got pins from Tim Sayre (119), Burt Morgan (135), Brian Gizenski (171), Ed Pitcavage (189) and Ben Sevnski (HWT) en route to the win. The Mountaineers received a fall from senior Glen Ellsworth (145) and a major decision from Mike Vavrek (140).

The win helped the Black

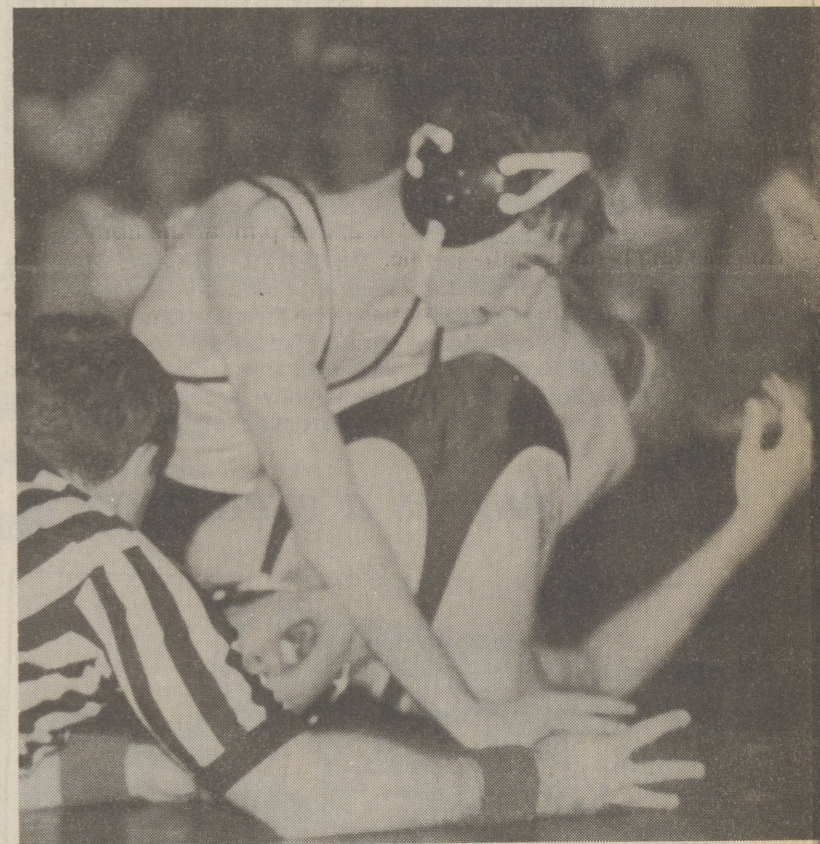
Knights keep pace with Wyoming Valley West in the West Division. Lehman and the Spartans both sit atop the standings with a perfect 4-0 record within the division.

It has been a tough year, of sorts, for the Black Knights, despite their success. The team has been hit by a rash of injuries and sickness. But the adversity has shown just how deep this Black Knight team has become.

"We've been a little banged up," said Lipski, in a bit of an understatement. "But we've been persevering. We haven't had too many wrestlers who haven't been affected by injuries or the flu."

"But we've gotten some outstanding performances by our backups," added Lipski. "We have a talented bunch of kids. When you have 18 to 20 kids you can put on the mat at any time, it makes it a little easier. And we have some very good wrestlers who haven't even wrestled varsity yet. I think the great job being done by the backups has been our biggest surprise."

The Mountaineers, who have seemingly have been getting better with each meet, have had their share of ups and downs this season. Lipski had some kind words for his Back Mountain counterparts.



MCDADE DECISIONS - Jason McDade scored a major decision over Chris Snyder at the Dallas-Lehman wrestling match last week. (Post photo/Ron Bartizek)

"Steve (Dallas coach Kashenbach) is doing a nice job," said Lipski. "It's tough to recover a program that has had problems. You have to start from the bottom

up and it takes a lot of time. We didn't take them lightly. We knew that we would have to wrestle very good to win. I thought all the kids did a real nice job."

## Sports roundup

### LADY KNIGHTS HOLD OFF MEYERS 54-48

Lake-Lehman connected on 23 of 41 free throws en route to a 54-48 win over Meyers in girl's basketball action on January 18. The Black Knights led 40-27 after three periods and then held off a furious rally by the Lady Mohawks. Cherub Honeywell led all scorers with 15 points while teammates Dyan Dymond and Deb Coslett added 12 and 10 points, respectively.

### SUDA'S 18 POINTS NOT ENOUGH FOR DALLAS

The Dallas girl's basketball team dropped a 54-42 decision to GAR on January 18. Robin Suda led the Lady Mounts with 18 points while Kelly Janosky tossed in 13. Dallas

outscored the Lady Grenadiers, 21-17, in the final period.

### KNIGHTS KNOCK OFF MEYERS AT HOME

The Lake-Lehman boy's basketball team knocked Meyers from the ranks of the regular season unbeaten, handing them a 55-42 loss before an overflow crowd at the Lehman gym on January 19. The Black Knights placed three players in double figures, led by Rich Davis' 18. Wil Woronko and Dave Clancy added 13 and 12 points, respectively.

### KNIGHTS LOSE TO HAZLETON ON MAT

The Lake-Lehman wrestling team lost their first conference match in three years as they

dropped a 32-19 decision to host Hazleton on January 20. Mike Stuart (135) had a major decision for the Black Knights.

### GAR GIRLS TOO MUCH FOR LAKE-LEHMAN

GAR jumped out to an early 16-8 lead en route to a 61-46 win over Lake-Lehman in girl's basketball action on January 21. Johanna Miller led the Black Knights with 13 points while Heather Gray added 12.

### MOUNTS COME BACK, TOP WYOMING AREA

The Dallas boy's rebounded from their two consecutive losses, pounding Wyoming Area, 69-51, on the loser's court. The Warriors led, 10-8, after one period but the Mounts used a 43-24 run to put the game out of reach. Dave Putz led the Mounts with 16 points while Charlie Siglin and Dave Fisher added 15 and 13 points, respectively.

## Back Mountain Baseball registration Saturday

Back Mountain Baseball will hold registration Saturday, Jan. 30, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Dallas Middle School. All ages can register, and players must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. First time players must bring a copy of a birth certificate. The following leagues will register:  
**Little League Baseball** - boys and girls, ages 6-12; T-ball; Minor League and Major League.  
**Girls' Softball** - Little League, ages 8-12; Senior League, ages 13-15; Big League - 16-18.  
**Boys' Senior League** - 13-year-old league; 13-15 year-old league. Boys eligible for Seniors are those whose 13th birthday is before 8/1/93 or whose 16th birthday is after 7/31/92. Both registrations are for Back Mountain Little League and Senior League only.  
Note: Residents of Lake Twp. should register with Harveys Lake Little League; Franklin Twp. and Kunkle with Bob Horlacher League; and Ross Twp. with Northwest Little League.

## Sports Calendar

### BOYS' BASKETBALL

Tuesday, Feb. 2, West Side Tech at Dallas, 8:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, Feb. 2, Lake-Lehman at Wyoming Seminary, 8:00 p.m.

### GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Monday, Feb. 1, Dallas at West Side Tech, 8:00 p.m.  
Monday, Feb. 1, Wyoming Seminary at Lake-Lehman, 7:45 p.m.

### WRESTLING

Wednesday, Jan. 27, Lake-Lehman at Meyers, 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, Jan. 27, Dallas at Bishop Hoban, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 30, Berwick at Lake-Lehman, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 30, West Side Tech at Dallas, 7:00 p.m.