

The Dallas Post SportsWeek

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From the pressbox

By Dave Konopki

Situation Wanted: Have arm, will travel

Mark Konopki is looking for a job. On the surface, it doesn't seem like too difficult a task. After all, his resume is replete with outstanding achievements in his field and everywhere he's performed his trade, he's had marked success.

But there is one minor problem. There aren't many job opportunities in Konopki's line of work and he certainly won't find help in the classified ads.

Konopki, you see, is a professional baseball player.

The 6-3, 180-pound right-hander has been out of work since early March when he received his outright release from the Boston Red Sox.

The former Dallas High School standout had some success during his two and one-half seasons with the Red Sox, posting an overall record of 15-8 with six saves and a more-than-respectable ERA of just over 3.00. Those stats include an all-star year in the New York-Penn League with the Elmira Pioneers in 1991.

The former collegiate All-American tied for the league lead with most wins by a right-hander, led the league in complete games and was in the league's top five in runs allowed, ERA, strikeouts and walks. He also posted an impressive 8-0 record during his three spring trainings with Boston.

The release by the Sox was a mutual parting of the ways between Konopki and the Red Sox organization. Konopki had been increasingly frustrated with his slow ascent through the Boston system despite his success but he fell from grace and drew the organization's ire when he left his team in Lynchburg, Va. in mid-August to attend to personal matters.

"I had to take care of some personal matters," said Konopki, who played on two division championship teams while with the Red Sox and helped Elmira clinch their first championship since Wade Boggs played there in the early 1970's. "I only had two starts left in the year. Maybe I shouldn't have left. I learned a great deal from that situation. I tried to explain my situation to the organization."

With his personal problems behind him, Konopki began serious workouts for the 1993 season, well aware that at age 24, this was a pivotal year in his baseball career. He spoke with Boston Minor League Director of Player Personnel Ed Kinney last November following the Red Sox organizational meeting. Nothing was said about being released. In fact, Konopki was protected by the Red Sox in last winter's minor league expansion draft.

The winter rolled by with no news. And in the world of minor league baseball, where players live on a year-to-year basis, no news is good news. In early March, Konopki received a certified letter from Boston. "My new contract," he thought.

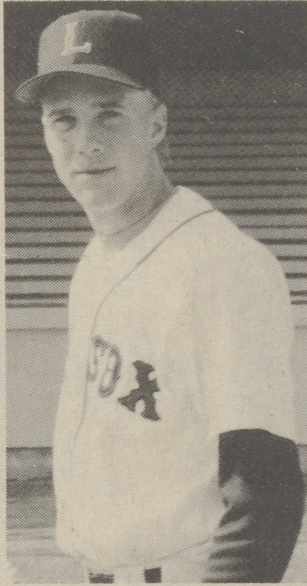
Then he opened the letter. "They told me they were giving me my release," recalled Konopki, who has compiled an incredible record of 82-24 since high school. "They said they knew it would come as a shock to me. I couldn't believe it. Why did they wait until March? If they told me in November, my agent (New York attorney and Dave Winfield agent Jeff Klein) could have contacted some other teams. Now, I'll have to wait until at least May."

Konopki was also a victim of the numbers game. When the Red Sox moved their spring training site from Winter Haven to Ft. Myers, they lost their Florida State League franchise, costing nearly 30 players their jobs.

The Trucksville resident had played under a Double-A contract last season and was hoping to play on at least that level this year. But now, he's willing to take his near 90-MPH fastball anywhere.

"I don't care who I play with or where I play," said the son of John and Patricia Konopki of Trucksville. "All I want is the chance to play again. I know I can play on at least the Double-A level. Once you get to Double-A, you never know. I just hope someone gives me the opportunity."

But for now, Konopki can do nothing more than sit and wait, hoping that baseball, which has given drug users, alcohol abusers and convicted felons five, six and seven chances, will give him a second chance.



Children's swim lessons at Misericordia

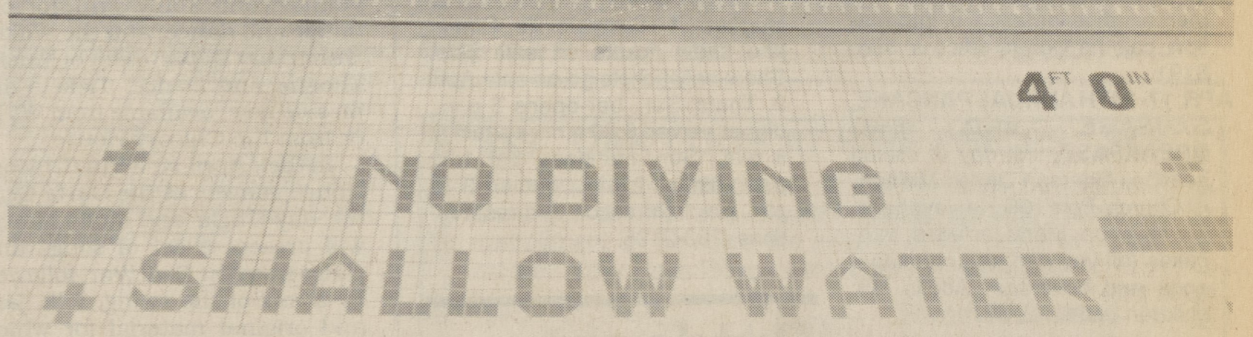
College Misericordia will offer a School Age Swim Program in the new Anderson Sports-Health Center natatorium beginning Monday, April 19.

Cost of the five-week program, which is open to boys and girls ages 5-13, is \$25. There will be seven sections offered, each divided to accommodate age and ability levels with instruction ranging from beginner to advanced swimmers.

Classes will be offered twice on Mondays and Thursdays and three times on Saturdays for five consecutive weeks. Monday classes are from 4-4:45 p.m. and 5-5:45 p.m. and run April 19 to May 17. Thursday classes are 4-4:45 p.m. and 5-5:45 p.m. and will be held April 22 to May 20.

Classes will be offered on Saturdays beginning April 24. They will be held from 9-9:45 a.m.; 10-10:45 a.m. and 11-11:45 a.m. until May 22.

Enrollment is limited for the program which will be held in the six-lane, 25-yard, NCAA regulation pool. For more information, contact the Continuing Education Office at College Misericordia at 675-3862 or 674-6289.



EVERYONE IN THE POOL - Shown in photo, 1st row, from left, Chuck Edkins, Misericordia athletic department; Lynn Vinca, lifeguard; Nancy Edkins, aquatics director; Kristine Desmet, lifeguard; and Heather Salt, lifeguard. 2nd row, David Ter Borg, lifeguard; Chris Keller, lifeguard; Beth Spencer, Misericordia athletic department; Karen Benny, lifeguard and Paul Brower, lifeguard.

Previews: Track, tennis and volleyball

By DAVE KONOPKI
Sports Correspondent

While they might not be as popular with the average sports fan as their spring counterparts like baseball, softball and soccer, try telling the members of the Dallas and Lake-Lehman volleyball, tennis and track teams that their sport is not important.

While the publicity may not be as widespread, the competition is just as fierce, the practices just as long and the dedication just as staunch.

Here, in alphabetical order of sport and school, is a closer look at each sport in their respective school and, when available, some coaches comments.

DALLAS TENNIS

Despite having his number one player from last year switch sports, head coach Tom Kilduff is optimistic about his 1993 team and expects an improvement from his team's .500 record last season.

"I'm hoping we'll improve on last year's record," said Kilduff, who enters his 15th season as tennis coach at Dallas. "I think we have an outside shot at making the playoffs. We're looking to finish the season with at least a 9-3 record and I think it might take an 11-1 mark to make the playoffs."

Kilduff, who also coaches the golf and girls' basketball teams at Dallas, lost returning number one player Matt Sleightholm to the track team this season but returns a handful of quality players, including senior Josiah Garland and junior Bill Richardson. Seniors Mike Handley and Steve Buckley, as well as junior Jed Aston, return from last year's squad.

The veteran coach is also counting on senior Gonzarlo ????, an exchange student from Ecuador and freshman Tim Reisch to contribute to the team.

DALLAS TRACK

After finishing a very successful indoor track season just a few weeks ago, Dallas head coach Bill Kvashay should feel very excited about his team's chances of repeating a Wyoming Valley Conference and District 2 Class AA champions.

The fourth-year coach is loaded with talented underclassmen, athletes he is hoping can make up

for the loss of 1992 district champion Brad Barket. Barket transferred to a private school in New Jersey.

But Kvashay returns a wealth of talent, including District 2 cross-country champion Matt Samuel, who will be competing in the individual and relay distance runs. Samuel will be attending the University of Pittsburgh this fall on a cross-country scholarship. He also returns senior Ryan Klem, who qualified for indoor states in the high jump.

Junior Richard Banks, who captured a third place in districts last year in the pole vault returns this season. Junior Charlie Siglin will handle his share of Dallas's field events, including the discus, shot put and the triple jump.

LAKE-LEHMAN TRACK

Veteran head coach Ed Narkiewicz, who enters his 24th season at the helm of the Lehman cindermen, has 20 athletes on his roster this season. Seniors Mike Burnaford (dashes/relays), Dave Clancy (high jump), and Larry Lucarino (shot put) return to the Black Knights this season after performing well during the 1992 season. Narkiewicz is hoping seniors Gary Cavill, Pat McManus and junior Burt Morgan, all standouts in other sports, can give him quality performances in the sprints, a concern for the Lehman coach. No other information was available.

DALLAS VOLLEYBALL

Although they have very little experience (no starters return from last year's team), don't expect the Mountaineers to be intimidated when they take the court this season.

Third-year coach Dave Jones is looking to build the Dallas program into one of the league's best, hoping to put his team alongside Tunkhannock, Lake-Lehman and the North Pocono. The Mounts helped the cause last season, posting a 10-2 league record, finishing second in the District 2 playoffs and advancing to the state playoffs.

"We know we're rebuilding but we hope for a good season," said Jones. "Our goal is still to win the league and make the playoffs. The hard part is getting the kids to believe in themselves, but we're not intimidated. We don't antici-

pate losing no matter who we play."

Jones is looking for strong performances from seniors Dave Holdredge (front line), Ron Moses (front line), Eric Spear (back line/setter), Tony Mussara (defense); juniors Shane Nothen (front line), Ryan Finn, Brian Burkhart, Steve Lieberman and Dan Moses.

"Lehman is definitely the team to beat," added the Dallas coach. "Rob Spencer is one of the premiere hitters in the league. We started the season with 35 kids and now we have in the mid-20's. We want to build a winning image right now. Dallas always has great baseball and track teams and they get great athletes. But we always get a lot of nice kids who can play."

LAKE-LEHMAN VOLLEYBALL

Perhaps we've saved the best for last. And we're not alone in our thinking. The Black Knights are currently ranked number six in the eastern half of Pennsylvania and 10th in the state overall.

Veteran head coach John Baranowski is blessed with a host of outstanding players, led by senior Rob Spencer (setter/outside hitter), who is considered one of the top players in the region.

"We have a lot of letter winners back," said the Lehman coach.

who enters his 17th season with the Black Knights. "These kids have a good deal of desire. We just try to do the best we can and hope everything works out. I'm pleased with our team's progress so far."

Joining Spencer are seniors Anthony Scavone (middle blocker), Chris Salka (middle blocker), Tim Norconk (outside hitter), and Brian Kelly (defense) who lettered as a sophomore but missed last season due to soccer commitments.

Also juniors Jarrod Baranowski (outside hitter), Mike Callahan (setter/defense), Dan Lukasavage (outside hitter) and Jason Sutliff (middle) return to the Knights. Sophomore Jeremy Fleegeer (defense) and freshman Jeremy Baranowski (setter/outside hitter) are expected to greatly contribute to the team.

The Black Knights won their own pre-season tournament, overcoming a 13-5 deficit to win 15-13 in the championship game. That, among other things, pleased Baranowski.

"This team has the ability to come back if we fall behind," said Baranowski. "They don't want to lose. We have a lot of kids who played other sports, especially soccer. I like kids who play other sports. I think it helps."

Soccer registration postponed

Due to scheduling conflicts, registration for Back Mountain Youth Soccer will not be held April 17. Watch for the posters and announcements in the papers for the date, time and location for fall '93 Intramural registration.



Back Mountain Wrestling

Recently the Back Mountain Wrestling Club took part in the Mid-Atlantic Wrestling Association district tournament, held at Dallas Area High School. The boys finishing first, second and third will advance to the regional tournament held in Shamokin.

Pictured from left, first row, Brad Thomas, 40 lb., bantam, 2nd place; Scott Arnold, 73 lb., bantam, 2nd place; Aaron Kubasic, 50 lb., midget, 1st place; Mike Stolarick, 40 lb., bantam, 4th place; Mark Shaw, 50 lb., midget, 3rd place; B.J. Lewis, 52 lb., bantam, 1st place; John Walters, 62 lb., midget, 3rd place. Second row, Lewis Spurlin, 58 lb., midget, 1st place; Dennis Brown, 70 lb., junior, 2nd place; Adam Gurnari, 58 lb., midget, 2nd place; Rich Harris, 74 lb., junior, 3rd place; Tim Shaw, 66 lb., midget, 1st place; Jonathan Bird, 62 lb., junior, 1st place. Third row, Zack Ragukas, 85 lb., midget, 3rd place; Geoffrey Rittenhouse, 74 lb., junior, 2nd place; Nick Raczkowski, 70 lb., intermediate, 1st place; David Spurlin, 82 lb., junior, 3rd place; Lloyd Droppers, 105 lb., junior, 2nd place; Stephen Arnold, 105 lb., midget, 1st place; Ben Brown, 78 lb., junior, 4th place; Brett Larson, 105 lb., junior, 1st place. Also placing but missing from picture are Andrew Shaw 44 lb., bantam, 1st place; Matt Davis, 56 lb., bantam, 4th place; Douglas Ellsworth, 65 lb., bantam, 4th place; Damian Temperine, 82 lb., junior, 4th place; Jeremy Naugle, 100 lb., intermediate, 4th place.

Strikers place at regionals

The following Noxen Strikers placed at Regionals in Shamokin. Bantam, 40 lbs, John Houssock, 1st place; Midget, 62 lbs., Todd Jones, 3rd place; Midget, Unlim., Mike Burnside, 4th place; Junior, 98 lbs., Lynn MacMillan, 2nd place.

The top three will compete at Bloomsburg University, April 17 and 18 in the Middle Atlantic Eastern National Championship.

Other wrestlers that placed in the competition who were former Noxen Strikers, were: Intermediate, Joe Hollowich, 3rd place; Intermediate, Percy MacMillan, 3rd place; Advanced, Mike Stuart, 1st place.

Pool will be closed April 17, May 1

The Anderson Sports-Health Center natatorium will be closed to the public on two dates during the next month due to a variety of special events.

The pool is closed Saturday, April 17 due to Dr. Carol Jobe's inauguration as President of College Misericordia.

The pool is also closed to the general public Saturday, May 1 due to the All College Activity Day celebrating the opening of the facility.

Normal community swimming hours are Saturday and Sundays from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

KT Raiders information meeting

The Kingston Township Raiders are sponsoring a "Meet the Coaches" night Friday, April 16 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Shavertown United Methodist Church. Coaches from all team levels will be available to answer questions and address concerns.

In addition, videotapes of actual games will be shown and equipment will be on display. Ted Jackson, head coach of the Dallas Mountaineers, will be on hand to help answer questions about safety and football rules.

Youngsters who want to play in the coming fall season may register at the meeting. Refreshments will be served.

Mahler sets swim marks

Nick Mahler recently distinguished himself in high school swimming both at Wyoming Seminary and in competition with his peers.

Nick, son of Atty. and Mrs. Paul Mahler, Dallas, a sophomore at Wyoming Seminary, recently took the gold medal in the 100-yard breast stroke in district competition. He is the school's first district champ in the school's 150-year history.

He qualified for state competition in the 200 yard individual medley, and is the first male student in Sem's history to qualify for



NICK MAHLER

two events. Mahler took 14th place in the state in the I.M. and 16th in the breaststroke, setting a new school record.