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SportsWeek

Wrestling Preview

Mounts aim for respectability

By KEVIN KAZOKAS
Post Correspondent

DALLAS TWP. — When Mike Ropietski considers the future of the Dallas wrestling program, he sees plenty of promise. But as his team enters the 2003-04 season, the second-year Mountaineers coach speaks only of modest goals.

That's because the team will feature nine sophomores in its starting lineup. The youth and lack of experience could pose challenges for Dallas as it competes against traditional wrestling superpowers such as Berwick, Pittston Area and Lake-Lehman in the fierce Wyoming Valley Conference West Division.

"Our main goal is to make district duals," said Ropietski, whose team went 6-20 last season, his first on the job. "At least .500 or better we want to be. That's a victory for us for how young we are. Then we can build off that."

The Mountaineers will depend on a quartet of wrestlers to lead the way. Senior A.J. Musto placed fourth at districts last season and recorded 25 wins. He's projected to wrestle at 103 pounds.

Senior Morgan Anderson will compete at 160. He registered more than 20 wins last year. His coach would like to see him reach 30 this year and possibly make a trip to states.

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Knights face new challenges

By KEVIN KAZOKAS
Post Correspondent

LEHMAN TWP. — It's a program distinguished by a proud tradition. But after losing seven starters from last year's Class 2A district duals championship team to graduation, the Lake-Lehman Black Knights wrestling team will take a cautiously optimistic approach to the 2003-04 season.

"Obviously, we have to fill a lot of holes," said coach Phil Lipski, who guided his squad to the PIAA state quarterfinals in team duals competition last year. The Black Knights, winners of the District 2 2A title 12 of the last 14 seasons, saw nine seniors from last year's club graduate. As a

result, this year's team will look to a host of young wrestlers to step up.

"Our biggest concern is going to be the lower weights," said Lipski, whose projected lineup features no wrestler above the sophomore level in the bottom four weight classes. Freshman Art Spencer will likely wrestle at 103 pounds. Lipski projected sophomore Tim Ford to start at 112, freshman Jared Kopetchne at 119 and sophomore Steve Schwartz at 125.

Despite the lack of varsity experience in many of Lake-Lehman's starters, several veteran team members expressed confidence that the club can remain powerful.

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Scholastic Roundup

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Bishop Hannan 51, Lake-Lehman 40

DEC. 3 — Sheree Horvath paced Lake-Lehman with 15 points.

Tunkhannock 55, Mountain View 44

DEC. 3 — Jessica Wildrick scored 18 points and Krista Flaherty added 11 as Tunkhannock defeated Mountain View.

O'Reilly 45, Nativity BVM 43

DEC. 2 — Janelle Zabresky of Bishop O'Reilly scored 14 points and was named the tournament MVP as the Mountaineers defeated Nativity BVM 45-43 on Tuesday in the championship game of the Plymouth Rotary Tournament.

Meyers 58, Tunkhannock 47

DEC. 2 — Jamie Morrison scored 10 points for the Tigers, who fell behind 32-13 at the half and never recovered.

Dallas 69, Seminary 30

DEC. 1 — Dallas took a 21-point lead after the first quarter and cruised to its second victory.

Shannon Thomas led Dallas with 17 points followed by Jackie Hardwick with 14 and Rosalyn Wentko with 11. Thomas hit two 3-point shots and Meredith Lacey had one and nine points overall.

Janelle Krisulevich led Seminary (0-1) with 12 points.

Lake-Lehman 39, Mountain View 33

DEC. 1 — Kika Nockemann scored 10 points in leading Lake-Lehman to a victory.

Sheree Horvath and Jessica Turak added six points apiece for the Black Knights, who broke a tie after three quarters by outscoring Mountain View 16-10 in the final period.

Bishop O'Reilly 48, Stroudsburg 23

PLYMOUTH — Erin Chesnavich and Janelle Zabresky combined for 32 points as Bishop O'Reilly routed Stroudsburg in the third-place game of the Lady Spartan Tip-Off Tournament at Wyoming Valley West High School.

Zabresky made six field goals and shot 3-for-4 from the line.

Dallas 54, Marion Catholic 53

DALLAS — Shannon Thomas scored 14 points, Rosalyn Wentko had 11 and Cory Patton 10 as the Mountaineers nipped the Fillies, last season's Class A state-runnerup.

Lauren Patton hit two 3-pointers and scored 10 points; Jackie Hardwick added seven points and Ashleigh King hit for six.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Bishop O'Hara 55, Dallas 53

DEC. 3 — Robbie Myers had a game-high 20 points for Dallas, which gave up a 28-22 halftime lead. Chris Higdon scored nine points, and Ben Thomas hit two 3-pointers.

GAR 88, Lehman 42

DEC. 2 — Alan Sheridan knocked down five 3-pointers and finished with 15 points for Lehman. Teammate Kevin Racemus scored 15, including three 3-pointers.

Meyers 65, Dallas 49

NOV. 29 — Jaron George scored 14 points to lead Meyers to a 65-49 victory over Dallas in a boys high school basketball exhibition game Saturday.

Matt Wilson made two three-point shots for Dallas and led the Moun-

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Jackie Hardwick drove through a horde of Abington Heights defenders in last week's game.

Lady Mounts batter 4A champs

By JOHN ERZAR
For The Post

DALLAS — Aside from one glitch handling the Comets' press and a couple of misses on high-percentage shots, the Dallas Mountaineers completely dominated Abington Heights, eight-time District 2 Class 4A champions, last Tuesday while storming to a 72-39 thrashing.

"We played well and executed," said Dallas coach Joe Noon. "(Abington) has only one of their girls back from last year, but they are a well-coached team and a good team."

Dallas' senior starting lineup, all four-year starters, exploited Abington's inexperience early and continued to do so throughout the game.

Meredith Lacey celebrated her 18th birthday by dishing out seven assists during the game and doughnuts after it. She helped set the tone with three sharp passes in the game's first two minutes that led to two baskets by Rosalyn Wentko and another by Jackie Hardwick, and a 16-4 lead entering the second quarter.

"It's almost like a sixth sense you can say," Lacey said. "Most of us have been playing together since third or fourth grade. It's kind of an instinct that we know what moves we're going to do and which spot we're going to."

Wentko and Hardwick's place Tuesday, for the most part, was underneath the basket. Wentko finished with 25 points and Hardwick added 12, and their rebounding led to sec-

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Shannon Thomas blocked the path of Abington Heights' Katie Hirschuer.

Rec group mulls field purchase

By RONALD BARTIZEK
Post Staff

Back Mountain Recreation Inc. is looking at alternative sites to its Lehman Township land for baseball fields, including the area that has been used by Back Mountain Baseball for 40 years and is owned by Dallas School District.

Unanticipated excavation costs for the Lehman land led the group to consider other spots. "All options are still on the table," said Brian Grove, Executive Director of the rec group, including building fields as originally planned at the 130-acre regional park complex.

Back Mountain Baseball Inc., which operates Little League baseball and softball programs, has tried in the past to purchase the school fields, but their offers have been rebuffed.

Grove said the boards of the two organizations have been working together on the site search, but at this point BMT Recreation will make any purchase. "Our intention is to use BMT Rec funds to do that," he said.

"I can tell you that Back Mountain Rec is going to make an offer," said Jack Snyder, president of BMT Baseball, although he wasn't sure how much it would be for. Snyder said the last time he talked with the school board about the approximately 12 acres, the asking price was \$1.2 million.

The land, which is in Dallas Township, is zoned S-1, with use allowed for one- and two-family homes, agriculture, public and semi-public facilities (except hospitals and nursing homes) and utility firms.

Bruce Goeringer, who took a seat on the school board last week, favors keeping the fields where they are. He fears that if the fields are moved to Lehman, some families will decide that is too far to travel for frequent games and practices.

"I think they're in an ideal location now," he said.

But Goeringer said the needs of the baseball league and school district would have to be balanced, since it would be unwise to dispose of land that might be useful in the future for school facilities.

If other options don't pan out, the fields will still be built in Lehman, both Grove and Snyder said. "They're still committed if need be for us to go out there," said Snyder.

The latest plan for the Lehman land shows seven baseball fields, four of them regulation Little League size and one for tee-ball. Two others are multi-purpose fields that can accommodate both baseball and soccer.

Wrestlers place at Y tourney

Wrestlers from Back Mountain Wrestling Club participated in the YMCA Turkey Classic in November.

From left, first row: Connor Martinez, Cole Dixon (3rd Place, PeeWee 55), Mark Michno (1st Place, Bantam 65), Jimmy Caffrey (4th Place, Bantam 65), Aidan Martinez (4th Place, PeeWee 55).

Back row: Adam Goeringer (1st place Midget 95), Keith Sulewski, James Rosencrans, Brian DeLuca, Billy Dixon.



Emily Foran named conference all-academic

AMHERST, MA — Emily Foran, a junior who plays for the Amherst College women's golf team (Dallas, PA/Wyoming Seminary), has been named to the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) Fall All-Academic Team.

Members of the team must be starters or key reserves on an officially sponsored varsity team with a grade point average of at least 3.35, or equivalent.