

THE DALLAS POST

SportsWeek

Section 2

From the bullpen



Timothy J. Raub

It's almost time for a game of catch with Dad

I can still remember the first time I saw it. It was light brown, tiny, had "JC Penney" sewn into the wrist guard and it was mine, all mine.

I still have it — my first baseball glove, that is. I can remember breaking it in with my dad for hours. We'd put the oil in the glove, work it into the leather and go outside to try it out. Ah, those were the days. My father worked very hard when I was young so that my three younger siblings and I would have everything we needed. He worked so many crazy hours, though, that the opportunity for quality time with Dad was pretty rare. I did not get to spend much quality time with him, much less than other children. But when it came to my first baseball glove and learning how to catch, Dad was there every step of the way. I can't remember how many times I got hit with the ball that first spring, but it didn't matter — it was my chance to be with Dad.

Every spring the ritual would start about a month from now. The snow would just start clearing out, and I would search the house for my baseball glove, and once found, I would go outside with Dad and have a catch for hours. My dad would come home from work, tired and worn out from a hard day on the job, but without hesitation after dinner, he would head for the closet, get his glove and it would be off to the baseball field for the two of us. I did not realize it then, but I was bonding with my dad, bonding in the same way thousands of fathers and sons do each year. Every year about this time, it is not unusual to see fathers and their young sons at the sporting goods store in search for that perfect first baseball glove.

What starts out as just another purchase, quickly develops into much more. Fathers and sons can find a mutual interest when it comes to sports, and it gives the two a way to be together, talking and learning without really thinking about it. This is where a father and son's bond develops and grows — all because of a baseball glove. Dad and I would throw for what seemed hours each day, no matter how tired he was. He taught me how to get under a fly ball, field a grounder and throw with accuracy.

It is important for a father and son to do these types of things. In today's society when many children grow up in day care centers and nursery schools, it is important for a father and his son to spend that quality time together, if nothing else. As I grew up, my father and I were not always the closest of friends, sometimes we were even bitter enemies. But like a cease fire on Christmas day, the two of us put everything aside when it came to sports. My dad and I don't get to have a catch in the backyard any more, but I hope someday I can pass on the tradition with a son of my own. I still have my first baseball glove, and I will never get rid of it. It is more than just a glove — it's my memories.

Back Mountain standouts are Killer Bees finalists

BY TIMOTHY J. RAUB
Post Staff

Some student-athletes find it hard to manage full-time sports and academic schedules. Not Lindsay Boris and Kristen Clay. Boris and Clay, seniors at Lake-Lehman and Wyoming Seminary, respectively, have each been named finalists for the Killer Bees Athletic Club scholastic female division Student-Athlete of the Year.

"Sometimes it's kind of tough,

especially during the (sports) season, because you have so many commitments both athletically and academically," said Boris, an all-state field hockey and soccer standout. "It all comes down to time management."

Both Boris and Clay agreed that they have had to set their priorities to stay on top of class work and athletic responsibilities.

Clay, a three-sport standout in cross-country, swimming and soccer for the Blue Knights, said

"It is a huge honor. Sports and school are just the two things I love doing."

Kristen Clay
Wyoming Seminary senior

she makes study sheets so she can study any time she gets a free moment, and uses the weekends as a way to get a lot of school work done.

"Part of it is just natural ability," said Clay. "You get to know how much time you have to get things done. I find odd moments to get things done."

Boris ranks second in her class at Lake-Lehman. She has a 99.35 average, taking advanced placement courses, has a score of 1,240 on her SAT and was accepted early by Brown University.

"It is definitely nice to be honored academically," said Boris. "A lot of people don't know what you have going on besides the

athletics, so it's nice to be honored for both."

Clay is an honor student and has a score of 1,380 on her SAT. She has maintained a near 4.0 academic average during her four years at Seminary, while taking advanced placement courses.

"It was pretty cool (to be honored as a finalist)," said Clay. "It is a huge honor. Sports and school are just the two things I love doing."



POST PHOTOS/TIMOTHY J. RAUB

Dallas's Blake Saba takes it strong to the basket against Crestwood in left photo. The Mountaineers defeated the Comets 42-40 in a key WVC Division II game. At right, Dallas forward Chuck Suppon puts up a shot, which would be his 1,000th career point against Crestwood on February 5.

Mounts edge into 1st-place tie as Suppon scores 1000th

By MICHAEL LELLO
Special to The Dallas Post

DALLAS TWP. — Dallas's mission was simple. Beat Crestwood Tuesday night and you're still in the running for the Wyoming Valley Conference Division II second-half title. Lose and your chances of capturing the crown are slim.

Throw in a senior night crowd at Dallas High School, the chance for forward Chuck Suppon to score his 1,000th career point and an opportunity to avenge an embarrassing first-half loss to the Comets, and the game took on greater significance.

Suppon and the Mountaineers showed they were up to the challenge.

The senior power forward single-handedly dominated the inside game despite the absence of injured center John Simonitis, scored a game-high 21 points — including his 1,000th — and pulled down 14 rebounds to lead Dallas to a 44-42 victory.

The victory propelled Dallas (4-2 Division II, 14-9 overall) into a three-way tie with Crest-

wood (4-2, 18-5) and Nanticoke with two games left in the regular season.

"It feels great to get a thousand, but it feels better to beat Crestwood," Suppon said.

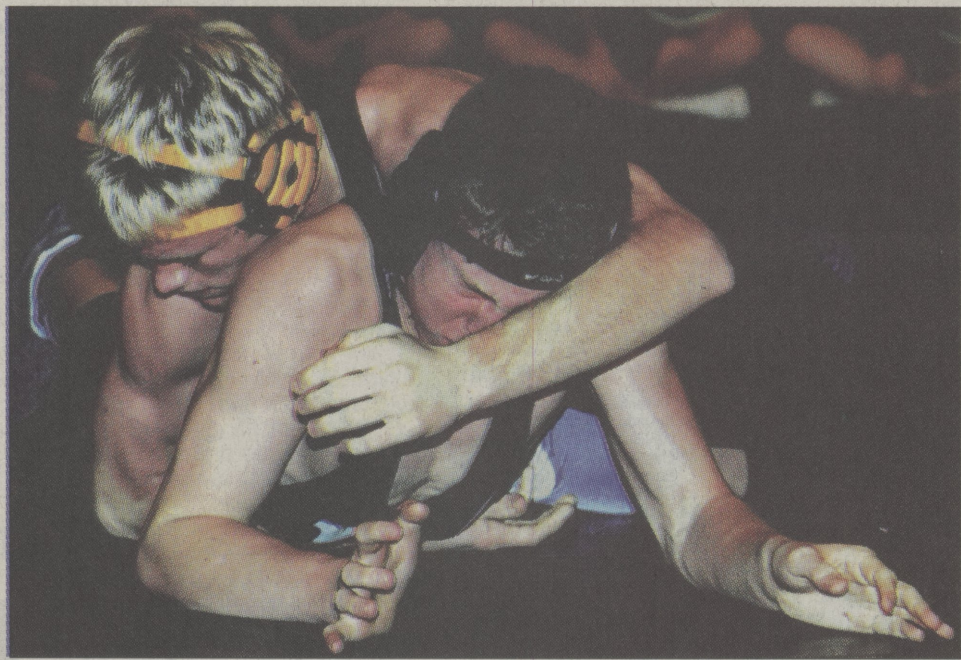
The Comets, the Division II first-half champions, routed Dallas 51-37 on Jan. 10 at Crestwood.

Despite the absence of Simonitis, his 11.3 points per game and rebounding presence (the Pitt football recruit landed awkwardly on his left foot late in Monday's practice), Dallas asserted itself in the paint from the opening tip. The Mountaineers jumped out to a 9-0 lead and were up 14-10 after the first quarter thanks in part to seven points and five rebounds from Suppon.

Herb Bressler's three-pointer early in the second quarter gave Dallas a seven-point lead, but the Comets stormed back with a 7-0 run to tie the score 17-17.

Crestwood would take its only lead — 24-23 — on two Jeff Calaide free throws with 5:58 left in the third. That lead was

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POST PHOTOS/JIM PHILLIPS

Dallas and Lake-Lehman wrestling teams met last week, with Lehman taking a 54-12 win. At left, Lehman's Aaron Moyer controlled Morgan Anderson at 140 lb. In right photo, Willie Weber had the advantage over Perry Coolbaugh, but the Dallas grappler went on to win the match on an 8-0 major decision.

Black Knights crush Octorara in Duals prelim

By DOUG PAPE
Special to The Dallas Post

YATESVILLE — Look out Hershey, here come the Black Knights.

The Lake-Lehman wrestling team dismantled Octorara 59-6 Tuesday at Pittsburg Area High School in the preliminary round of the PIAA Class 2A Duals Tournament.

Lehman (17-2) advances to the state quarterfinals of the team event against District 7's Fort Cherry on Friday at Hersheypark Arena at a time to be announced.

"We came a long way," 119-pounder Aaron Kubasik said. "At the beginning it was a little shaky, but now everybody kind of jelled. We're all coming together now."

"This is very important," he added. "This is the first time that Lehman has gotten to the state duals and we want to make a statement this year."

The Black Knights appear to be peaking at the right time and are poised to make

some noise in Chocolatetown, USA if Tuesday's match is any evidence.

Octorara (6-6) never got going and earned its only points when L.J. Ladley got a forfeit at 140.

Kelby Morgan got things started at 103 with a 15-4 major decision. Morgan scored most of his points with a vicious cradle he hit opponent Josh Parker with in the first and third periods.

John Houssock followed with a forfeit at 112, while Kubasik registered a pin in 28 seconds at 119.

"It starts at the 103 match," Kubasik said. "If he wins, then it just snowballs and everybody gets psyched and we just keep it going."

Matt Dragon followed with a pin in 3:20 at 125, while Ryan Post picked up a 5-3 decision at 130. Post iced the match in the second with an escape and a cradle which yielded two back points. He led 5-2 after two periods.

At 135, Jeremy Schutz earned a 17-3 major decision to give the Black Knights a 29-0 lead. After Ladley's forfeit, Lehman's

Aaron Moyer pinned Ken Miller with a cradle at the 2:50 mark.

Willie Weber followed at 152 with a pin in 3:54, and Matt Stuart proved to be Lehman's comeback wrestler of the night at 160. He scored three takedowns in the first to take a 6-3 lead. Octorara's Justin Parker battled back and, with about a minute left, scored a takedown to lead 7-6. Stuart escaped in the waning seconds to force overtime and in the one-minute extra period scored a takedown and three back points to seal a 12-7 decision.

Bob Morris (171) followed with a 7-2 decision, while Ed Becker (189) and Matt Carey (275) closed out the bout with forfeits.

Lehman coach Phil Lipski expects the eight teams left in the single-elimination event to be "stout."

"We are wrestling well," he said. "For the most part the kids are doing a nice job, and we're on somewhat of a roll and we're going to need that because Fort Cherry is going to be real tough."

Rich Butcofski joins Pioneers

WILKES-BARRE — The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Pioneers continued to add local flavor to its team on last week as Dallas High School graduate Rich Butcofski became the ninth player assigned to the arenafootball2 team's inaugural training camp roster.

Butcofski played at East Stroudsburg University in the 1999 and 2000 seasons. He made 99 tackles his senior year and was a Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Eastern Division second-team selection. Prior to his two years at East Stroudsburg, Butcofski played two seasons at middle linebacker for Nassau Community College in Long Island.

At Dallas, Butcofski was a two-time all-state linebacker and was named the Wyoming Valley Conference Most Valuable Player as a senior. Butcofski also played in the Big 33 game. He was a member of the Mountaineers' 1993 PIAA Class 2A state championship team.

BMT baseball, softball registration Saturday

Back Mountain Baseball will conduct its second player registration for the 2002 season Saturday, Feb. 9, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Dallas Senior High School. All children age 6 and older who have not already registered and who wish to participate in tee-ball, major and minor league baseball, major and minor league softball, and all teen programs should register at that time.

All prospective players should bring their Social Security numbers to registration. Any child who has not previously participated in Back Mountain Baseball or Softball should bring his or her birth certificate to registration as proof of age. The cost of registration is \$40 for the first child in a family, \$20 for the second child, and \$10 for each additional child.