

The Dallas Post Sports Week

Sallitt pitches Mounts to win

By LEN KRYESKI
Sports Writer

The Lady Mountaineers rode the arm of Katie Sallitt and scored five insurance runs in the sixth inning to post a 6-0 win over Lake-Lehman Monday afternoon.

The senior hurler struck out nine and allowed the league's pre-season favorite just three hits during the early season AAA North Division showdown at W. W. Kubis Field. Katie especially used her change-up to baffle the Lehman hitters.

"The change-up was working," Sallitt said. "I have a special pitch I invented myself and that seemed to be working too. It's the wiggle pitch - it wiggles!"

Sallitt faced just 25 batters, didn't walk anyone and at one point retired 10 Lady Knights in a row.

"Katie Sallitt had her finest game ever in a Dallas uniform," said coach Jay Pope. "She's been looking for this game going on two weeks now. She was on top of it."

"We will be awarding her the game ball. We don't do that very often, but she'll be getting the game ball in recognition of her efforts. She was absolutely phenomenal today."

Lehman's Jen Birt was working on a three hitter herself before the Dallas bats touched her for three singles in the bottom of the sixth inning. Until that point, the only score had been an unearned Dallas run in the fourth.

Holly Baseski started the Mounts' rally with an infield single and shortstop Melanie Getz added a single that just went through the infield. Lisa Tomaine attempted a sacrifice bunt, and Dallas managed to load the bases when third baseman Kacie Ziomek's throw to get the lead runner was late.

Clean-up hitter Theresa Paxton then drove in two runs by slamming the ball through the left side of the drawn in infield. Down 3-0 late, and having to make up a game this week, Lehman coach Flossie Finn decided to give Birt a rest and brought in flame-throw-

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Jay Pope
Dallas softball coach

ing Autumn Wood.

"I was happy with the pitching," said Finn. "I thought Jen did a great job."

Suzanne Fisher greeted Wood by slamming a double that scored Tomaine and Paxton. The first baseman's hit just missed the fence in leftfield. Wood, however, struck out the next two Dallas batters looking before Bridget Temperine's single drove in run number six. The inning ended as Temperine was thrown out at third after stealing second.

Dallas took a 1-0 lead by scoring an unearned run in the bottom of the fourth and Lehman hoped to return the favor and tie up the game in the sixth. With one out, Rogers reached base via an error and advanced to second after a sacrifice bunt by Kelly Spencer. Freshman Darby Wolfe then rifled a shot to center, but Rogers got caught in a rundown between third and home.

"We had our hopes built up because we got Amy on second," said Finn. "(Tomaine) threw a strike, the catcher was waiting for Amy and that was kind of a momentum builder for them. It's such a psychological game when that happens you take yourself out of the game."

Getz went two for three, scored two runs and stole a base for the victors.

"It was a nice win, a big confidence builder for us," Pope said. "They've worked hard, our timing is coming, but we have a long way to go. We're looking at it as just one game in a lot of games that are coming up. Lehman, I still think they have the best ball club in the division."

"My biggest concern right now is not to let this be our season," Finn said, "but to regroup, go on win the rest of the games, come back and beat them next time."



It was all Dallas when the Mounts met the Lake-Lehman Black Knights Monday in Dallas. The game was scoreless until the fourth inning as both teams played tough defense behind stellar pitching. In photo above, Bridget Temperine, left, and Melanie Getz crossed paths but neither could grab this pop fly. At right, Lehman second baseman Darby Wolfe flipped the ball to first after making a diving stop. Wolfe had several outstanding plays during the contest.

POST PHOTOS/RON BARTIZEK



High jump leads to Dallas win

By LEN KRYESKI
Sports Writer

Friday's three-way track meet at Dallas High School couldn't have been scripted any better if writers were brought in from Hollywood. The boys' showdown featured a couple of undefeated teams in Dallas and Wyoming Valley West and a 6-1 Hazleton squad was not to be taken lightly.

On and off all day rain, including a heavy downpour just as the meet got underway, also became a factor in the contest.

When it came time for the climax, Dallas held a point advantage over Valley West with just the high jump remaining in the midseason meet.

"Jason was there when we needed him."

Bill Kvarshay
Dallas track coach

The event started with the bar set at 5-8 and by the time it rose to 6-2 just three competitors remained: Jason Peczynski and Buddy Rhodes of Dallas and the Spartans' Ryan Rabuck.

Dallas claimed a 79-71 victory when their duo was able to clear the bar while Rabuck missed all three attempts. The Mountaineers raised their Wyoming Valley Conference record to 9-0 by also romping over Hazleton 101-49. Valley West earned a split with a 112-34 victory over the Cougars.

Peczynski proceeded to beat his teammate by clearing 6-4.

"Jason was there when we needed him," said coach Bill Kvarshay. "He hasn't been jumping well the last two weeks. He's only been clearing six feet in practice. Today, the big crowd, the pressure, he came through for us."

Peczynski, who also took second in the long jump, was equally concerned about the wet surface. The high jump takes place out-

See DALLAS WIN, pg 10

Chopick has attitude to lead

By LEN KRYESKI
Sports Writer

It took first-year Dallas volleyball coach Kevin Straka all of two seconds to name Jeff Chopick the captain of this year's team.

"Jeff's the captain and he's there for one reason - attitude," said Straka. "He has the right attitude, he never quits, he does exactly what I tell him to do and he does the impossible. I require a lot out of him. I make him responsible for all of the team members."

Jeff is the son of Robert and Ann Marie Chopick of Trucksville. The senior has played four years on the varsity level for the Dallas program. Jeff started a couple of games as a sophomore, but has been a steady member of the starting line-up the last two seasons at his familiar setter position.

"(At the) setter position - he's the quarterback," stresses Straka. "He sets the offense. If he has a bad day, we don't win."

Chopick, meanwhile sees the position as a challenge, not only for being responsible for dictating the tempo and style of the offense, but for also having to cover the entire court.

"If the setter doesn't set the ball to the hitter, he's not going to hit it," Chopick said, "and you won't have a chance at a point."

Obviously, Jeff leads the team in assists, but he has also paced the Mountaineers in service points thus far in '95. He's also a pretty good passer, but setters don't receive a lot of opportunities to show off their passing abilities. He's tried every sport at one time or another, but enjoys the game of volleyball the most because of the intensity.

"When you're having a good day, it's the ultimate power," said Chopick.



JEFF CHOPICK
Dallas volleyball captain

Jeff also enjoys skiing and says the off-season activity does wonders for endurance, especially for the legs. Jeff is the hardest worker on the court at a typical Dallas practice session.

"I work on technique more than intensity," explained Chopick. "I stretch more than the other guys, which they think is weird."

Jeff goes through the stretching routine to avoid muscle pulls and injuries, but his mentor also pointed out another benefit to the exercises.

"He's got high flexibility," said Straka. "He's not tall, but he can jump as high as the other guys. Flexibility is the key. The greater flexibility you have, the greater range of motion you have, the higher you can jump."

This may be Straka's initial season at Dallas, and he has a good memory and an eye for the sport. While performing head coaching duties for Wyoming Area he noticed certain things about many players in the Wyoming Valley Conference, including the

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Jeff Chopick
Dallas volleyball captain

group at Dallas. He's noted an improvement in Chopick's play.

"His setting is more precise and he takes charge of the game," Straka said.

Jeff believes his passing has improved more than any other aspect of his game during the last four years. As a senior he's using more of a college-style setting on the floor. He's also most appreciative of his new coach.

"He's a guy that will teach you more than just the game," Chopick said. "He teaches the facts of life and character."

"I'm a big believer in character," stated Straka. "He's got to have the right character to be the team captain and the setter. The hands are second - the character is first."

Jeff plans to assist in the family business after graduation. The family opened Custom Computers in Kingston last summer. Jeff will take some night courses at Luzerne County Community College next fall to brush up on the latest in the industry. He'll then pass along his knowledge to prospective customers as well as teach computer operation.

As for volleyball, Jeff plans to either become a referee or possibly help out the Dallas program as a volunteer coach. Playing volleyball at the college level is in the back of Jeff's mind.

"It would be nice for a college to look at me," Chopick said.

Jeff has two older brothers, Steve and Scott and a younger brother, Bob.



Eye on the ball

Brian Blase certainly followed that age-old advice in his match against Wyoming Seminary's Jim Matysczak last week. Blase's concentration wasn't enough, though, as Matysczak came out ahead 6-1, 6-1.

POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK