

The Dallas Post

Sports Week

- School news
- Calendar
- Classified

Wrestling preview

It could be a good year on the mats for Dallas, Lake-Lehman

By DAVE KONOPKI
Sports Writer

There's a feeling of optimism cascading through the veins of high school wrestling fans in the Back Mountain.

And for good reason. At Lake-Lehman High School, a name which has become synonymous with wrestling success, they're poised for another run at the Wyoming Valley Conference championship. And at Dallas High School, a program which has ridden a roller-coaster of results in recent years, they may be putting their best wrestling team on the mat in the past five years.

Here's a closer look at both programs:

Black Knights field experienced team

The Knights saw their streak of three consecutive WVC titles end last season. Now they're looking to begin another one.

Co-coaches Tom Williams and

Phil Lipski have done an incredible job during their four seasons at Lehman, compiling an impressive 49-2-1 record during those years. In that span, the Black Knights have won three District 2 Class AA championships, three West Division titles and one regional title. Add to that one District 2 runner-up finish and two seasons where they finished as one of the top 10 Class AA teams in the state.

This season, 10 lettermen return from last year's squad, which finished with a 17-2 WVC record and a second-place finish in the Class AA district tournament.

"We have a very well-balanced team this year," said Williams. "We're a little more solid this year; we don't have as many weak spots as we did last year. I think that we're above-average at every weight class this season."

"Valley West won the (WVC) championship last year and until someone beats them, they're still the champs. But our kids have worked very hard so far this season. We've had a lot of good,

focused practices. We're cautiously optimistic."

Last season's district champions, senior Burt Morgan (140) and junior Tim Sayre (135), head the list of returning lettermen. Morgan finished third at regionals and earned a spot in the state tournament while Sayre garnered a fourth-place finish at regionals.

Senior Ed Pitcavage (189) finished third at districts while junior Mike Stuart (130) finished second. Seniors Brian Guzinski (171); John Morgan (119); juniors Mike Budzak (189-Hwt); Ryan Gold (145); John Wood (152) and sophomore Mike Pitcavage (145) are the other returning lettermen. Wood finished fourth at last year's districts.

Williams and Lipski are also looking for key contributions from Bill Brehm (103); Matt Rackowski (103); Joel Halowich (112); Allan Scott (125) and Vito Pilosi (Hwt). Senior Allen Raczkowski is expected to return this season following an injury.

Although wrestling is perceived by many to be an "individual"

sport, Williams knows the Black Knights success has been built with a team philosophy.

"From January to February we focus on the 'we' concept," said Williams, referring to the months where most of the team's dual meets take place. "We try to put the best kids on the mat in order to help our team win. When districts come, they can choose where (weight class) they want to wrestle. But the kids we've had have been great. When the team wins, we all win."

Dallas has core of solid matmen

After a couple of less-than-spectacular seasons, the Mountaineers appeared to be headed in the right direction last year, completing the 1992-93 wrestling season with a record of 10-9.

This year, they're hoping to carry it one step further.

The Mountaineers, under sixth-year head coach Steve Kashenbach, return eight lettermen from last year's squad, led by district champion Mike Vavrek. The 140-

pound senior won the 130 pound classification last year. Joining Vavrek are District 2 Class AA runners-up, senior Rick Hodle (103) and junior Aaron Gingo (152).

Also returning are senior lettermen Harry Phillips (119/125) and Chris Snyder (125); junior lettermen Mike Heffron (112/119) and Adam Hoover (160); and Cody Friedel (135), who lettered last year as a freshman.

In addition to the experience returning, Kashenbach will be counting on an outstanding group of sophomores. In fact, six of the 13 wrestlers in Dallas' current starting rotation are in 10th grade.

Joining Friedel are sophomores Dan Natitus (189); Chris Kuderka, Jim Ryan (171); Mike Metz (103) and Charlie Sabulski (Hwt). Metz captured first place in the Troy Tournament last week.

"The senior leadership of those four (Vavrek, Hodle, Phillips and Snyder) and a tough, experienced junior (Gingo), should provide us with our strong parts," said Kashenbach, who is assisted by Bill

Janosky. "We have some kids back but we're still a little inexperienced. Once the younger kids get some experience on the mat, we should be competitive."

The strength in this year's Dallas team lies in their lower and middle weights and nobody knows that better than Kashenbach.

"There's no question about it, our strength is in our lower weight classes," said Kashenbach, who has been a part of the Dallas wrestling program for 14 years. "Our pivot point is at 152 (weight class). We're going to have to jump out to a big lead and try to hold on."

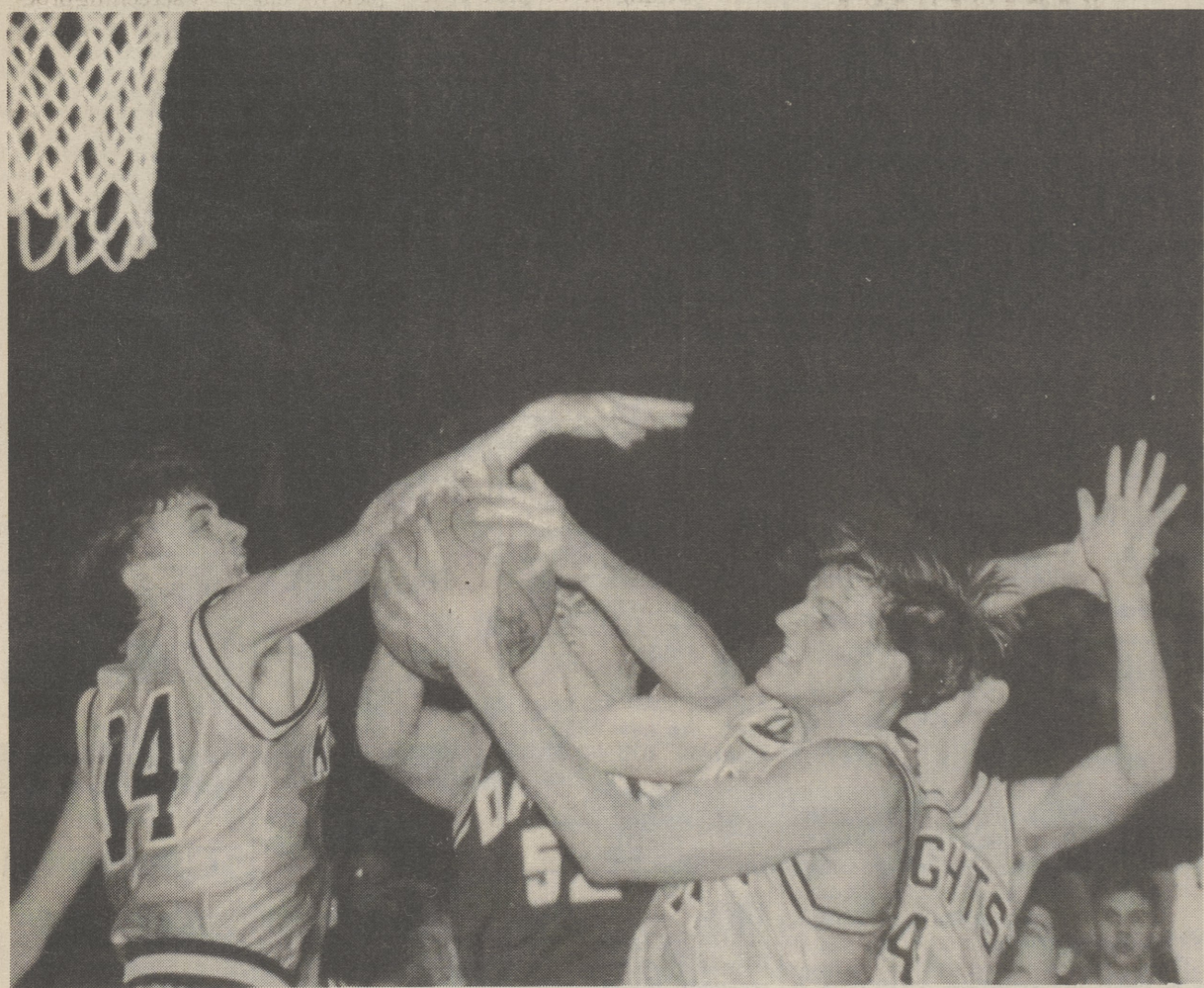
While the sixth-year head coach may be a little bit optimistic, he is also realistic.

"Right now, I don't know if we can hang with the big boys," said Kashenbach, referring to teams like Lake-Lehman, Wyoming Valley West, Hazleton and Meyers. "But I know we can be competitive. Hopefully, we can be a little better than last year. We want to improve with each match. It should be an interesting year."

Mountaineers top Lehman in Crossin Tourney

POST PHOTOS/RON BARTIZEK

The Dallas Mountaineers turned back Lake-Lehman 41-33 last Thursday in the consolation game of the Crossin Memorial Tournament at Wyoming Valley West High School. In photo at right, Jason Pieczynski eyes the basket at Black Knights Dave Fosko (24) and John Oliver defend. Below, Tim Brislin battles for a rebound surrounded by Oliver and Fosko while the Mounts' Chris Mill (52) tries to gain control.



Girls' basketball preview

Lehman has new faces on court and sidelines

By DAVE KONOPKI
Sports Writer

He may be entering his first year as head coach, but Dick Morgan is anything but a newcomer to Lake-Lehman High School basketball.

The likeable Morgan, who has been a long-time assistant coach for both the girls' and boys' programs, this year took the reins of the girls' varsity program from veteran head coach Joe Martini. Joining the new head coach are a bunch of new faces on the team this season. The Lady Knights return just three letter winners from last year's 15-12 team which finished third in the District 2 Class AAA tournament and qualified for the state playoffs.

Seniors Heather Gray and Debbie Coslett, along with junior

Amy Rogers, are the lone returning starters from a year ago. At the guard position, Gray averaged 7.5 points per game last season as did Coslett, who plays forward. Rogers, a forward/center, averaged 6.5 points per contest as a sophomore last year.

But the Lady Knights do have welcome additions in the return of two Lake-Lehman players who did not play last year. Seniors Karen Komsisky and Jessica Hynick return to the team after missing either most, or all of last season. Komsisky played as a freshman and sophomore but did not play last season and Hynick, an outstanding volleyball player, had bronchial pneumonia and missed nearly all of last year.

As a coach who has been

See LEHMAN, pg 10

Rec basketball

Dugan's, Greyhounds in duel for first place

The Greyhounds kept their share of first place with a 73-57 win over Philadelphia Subs in the Dallas Adult Basketball league. Rick Coslett led the 'hounds' with 23 while Scott Meuser and Jeff Phillips had 12 each. Ken Carter led all scorers with 27 for Philadelphia Subs.

Dugans Pub kept pace with the Greyhounds by whipping Bassler Equipment 88-72. Frank Debona led the winners with 27 points including six three pointers. Jim Jaster added 19 and Nafty Hage 18 for Dugans. Pat Flaherty had 23 and Scott Millington 19 for Bassler.

The Lion Inc. captured their first win of the year by beating Allen Construction 61-50. Jim

Lister had 15, Charlie Lamoreaux 14 and Bill Cuff 13 for The Lion. Allen was led by Joe Sinkulak's 15. Play continues next Sunday with three games beginning at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas High School.

LEAGUE STANDINGS			
Dugans Pub	7-1		
The Greyhounds	7-1		
Philadelphia Subs	5-3		
Bassler Equip.	3-5		
Allen Constr.	1-7		
Lion Inc.	1-7		

Jan. 9 Schedule			
12:30 - Allen Constr. vs. The Greyhounds			
1:30 - Bassler Equip. vs. The Lion			
2:30 - Dugans Pub vs. Philadelphia Subs			

The Greyhounds - 73				Philadelphia Subs - 57			
	FG	F	Total		FG	F	Total
Coslett**	7	7	23	Carter*	8	9	27
Obeid*	3	3	10	Swank*	1	1	4
Pincovski	3	3	9	Gebhart	4	4	12
Phillips**	5	0	12	Feddock*	2	0	5
Meuser	3	6	12	Lanza*	2	0	5
Bonchefski	1	1	3	Kepp*	1	0	3
Crocker	2	0	4	C. Gleco	1	0	2
	24	20	73	L. Gleco	0	0	0
					19	14	57

Dugans Pub - 88				Bassler Equip. - 72			
	FG	F	Total		FG	F	Total
Debona*****	9	3	27	Wilson*	3	0	7
Jaster**	8	0	19	Race	1	0	2
Messenger	1	0	2	Flaherty**	10	1	23
Straigis*	4	1	11	Woychick	4	0	8
Hage	8	2	18	Sutliff	6	0	12
Hosey	3	3	9	Millington**	8	0	19
	33	9	88		32	1	72

Lion Inc. - 61				Allen Construction - 50			
	FG	F	Total		FG	F	Total
Cuff*	4	3	13	Reidinger	4	0	8
Luksic*	4	1	10	Sinkulak	4	7	15
Swrnw	1	0	2	McCue*	3	2	10
Lamoreaux*	3	7	14	Golombuski	2	1	5
Welgosh*	3	0	7	Hrabowski	2	1	5
Lister*	7	0	15	Allen	3	1	6
	22	11	61		18	12	50

* Denotes 3 point goal
* Denotes 4 point goal