

# The Dallas Post Sports Week

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## From the pressbox

By DAVE KONOPKI

### Please, don't use the 'D' word for Cowboys yet

For the second consecutive year, the Dallas Cowboys have proven they are the best team in the National Football Conference. But please, please, PLEASE, don't use the word "dynasty" when you talk about the Cowboys.

I'm not trying to take anything away from "America's Team" or what they have accomplished during the past two years, but when I hear Cowboy fans talking about how the current team should take their place next to the Green Bay Packer teams of the 1960's, the Pittsburgh Steeler, Oakland Raider and Dallas Cowboy teams of 1970's or the San Francisco teams of the 1980's, I have to draw the line. Could they be on that level someday? Perhaps. In fact, they have an outstanding chance.

But please, please, PLEASE, don't yet use the word "dynasty" when you talk about today's Dallas Cowboys.

Perhaps it's just a reflection of many people in today's sports society when the talk of dynasty surrounds the Cowboys. Shaquille O'Neal has yet to play one and one-half seasons in the National Basketball Association, yet many want to place him alongside the best centers who ever played the game. He must be good. It took guys like Chamberlain, Russell, Abdul-Jabbar and Walton more than a dozen years of playing time before they reached that plateau.

A good friend of mine and I recently got into a friendly, but heated, debate after he stated Barry Bonds should be elected into the Baseball's Hall of Fame if he were to retire tomorrow. Sure, he's the best baseball player in the game today, but he's played just seven years in MLB, for crying out loud! Let him continue his recent level of play for another five or six years and then we'll talk.

Ask almost any athletic coach, on any level, and he or she will tell you most kids today do not want to pay their dues when it comes to playing time. Freshmen and sophomores want to know why they have to sit on the bench at high school varsity games. Seventh graders want to know why they have to sit on the bench during freshmen games. They want to be a star. Now. And you wonder why it takes just two very good seasons by a professional sports team before they start using the "D" word.

Is this run by the Cowboys over? Not by a long shot. Will they get back to the Super Bowl soon? There's a great chance they will. Are the Cowboys the best football team in the world? Absolutely.

But please, please, PLEASE, don't use the world "dynasty" when you talk about the Dallas Cowboys.

Boy, do I feel better.

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Getting lost in the shuffle of the Cowboys' success and the Bills lack of same, is the fact that the Buffalo Bills are an outstanding football team. Their fourth straight appearance in the Super Bowl this season is unprecedented in the storied history of the National Football League. They are three feet and 30 minutes away from going into the history books as one of the greatest teams in NFL history.

Don't laugh. Think about it. If Scott Norwood's last-second field goal goes three or more feet to the left in Super Bowl XXV and the Bills hang on in the second half during last Sunday's game, they have two Super Bowl rings and four straight Super Bowl appearances in four years.

Many people don't realize the incredible effort it takes to reach the Super Bowl for four consecutive seasons. For many Super Bowl teams, including the champions, just making the playoffs the following year is difficult. Just ask the New York Giants, who failed to make the playoffs the year after beating Buffalo in Super Bowl XXV.

How will the Buffalo Bills be remembered? As a team which won an unprecedented four conference championships? Probably not. More likely, and unfortunately, they will take their position next to the Boston Red Sox as the biggest chokers in sports history.

## Teams must regroup for 2nd half

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Sports Writer

Although their teams may not have played the kind of basketball they expected in the first half of the Wyoming Valley Conference Division II, Dallas head coach Paul Brown and veteran Lake-Lehman head coach Rodger Bearde hope it has been a valuable learning experience for their teams.

As of Monday night, with first half action finally winding down after a rescheduling nightmare because of the record snowfall this January, Dallas, one of the pre-season contenders for the WVC Division II title, found itself with a 4-2 record in conference play. Meanwhile, the Black Knights, who are in the midst of a rebuilding season following last year's record-setting campaign, are 2-4 in the division.

The Black Knights evened the season record between the two backyard rivals at 1-1 with a thrilling 81-78 win in overtime before a large crowd Monday night in Lehman. Dallas had beaten Lake-Lehman in the consolation game of the Crossin Memorial Tournament during the Christmas holiday.

On Monday night, Dave Fosko scored a career-high 33 points, including six in the overtime period to lead the Knights. The senior tossed in four three-point field goals and was 13 of 16 from the free throw line. Junior Tim Waslick

added 21 points for the Knights while sophomore John Oliver tossed in 12.

For the Mountaineers, who were involved in their second consecutive overtime contest (the other was a two-point win over Wyoming Area), senior guard Brian Brady was the leader with 23 points including a two-point basket to tie the contest at 70-70 with three seconds remaining in regulation. Junior forward Jason Pieczynski added 21 points for the Mounts.

Clearly the postponement of games and the inability of both teams to get into their gymnasiums for some much-needed practice took its toll on both teams and was frustrating to both the coaches and the players.

"The biggest problem we had was not being able to get into the gym when we didn't have school," said Bearde, who has been a "gamer" himself, coaching from the sidelines despite a recent back injury. "You lose any of the continuity that you already had. At one point there was a time when we were out of the gym for one week, where we didn't have any games or practices. That's crucial at this time of the year, especially when you started having things go the way you wanted them."

Obviously, the word "continuity", or disruption of it, was the key for both coaches.

"I think you just said the key word - continuity," said Brown,

responding to a question. "We're having a hard time getting any continuity, any kind of rhythm or any type of consistency. There are times the team will do something wrong during the game and, as a coach, you look forward to working on that the next day in practice. We haven't had the chance to do things like that."

Although both teams have shown signs of being very good basketball teams - Dallas was 3-0 in the conference before the bad weather - both coaches expressed some displeasure with their teams' performances.

"We're nowhere close," replied Bearde, when asked if his team was playing as well as they should at this point in the season. "I think it's our whole game. I thought we'd be shooting better, I thought our defense would be further along than it is. The whole team concept hasn't developed as much as I thought it would. But I think a lot of that has to do with the weather and the missed practice time."

Brown had similar sentiments.

"We're kind of scrambled right now as far as what our goals are," said Brown. "There are times when we haven't played the kind of basketball we're capable of playing. At times we do things very well and at times we do things very poorly. We're way behind as far as putting plays into our game plans. There are things that we should have

been doing in December that we just put into practice last week."

But despite some of the setbacks, both coaches feel their teams will only get better as the season progresses.

"I'm pleased with the progress of the team," said Bearde, who is assisted by Clarence Ozgo. "We have improved and if the kids keep working hard, they're going to get better. We just need to come out and get a couple of wins to make ourselves feel a little bit better. We're playing just one senior (Fosko) and this should be a great learning experience for our underclassmen if they don't get their heads down and get too concerned about the losses."

For Brown and the Mountaineers, this is an important week. The Mounts play four more games this week, including their final two first half contests. And while the playoffs may seem light years away, Brown knows his team has to improve if Dallas is to get the chance to play basketball in March.

"This is a big week for us," said Brown, who is assisted by Joe Ellis. "But I think we have the kind of players who can step up and do it. Hopefully the bad weather is behind us and we can get a chance to play two games a week and practice four days a week. We're going to have to work hard and play better or there's not going to be any basketball for us in March."

## Dallas youth basketball

### BULLS 40 - MAGIC 31

Joe Tarity scored 17 points to lead the Bulls over the Magic and keep his team on the heels of the league-leading Blazers. Kyle Droppers had nine points for the winners while Jeff Faneck added eight. Matt Barnard had a good day for the Magic, scoring 25 of his team's 31 points.

### BLAZERS 61 - HEAT 18

Rick Lorah led a quartet of Blazer players in double figures as they stayed unbeaten with a big win over the Heat. J.J. Smith added 11 points for the winners while Josh Yoh and Jeff Parker had 10 points apiece. Ed Piekara led the heat with 12 points.

### WARRIORS 39 - SIXERS 28

Bruce Kunkle tossed in a team-high 18 points to lead the Warriors over the Sixers and keep them in a tie for third place. Sean Killeen had a game-high 19 points for the Sixers.

### STANDINGS

Blazers	6-0
Bulls	5-1
Celtics	4-2
Warriors	4-2
Hornets	2-4
Heat	2-4
Magic	1-5
76'ers	0-6

### Schedule for Feb. 6

Hornets vs. Bulls	1 p.m.
Sixers vs. Heat	2 p.m.
Magic vs. Celtics	3 p.m.
Blazers vs. Warriors	4 p.m.

### Keystone Games begin February 10

The seventh annual Keystone State Games Winter Sports Festival will start with skiing competitions Thursday through Sunday, Feb. 10-13, and will conclude with ice skating competitions Friday through Sunday, Feb. 18-20.

The seven alpine racing and two freestyle skiing events will be held at the Montage Mountain Ski Resort, Scranton.

Ice skating competitions will take place in the Ice-A-Rama, Coal Street Park, Wilkes-Barre.

### L-L Football Club will meet Feb. 3

The Lake-Lehman Football Club will meet on Thursday, Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m. at Grotto Pizza, Harveys Lake.

A special invitation is issued to the parents of Juniors, Sophomores and Freshmen. The club will be discussing a scholarship program.

### Noxen Strikers place at Benton meet

The Noxen Wrestling Club attended the Benton Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 22. Seven Strikers placed:

Bantam, 45 lbs., John Houssock, 1st place; Bantam, 60 lbs., Ryan Post, 2nd place; Midget, 65 lbs., Matt Metz, 1st place; Midget, 65 lbs., Perry Coolbaugh, 2nd place; Midget, Hwt., Mike Burnside, 3rd place; Midget, Hwt., Eric Edwards, 4th place; Junior, Unltd., Matthew Kehler, 1st place.

### Scranton Miners offer discount tickets for Mountaineer night

The state champion Dallas Mountaineer football team will be the guests of honor February 12 at the Scranton Miners professional basketball game.

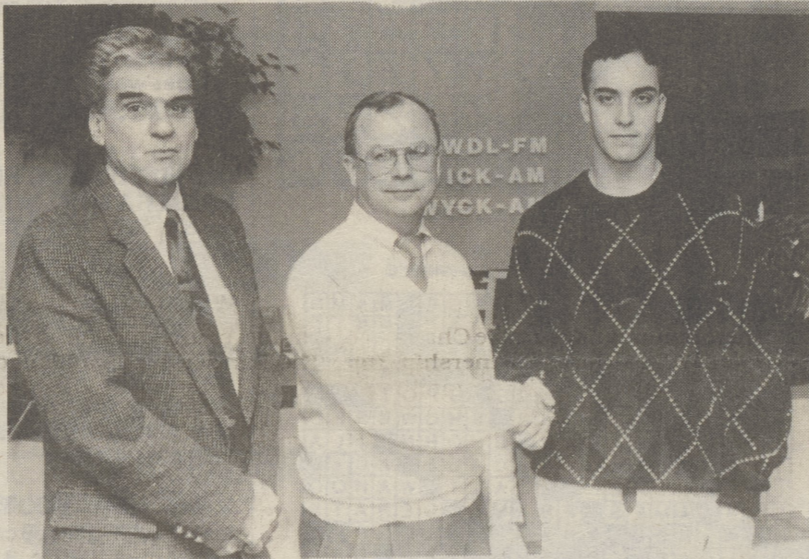
For the occasion, the Miner organization has made mid-court seats, which normally sell for \$5 each, available to the Dallas area community for only \$3 each.

The Miners, who are undefeated in league play, are members of the Atlantic Basketball Association, which this season replaced the Eastern Basketball Association. The team will play the Hazleton Hawks at the Scranton CYC, with game time at 7 p.m.

The Miners have been led in scoring by Lamont Middleton, who has averaged nearly 30 points per game, and Dwayne Johnson, averaging 23 points per game. As a team, the Miners are scoring an average of 130 points each game and holding opponents to 116.

Discounted tickets may be picked up at the office of The Dallas Post Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are \$3 each (regularly \$5), payable in advance.

The Scranton CYC is located at 500 Jefferson Avenue. To get there, take I-81 north to exit 53 (Central City Expressway), follow the expressway to first traffic light. Bear right at the light onto Jefferson. The CYC is two blocks on the right, at the corner of Jefferson and Vine.



### Brady named athlete of month

All State Quarterback Brian Brady of Dallas, has been named High School Athlete of the Month in Northeastern Pennsylvania, by radio stations WICK and WWDL. Both a male and female athlete of the year will be selected in June.

Pictured, from left, are Dallas Assistant Coach Bill Silvi; WICK/WWDL sports director Mike Remish and Brian Brady.

### BMT Baseball registration Feb. 5

Back Mountain Baseball, Inc. will hold registration for the 1994 season Saturday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Dallas Middle School cafeteria. All returning players were mailed application forms and are asked to bring a completed copy with them. Registration fee is \$20 per child and/or \$35 per family.

Registration is for the following groups: boys' and girls' tee ball; boys' Little League, ages 8-12; boys' Junior and Senior leagues, ages 13-15; girls' Little League softball, ages 8-12; girls' senior league, ages 13-15; and girls' senior league, ages 16-18.

All first time registrants must bring a copy of their birth certificate and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

### Dallas basketball time change

The time for the Dallas vs. Athens boys' high school basketball game Saturday, Feb. 5 has been changed. The junior varsity game will begin at 3 p.m., with the varsity game immediately following.

## Weight for Wishes

### PLEDGE FORM

Your pledge will help Make-A-Wish bring pleasure to youngsters in the Wyoming Valley area. To help:

1. Fill out the form below, indicating the amount of your pledge, whether a flat amount or an amount per pound.
2. Send the form to The Dallas Post at the address shown. We will forward all pledges to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.
3. Watch for the final number of pounds Dave loses. Then send your check directly to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. We will publish their address with the final weight tally in the April 13 issue. Make-A-Wish will contact everyone who has pledged at the conclusion of the fund drive.

Here's my pledge to the Make-A-Wish Foundation

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per pound lost

Flat amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made payable to Make-A-Wish Foundation. All contributions are tax deductible.

Send or bring to: The Dallas Post  
45 Main Road  
P.O. Box 366  
Dallas, PA 18612

I do not want my name listed as a contributor.

## The weight begins to come off

Dave Konopki's Weight-for-Wishes to help the Make-A-Wish Foundation began with a 5-pound loss after just five days.

Dave weighed in at a hefty 281 pounds January 26 at Dallas Family Practice. On Monday, January 31, he weighed 276. All weighings will take place at Dallas Family Practice. We'll publish the results of each Monday's weigh-in.

You can help the Make-A-Wish Foundation, which grants wishes to seriously ill children, by pledging an amount per pound on what Dave loses between January 26 and April 8. Or, you may pledge a fixed amount. In either case, fill out the coupon and send it to The Dallas Post. We'll log all the pledges before turning them over to the foundation.

The total donation will be announced at halftime of the Make-A-Wish charity basketball game April 10 with players from the Philadelphia Eagles.

We'll begin running a list of contributors next week.

