

## From the pressbox

By Dave Konopki

I guess I've always been a sucker for a good human interest story. Over the course of the last 10 years, I've written dozens of stories about athletes who have beaten the odds. Stories about athletes who have battled back from personal adversity. Stories about athletes who have come from dysfunctional families. Stories about athletes who have overcome struggles in the classroom in order to succeed on the athletic field.

But it's also important, and refreshing, to hear a story about an athlete who didn't have to overcome personal setbacks in order to grab the headlines. An athlete with a supporting family whose athletic and academic success is the heart and soul of the story.

This is one of those stories. This is the story of Kelly Cleary.

There was little doubt that Cleary would be an outstanding field hockey player. A pair of older sisters made sure of that. Kelly was just eight years old when she first held a field hockey stick in her hand. And it wasn't long before her sisters, Erin and Shannon, who were both outstanding field hockey players at Dallas High School, had their younger sister running windsprints in the backyard.

Twelve years later, Kelly Cleary is taking part in a little bit of history.

The 1992 graduate of Dallas High School is a sophomore member of the Wake Forest University field hockey team. The Demon Deacons are in their second year of play in the Atlantic Coast Conference and last year as a freshman, Cleary had the chance to play on the first Wake Forest field hockey team to play in the ACC.

How Cleary ended up at the Winston-Salem, NC school is nearly a story in itself. During her senior year at Dallas, Cleary was recruited by a number of Division I schools. Jennifer Averil, who was then the head coach at Bucknell, helped Cleary get accepted to Brown University. When Averil accepted the Wake Forest job a short time later, she found out that Cleary had applied to Wake Forest. Averil decided to take the prized pupil for herself.

"I knew I would get the chance to play in a great conference and take part in a little bit of history," said Cleary. "Wake Forest was a Division I school but in field hockey they played in the Deep South Conference and played a lot of Division III schools. Getting the chance to play in the ACC and against some of the best field hockey teams in the country played a big part in my decision."

Cleary grew up watching her two sisters play field hockey and immediately became interested. And, as in many athletic families, the bond between the sisters became even stronger.

"I think I've had a field hockey stick in my hand since I was eight," said Cleary, who has yet to declare a major but is leaning towards a degree in English. "My goal was always to be as good as my sisters. I looked up to them. We've always been very close." Erin is currently in Boston pursuing her Master's Degree from Boston College while Shannon lives in Japan, teaching English to students and businessmen.

As a freshman, Cleary was a regular starter for the Demon Deacons, who finished their first full year of Division I play with a 3-13-4 record. During the off-season, Averil went on a major recruiting binge in an effort to build for the future, offering 14 of her 22 allocated scholarships to incoming freshman. The move left some returning underclassmen without scholarships.

Cleary was one of the fortunate ones, and while her playing time has tapered off slightly since last year, the four-year former letter winner at Dallas has seen action in every game and has played a big part in the team's 8-5 record this season.

But to know Kelly Cleary the field hockey player is to know only half the person. She epitomizes the phrase "student-athlete".

Cleary graduated from Dallas with a grade-point average of 3.6 and scored an impressive 1220 on her SATs. At Wake Forest, a university with an outstanding academic reputation, Cleary has maintained a "B" average.

But for those of us who know the Cleary family, Kelly's success, as well as the success of her sisters, should come as no surprise. Jack and Marianne, have literally gone the extra mile to support their daughter.

The Cleary's, who also have two outstanding sons in Michael and Patrick, spend much of their free time on the road to see their daughter play collegiate field hockey. In fact, Marianne saw nearly half of her daughter's games last season.

The support hasn't gone unnoticed, or unappreciated. "It makes all the difference in the world," said Cleary of her parents encouragement. "They've always been very supportive. They never forced me to play. I always had the option of not playing if I didn't want to. It's a great feeling knowing that someone is always right there behind me."

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Speaking of success, the fall sports programs at Dallas and Lake-Lehman are at it again. For years, I've told anyone who would listen about the dominance of the Back Mountain schools during the fall athletic season. The Dallas football, soccer, cross-country and field hockey teams have each won conference and/or district titles in recent years while the Lehman field hockey, girl's volleyball and soccer teams have done the same.

Nothing has changed this year. As of last weekend, the two schools have combined for an impressive overall record of 97-39 in the 12 sports (two schools with six sports apiece).

Leading the way is Lake-Lehman golf team (11-3) which recently captured the Wyoming Valley Conference Division II title (see story this page). The Dallas football (6-1) and soccer (11-2) teams currently sit atop their respective standings while in field hockey, Lehman (11-1-1) and Dallas (10-3) are 1-2 in the conference. In cross-country, Dallas is 10-2 and has district title aspirations while the Lehman girl's volleyball team (9-3), under head coach Bob Rogers, is having another impressive campaign despite a young team.

Overall, the two schools have a legitimate chance to win league and/or district titles in at least five of the six fall sports.

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We've received some requests, over the past few weeks, to include results of junior high school sporting events in the Dallas Post. We'd love to, but in order to do so, we need your help. There are too many sporting events, 12 varsity high school teams in the Back Mountain and nearly that many on the junior high level, to adequately cover with a very limited staff.

That's where you come in. For more than a year, we've been encouraging you to send us your sports news (P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612). Some of you have been doing just that. Others have not. It's that simple. If we receive your result, it will be published.

Also, encourage the coach of your son or daughter's junior high team to call in the result of the sporting event. Any coach, assistant coach or interested person may call in their game result to 283-5532, Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or evenings from 8-10 p.m. Calls will also be taken on Sundays from 4-9 p.m.

Please remember: Be accurate, be fair, be honest and be brief.

## Lake-Lehman takes golf title

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Sports Writer

With his team in possession of a 2-3 record, Lake-Lehman head golf coach Mike Sharok knew they had to accomplish two things if they were to have a shot at the Wyoming Valley Conference Division II title.

First, they would have to win their remaining nine matches. Second, in doing so, they would have to defeat Bishop Hoban, a team they hadn't beaten in the team's 12-year history.

Mission accomplished.

Led by Nikki Sennett's 8-over-par 44, the Black Knights defeated Bishop Hoban, 196-201 last Friday, and capped an amazing

comeback with their first-ever WVC title. Lehman finished the regular season with a record of 11-3.

"The kids never doubted they could do it," said Sharok, who capped off a great weekend with a victory with his father in a Captain & Crew tournament last Sunday at Irem Temple with an impressive 14-under par. "When we were 2-3 we still thought we had the best team on paper. But I told the kids they would have to win the rest of their matches to have a chance. So, we decided to take them one match at a time."

Lehman captured the title with outstanding teamwork throughout the season and that was epitomized during the Knights' match

with Hoban. Dave Fosko, who had been the Knight leader for much of the season, finished with a 52 but Lehman received strong performances from his teammates.

"That's the way this team has been," explained Sharok. "When someone has a bad day, someone else is there to pick up the slack. All six of our golfers are capable of shooting well. This was nice for all of our players. They worked very hard at it."

Despite, his 52, Sharok had praise for his lone senior.

"Dave has been our leader all season long," said Sharok, of Fosko. "He was our captain. He really came to the front this season. He was the difference in our

season."

While the team will deservedly celebrate their title now, Sharok hopes he has taught them something they can carry on for the rest of their lives.

"We always teach our players to strive to get better," said Sharok. "We try to teach them things about golf that they can carry with them for the rest of their lives. If they go out there and do the things we've told them to do, they'll be fine."

Following the playoffs, Sennett, the District 2 champion who finished 15th in the state last year as a sophomore, will be taking part in this year's state championships on October 26 and 27 at the Elks Country Club near State College.

## With authority



Mindy Haberstich controlled the ball on the line during the Dallas field hockey team's match with Meyers last week. The Mounts won that game 2-0, then beat Wyoming Seminary Monday to stay in the race for the Class AA title.

POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOWE

## Mountaineers ranked 5th in PA

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Sports Writer

Dallas took another step toward a playoff berth last weekend while Lake-Lehman absorbed a severe blow to their hopes for post-season play.

The Mountaineers overcame a sluggish first quarter and more than 100 yards in penalties en route to a 21-3 win over a fiery, and punchy, Crestwood team in Mountaintop on Saturday afternoon. Meanwhile on Friday night, Lehman got off to what has become a trademark slow start in the first half and gave up a game-clinching score late as they fell to GAR 20-7.

The win raises Dallas's record to 6-1 overall and 4-0 in the Wyoming Valley Conference Division II. The Mounts, who have not surrendered a touchdown in 16 quarters, are ranked fifth among Class AA schools in the state according to the Harrisburg Patriot News Poll.

The loss drops Lehman to 3-4 overall and 2-2 in the WVC Division II. With their 3-4 mark, the Knights are tied with Meyers, Hanover and GAR for a third spot in the post-season. Dallas and Wyoming Area are a virtual lock for the first two Class AA spots.

Here is a brief recap of last weekend's games and this week's selections. The season prognostication record now stands at 10-4.

### Dallas 21 - Crestwood 3

It looked for a while as though neither of the teams wanted to score, but the Comets took advantage of a 15-yard Dallas penalty on their third possession to

take a 3-0 lead on Jamie Connell's 37-yard field goal.

Dallas got scores from three different players during the game. Junior Mike Viglone was on the receiving end of a 14-yard pass from senior Brian Brady. Junior Rich Butcofski turned in the game's most exciting play with a 52-yard scoring jaunt in the second quarter and senior Jarred Cooney caught a 19-yard pass from Brady for the final score.

Despite the win, Dallas head coach Ted Jackson wasn't overly impressed with his team's play.

"We were a little unorganized," said Jackson. "We had some wrong play selections. We really didn't have a good week of practice. You can't go out there on Saturday and turn it on if you're not prepared."

"Some of our kids have to learn how to handle winning," Jackson said of the ugly incidents which marred the second half. "But it crossed over the lines both ways. But our defense played well. Rich Butcofski had an outstanding game and so did (lineman) Ed Langdon. Mike Viglone also did an outstanding job for us on special teams."

### GAR 20 - Lehman 7

For the second consecutive week, and for the fifth time in their seven games, the Knights got off to a slow start. And like previous times, it cost them. GAR jumped out to a 14-0 lead before Lehman got on the board in the third quarter on a four-yard run by sophomore Mike Pitcavage.

"We're not playing real good defense right now," said Lehman

head coach Rich Gorgone. "We went into the game pretty banged up and we had some players go down against GAR. We need to make some changes on defense. We haven't done anything consistently."

"But, like in our other games, our kids didn't quit," added Gorgone. "We want to finish the football season off right. We still have a shot at the playoffs. But we have to play better defense. The opportunity is there, we just have to take advantage of it."

### Bishop Hoban a Dallas

Bishop Hoban's 42-28 win over Hanover Area last Saturday night was the best thing that has happened to that program in the last three years. It also may be the worst.

The win by Hoban got Dallas's attention and virtually assures there will be no letdown this week when the Mountaineers play their final regular-season home game against the 4-2 (1-2 conference mark) Argents.

Hoban does have an outstanding tailback in Nick Quaglia, who ran for more than 200 yards against Hanover and is among the top three most prolific runners in the conference. Fullback Mike Phillips has proven to be a more-than-adequate blocker for Quaglia this season.

**PREDICTION:** Let's see now. An outstanding tailback is coming to the Back Mountain with aspirations of igniting an upset of the Mountaineers. Trouble is, more times than not, he leaves the field with modest rushing yardage and, if he's lucky, all body

parts intact. Give Quaglia a score, give Dallas a win. **DALLAS 35 - BISHOP HOBAN 7**

### Meyers AT Lehman

(12:00 p.m. WYOU-TV 22)

Gorgone isn't looking for sympathy. But you have to feel for one of the area's coaching good-guys. The Black Knights haven't gotten a break since the Crestwood game. Injuries have plagued the Knights, forcing Gorgone and his staff to use more sophomores on his already underclassmen-laden team.

For a team that has had trouble stopping the run over the past three weeks, hosting Meyers cannot be something the Knights are looking forward to. The Mohawks have tremendous speed in their skill people led by tailback Marvin Wilson and receiver Quentin Harris. Quarterback Jeff Labatch is a capable three-year starter for the Mohawks.

**PREDICTION:** This is the biggest game of the year for the Black Knights. A loss would virtually eliminate them from post-season contention and could go a long way in a sub-.500 season.

I've stayed with the Knights with my predictions during much of the season, so maybe they'll take this pick as an incentive. Quarterback John Oliver and receiver Tim Waslick can keep any team in the game, but the Knights, who have surrendered more than 700 yards on the ground in their last three contests, are in for a long day if they don't stop the run. With the game off the turf, the Knights stand a chance. **MEYERS 23 - LEHMAN 14.**