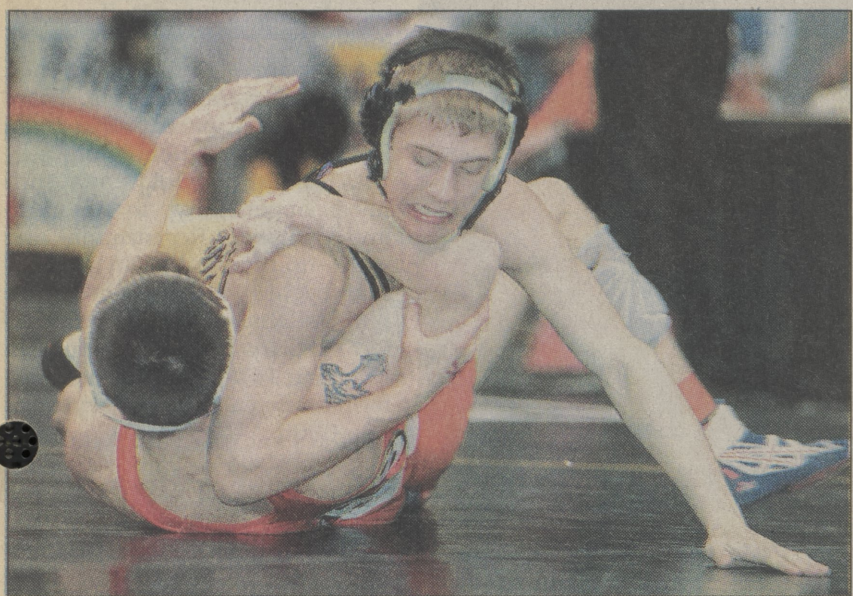


THE DALLAS POST

SportsWeek

Section 2



FOR THE DALLAS POST/S. JOHN WILKIN

Matt Dragon got an elbow in the chin from Greg Jensen of Juniata High School during the PIAA Wrestling Championships at the Giant Center in Hershey March 6. Dragon won an 11-4 decision and went on to finish fifth in the state at 130 lb.

Dragon takes 5th at state tournament

By JOE PETRUCCI
For The Dallas Post

HERSHEY — An undefeated favorite coming into the PIAA Wrestling Championships, Matt Dragon had some lofty expectations placed on his 130-pound frame.

Two losses and a shoulder injury on Friday night turned those hopes into a brief nightmare. But the same determination the Lake-Lehman sophomore used to win every bout before Friday came in handy in the Class 2A fifth-place final.

Dragon used a bit of trickery to score three points in the final seconds of regulation to force overtime and then scored a takedown with two seconds left in the one-minute extra period for a 6-4 win over Wilson Area senior Ed Labach.

"You have to keep going until the buzzer," Dragon said. "Keep on fighting and leave everything out there."

Dragon said the shoulder pain that he

Disputed foul costs Weber his chance, page 10

suffered in his semifinal loss to eventual champion Dana Gingerich, a senior from Delone Catholic, wasn't a factor in the fifth-place final.

"Once I got out there, the pain wasn't there," said Dragon. "The adrenaline took over."

Dragon rode Labach throughout the second period to keep things scoreless heading into the third. With Dragon on bottom, Labach caught him in a spladle — a leg and arm wrapped around Dragon's leg and arm — and the Black Knight surrendered three points. Dragon spent the next minute slowly working his right shoulder — the one he injured Friday night — out of the hold.

"When he hit me with the spladle, I was

going to wait to try to get out but I did it in little bursts every 10 seconds," Dragon said. "I knew exactly how much time was left. Then I slipped my shoulder out."

Dragon then mustered a reversal but time was winding down. With less than 10 seconds left, Dragon intentionally let Labach escape with the hopes of taking Labach back down without giving him a chance to fully get up. Labach stayed on the mat and Dragon pounced on him and was awarded a takedown at the buzzer to tie things up at 4 and force overtime.

"It was just instincts. I don't know if some (refs) would have counted it as two (points), if he didn't have enough time to get to his feet," said Dragon.

As the one-minute extra period wound down, Dragon got a single leg and eventually spun around Labach to get the takedown

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Lohin leads Queensmen

By KEVIN KAZOKAS
For The Dallas Post

HAZLETON — Senior center David Lohin led O'Reilly's strong inside attack with his 17 points as the Queensmen rolled to a 69-48 victory against Pottsville Nativity BVM in a PIAA Class A second-round game at Hazleton Area High School.

O'Reilly (21-8) will face District 4 champion Muncy (26-3) Friday at a site and time to be determined. Muncy defeated Galeton 63-48 Tuesday night to advance.

"All of our players came up big," said Lohin, one of four Queensmen who finished in double figures. "We had a lot of diverse scoring."

Most of that scoring came from inside the three-point arc. Junior forward Matt Flanagan added 11, Tim Crossin had six and Josh Aciekewicz added five.

But the Queensmen, as a team, made only a trio of three-point baskets.

Along with that inside game, O'Reilly relied on quick ball movement and an aggressive defense.

"We just figured, man-to-man, we'd make them (the Hilltoppers) dribble inside the arc, and it worked," O'Reilly head coach Mark Belenski said. "We played excellent defensively. That's what got us here and what got us by tonight."

The Queensmen overcame four deficits during a see-saw first quarter before a Lynn free throw put them ahead 20-19 at the end of the period. The basket ignited a 7-0 O'Reilly run and gave the Queensmen a lead they never relinquished.

O'Reilly expanded the margin to 37-31 by halftime and exploded for an 8-0 run during the third quarter. The surge opened up a 49-37 lead with 1:45 to go in the period.

The Hilltoppers closed the gap eight early in the fourth quarter at 49-41. But the Queensmen got four consecutive baskets, including a three-pointer from junior Jason Blazosek, to increase the margin to 59-41 with 4:42 left in the game.

O'Reilly girls lose by 1 in first-round playoff

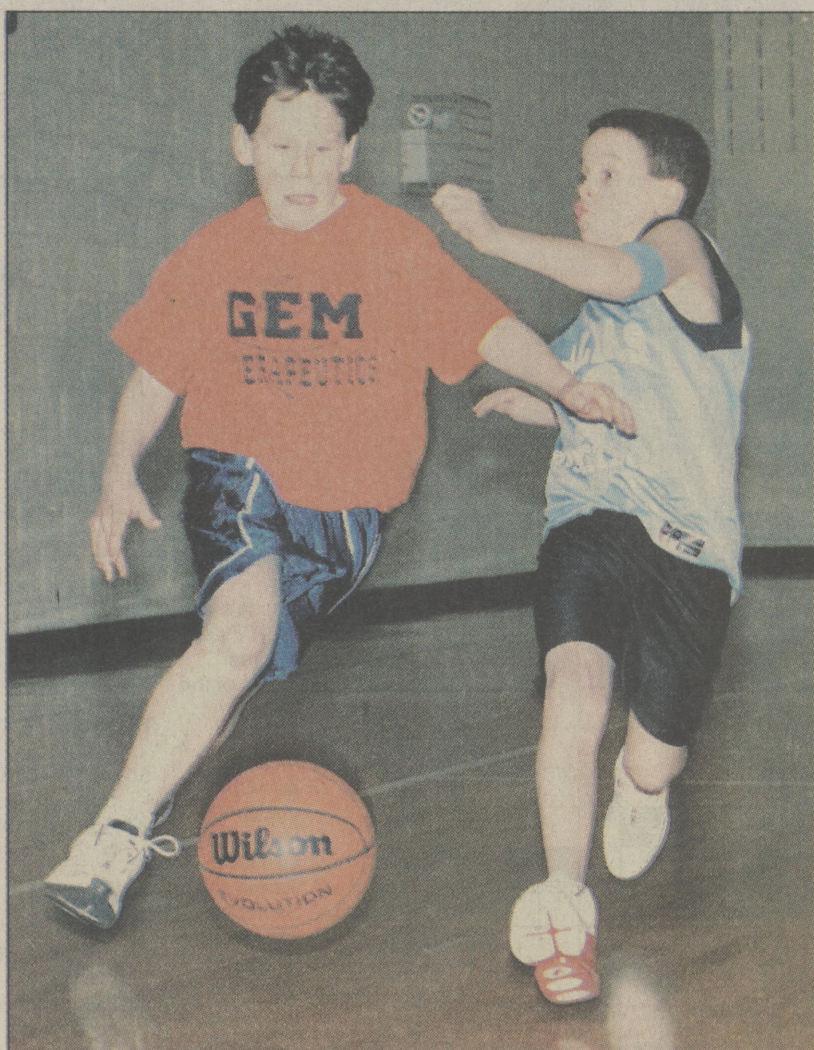
POTTSVILLE — The Bishop O'Reilly girls basketball team came close to pulling off a huge upset March 8, but District 11 champion Cardinal Brennan held on for a 41-40 victory in a PIAA Class A game at Martz Hall.

District 2 runner-up O'Reilly ended its season at 18-9, but did triple its win total from a season ago. The Queenswomen will return four starters next season, including Janelle Zabresky. The sophomore center paced her team with 14 points. Molly Guntli, the lone senior starter, completed her career with 13 points. Freshman Erin Chesnavich added 13.



FOR THE DALLAS POST/FRED ADAMS

Shannon Thomas drove past Erin Ensminger of Palmyra during Saturday's first-round playoff game.



POST PHOTOS/JIM PHILLIPS

Steven Olshemski drove past Chris Ellis on a fast break.

Mountaineers face down pesky foe

Staff report

WILKES-BARRE — Dallas withstood an unexpected Palmyra comeback March 8 for a 64-59 victory in the Mountaineers' PIAA Class 3A girls basketball playoff opener.

Dallas (23-5) played District 1 runner-up Nazareth Academy (20-8) on Wednesday. Nazareth Academy defeated District 3 third seed ELCO 41-38. The game took place too late to be included in this issue.

"I don't want to go through that again," Dallas coach Joe Noon said. "We had them. We had a game plan down, we had everything going for us, we had them by 10 at halftime. Then we came out in the third quarter and fell apart."

Noon pretty much summed up the third quarter, except for the fact that Dallas had a 13-point lead, 34-21, at intermission after scoring the half's final 10 points.

Jackie Hardwick, who scored a game-high 19 points and was fine after banging her head on the floor late in the game, matched a couple of early Palmyra baskets in the third quarter.

No problem, it seemed. Even when Palmyra went on one a brief run, Dallas recovered quickly and held a 45-32 lead with 2:38 left in the third.

But then what seemed like a harmless free throw by Jess Uhrich triggered 15 consecutive Palmyra points to end the quarter. The Cougars outscored Dallas 26-11 during the period by shooting 10-of-15 from the field.

Erin Ensminger then drained a three-pointer to start the fourth quarter, giving Palmyra a 50-45 lead.

"You can't take the human element out of basketball," Noon said. "The kids panicked and that was it. But we got them back together."

The uniting force was the press, and Dallas started beating Palmyra to the ball and in transition. The Mountaineers regained the lead for good, 57-56, on Hardwick's three-point play with 1:57 to play.

"The key was we pressed," said Meredith Lacey. "We pressed, they panicked and they forced their shots."

Dallas's Shannon Thomas kept the lead intact in the final 32 seconds with five points, including two from the foul line with seven seconds left that sealed Palmyra's fate. She finished with 16 points.

"We all worked so hard for this and we weren't going to let it go so easily," Hardwick said.

The game was the first state appearance for Dallas's all-junior starting lineup. The five received strong support from their three subs — senior Kelly Brzozowski and sophomores Cory Patton and Megan Savage — who outscored Palmyra's bench, 15-2.

Lloyd named to national team for student-athletes



Samantha Lloyd

Wyoming Seminary senior Samantha Lloyd of Shavertown, a members of the Sem varsity field hockey team, has been named to the National Field Hockey Coaches Association 2002 High School National Academic Squad, announced David L. Davies, dean of the Upper School.

To be selected, a student-athlete must be a high school senior who has been nominated by their high school coach and who have achieved a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.8 out of 4.0 through the first quarter of the 2002-03 academic year.

Lloyd, daughter of Tom and Susan Lloyd, played at midfield and forward for the Lady Blue Knights. She received the team's 2002 offensive MVP award.

Noon makes all star team

Jennifer Noon of Shavertown, a junior field hockey player at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., was recently chosen to the 2001-2002 Big East Academic All Star team.

Jenn was also presented with the 2002-Mission Statement Award-this award is voted on by the team and awarded to the member of the field hockey team who best approached and embodied the spirit of the teams' mission statement.

Jenn will also take on the role as a tri-captain.

Schilling scores two goals in Pirates' victory

Jason Schilling, Dallas Township, recently celebrated his ninth birthday by scoring two goals in the Pocono Pirates Mite Red team's 3-0 victory over Lehigh Valley.

Other Back Mountain Pirates skating in the victory included John Dougherty, Dallas Township; Hunter Hackling, Noxen; Casey McAndrew, Dallas, and Joey Miscavage, Harveys Lake.

DYB 5th graders edge Gem in classic championship game

Chris Ellis led a balanced scoring attack with 9 points as the DYB 5th graders edged Gem Therapeutics 34-32 in one of the most exciting championship games in DYB tournament history.

D.J. Berley and Chris Dailey added 6 points each for Dallas while Nick Lombard had 5 and Cody Plesnar 4. Gem was led by Joey Murray with a game-high 18 points and Ryan McAndrew with 4. Dallas reached the final with a 39-24 victory over St. Mary's of Avoca. Chris Dailey led the way with 8 points, while Taylor Dunn added 6 and Hunter Englehart 5. Jimmy Brown had 4 points and Mike Dia-co 2.

Banquet tickets on sale

Dallas Youth Basketball will hold its year-end banquet on Sunday, April 13 at 6 p.m. at Genetti's in Wilkes Barre. The cost is \$13 for adults, \$10 for children 12 and under, and age 4 and under are free. Players attending with a paying adult are free but are required to have a ticket to gain admittance. For more information, contact Peggy Lacey at 696-4603.