

THE DALLAS POST

SportsWeek

Section 2

Hawaii's Ironman Triathlon is on the agenda for Robbins

By TIMOTHY J. RAUB
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DALLAS TWP. — Two hour runs, six and one-half hour bike rides and long swims may not seem like fun to too many people, but for Sean Robbins it is a way of life.

Robbins, 32, of Dallas, has been competing in triathlons since 1994, and quickly has become one of the top triathletes in the area. He reached a milestone in his racing career when he

qualified for the Ironman Triathlon in Hawaii later this year.

"It is a great feeling," said Robbins. "I have been dreaming of racing in the Ironman for some time now, and although it consumes a lot of time, it's worth it."

Robbins qualified for the Ironman at the Blackwater Eagleman Triathlon in Cambridge, Maryland in June, and has been competing in triathlons throughout the summer to prepare for the Ironman's 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and

26.2-mile run.

The Dallas native finished 69th out of over 1,700 participants at the Ironman U.S.A. event in Lake Placid, NY over the weekend, and he will participate in the 21st Annual Wilkes-Barre Triathlon this weekend — the same event where Robbins got his start eight years ago.

Ironman U.S.A. and the Blackwater Eagleman are two of six races in the U.S. run as qualifiers for the Ironman Triathlon.

"In 1994 I competed in the Wilkes-

Barre Triathlon just to see if I could finish it," Robbins said. "But since then it has almost become an addiction."

The addiction has quickly made Robbins the top area amateur in the event, where he has been the top local finisher for the last three consecutive years.

But every addiction has its downside, and for Robbins the long hours of practice and the strive for perfection have taken a lot of time out of his life to get to the level he is at today.

"It's a challenge," he said. "It's been a

long haul to build the pace and ability needed to get (to the Ironman)."

Wilkes-Barre Triathlon committee president Jim Harris III competed in the Ironman in 1993, and said he gave Robbins some important advice.

"I told him to have fun and run his own race," said Harris. That's always a problem with the Ironman. A lot of people forget their race plan and bunk in the run."

See ROBBINS, pg 10

Back Mountain teams bring home big load of tournament trophies

Back Mountain American takes District 16 9-10 crown

NANTICOKE — Aaron Perez's two-run single capped a six-run sixth inning to lead Back Mountain American to a 16-12 victory over Forty Fort on Monday in the championship game of the District 16 9-and-10-year-old baseball tournament.

Winning pitcher Cody Plesnar helped his cause with three hits and three RBI. Nick Lombard was 4-for-4, with two RBI, and Kevin Pierce went 3-for-3, with two RBI.

Matt Shaver added three hits.

Wilkes-Barre Rec 9-10-Year-Old Tournament

Back Mountain National wins championship

WILKES-BARRE — Winning pitcher Hunter Englehart went all six innings, allowing just four hits and striking out 10 to lead Back Mountain National past Forty Fort in the title game at the Wilkes-Barre Rec 9-10 tournament.

T.J. Stepanski and Kyle Farrell each had a pair of hits for Back Mountain, and Eric Cannon hit the team's only double.

Back Mountain National 7, Avoca/Dupont 2

DALLAS TWP. — Carson Baker pitched all six innings, struck out six and had a pair of hits in a victory over Avoca/Dupont.

Joe Murray added two hits for Back Mountain.

Back Mountain National 17, Exeter 4

EXETER — Carson Baker and Eric Cannon combined to throw a one-hitter as Back Mountain National cruised past Exeter.

The duo tallied four strikeouts.

Hunter Englehart led the offense with four hits, T.J. Stepanski and Joe Murray added three hits each and Cannon had two in the win.

Fetch's Wyoming/West Wyoming 11-12-Year-Old Tournament

Back Mountain American 6, Mayflower 5

Myer Messinger's RBI hit proved to be the game-winner



POST PHOTOS/JIM PHILLIPS

Back Mountain American made it to the semi-finals of the Kubis Tournament before losing for a second time. Photos are from BMT's 18-1 thumping of Northwest. Clockwise from top: Pat Healy applied a tag at third; Ryan Urzen ran for third early in the game. He was tagged out trying to make it to home; Dave Fetchko whirled and fired to first after fielding a bunt. It was not in time.

as Back Mountain American edged Mayflower 6-5 in the Fetch's Wyoming/West Wyoming 11-12-year-old tournament.

Matt Ruch fanned 12 and threw a two-hitter to lead Back Mountain American, and helped his cause at the plate with a double.

Messinger and Joe Collini each added two hits in the win.

Kubis Tournament

Ed-Lark slides past American to advance at Kubis Tourney

DALLAS TWP. — Kris Moules struck out 11 and took and no-hitter in the sixth inning before giving up two hits as Edwardsville-Larksville nipped Back Mountain American to advance in the Kubis Tournament.

Moules broke a scoreless tie in the fourth with a two-run homer and Alan Kocher doubled and scored for Ed-Lark.

David Fetchko struck out five, and Ryan Urzen and Tom Youells each singled for Back Mountain American in the losing effort.

American was awarded fourth-place trophies at the conclusion of the game.

Back Mountain American 8, Plains 7

DALLAS TWP. — Preston Balavage's pinch-hit home run proved to be the game winner at Back Mountain American eliminated Plains. David and Ryan Urzen each had two hits and Steve Meskers and Derek Martin each doubled for Back Mountain American in the winning effort.

David Fetchko came on in relief to retire the side in sixth inning and seal the victory in relief of winning pitcher Josh Shaver.

Back Mountain American 10, Swoyersville 0

DALLAS TWP. — Henry Messinger struck out seven and gave up only three hits as Back Mountain American eliminated Swoyersville.

Tom Youells had two hits, including a triple, Ryan Urzen doubled twice and Messinger and David Zurek each collected two hits for the winners.

Ed-Lark 8, Back Mountain National 1

DALLAS TWP. — Kevin

See ROUNDUP, pg 10

Racing and racers are great, but it's time to lose the Dixie flag



From the bullpen

Timothy J. Raub

The world of auto racing is quite an interesting sport, to say the least.

Covering the Pennsylvania 500 for the Times Leader this weekend, I expected to see the usual big leaguers most professional athletes take part in with

the media, and be chasing drivers around all weekend in search of just one quote they may not care to give.

But after about only a few hours Friday morning, my expectations of the fastest growing sport in the country, and arguably the largest single-day sports venue annually in the state, changed about as fast as a pit stop on race day.

From top to bottom, the professionalism of the drivers, crew members and owners was remarkable.

When called upon, drivers spent a great deal of time talking

to fans and media personnel (with the exception of a certain Berwick native who seems to think he is too good for local media), and maintained a stress free, family atmosphere at the same time.

I couldn't believe just how easy it was to be a journalist when people bend over backwards to help you.

But as much as I enjoyed the hustle and bustle of race weekend at Pocono, something really bothered me.

Pocono officials have been hosting three African-American youths from the inner cities of

Philadelphia and New Jersey throughout the summer, in attempts to raise their interest in the world of auto racing with the hopes of giving them enough of an interest, they seek a possible career in the sport — a truly phenomenal idea.

But in an attempt to gain a feeling of what it is like to be a NASCAR driver, I looked around the memorabilia stands and team trailers and couldn't believe the hypocrisy of, what on the surface seemed like an honorable gesture.

The visibility of the Confederate flag, with a symbolism that

screams the racist past of the South, totally indulges in what NASCAR and the United States, for that matter, have been spending a lifetime trying away from.

That flag has no place in this world, and its bearers are only promoting a truly dark and forgettable past in a portion of the country where even today, people of color fight for equality.

If NASCAR wants to make their sport more ethnically and racially diverse, like all other sports in America, then the flag must not be allowed.

It is a slap to support diversity

and at the same time promote hatred. Supporters of the Confederate flag will try to dance around the issue, and deny the true meaning of it, but the fact of the matter is it's symbol promotes hatred.

Hey, I'm a strong supporter of an individual's freedom of speech, but not at the hindrance of an entire ethnic or racial group.

It is time for NASCAR to take a stand.

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