

Sports Week

DALLAS BOYS BASKETBALL



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Dallas senior Ben Thomas (14) will be one of the starters when Dallas begins regular season play Tuesday night at Meyers.

LAKE-LEHMAN BOYS BASKETBALL



TIMES LEADER FILE PHOTO/S. JOHN WILKIN

Former Lake-Lehman standout Dave Clancy enters his second season as head coach. Senior Alan Sheridan (3) is expected to be one of the top players in the WVC.

Ready to rumble

Angry about the transfers of two players, the Dallas basketball team is ready to prove the doubters wrong

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

DALLAS TWP. — Of the many duties Dallas basketball head coach Ted Jackson Jr. will have to perform during the 2005-06 season, getting his team motivated won't be one of them.

That was taken care of when District 2 officials recently approved the transfers of two former Mountaineers — two of the team's best players — to other schools in the Wyoming Valley Conference. Junior guard Ryan Nemetz is now playing at Bishop Hoban and 6-foot-8 senior center Robbie Myers is playing at Crestwood.

"Our guys are angry at the world," said Jackson, whose team opens play in the WVC Division II on Tuesday night at Meyers. "There weren't many people who thought we could be successful without those two players."

So far, the Mountaineers have proven the doubters wrong.

Dallas enters the regular season as the only undefeated team in the 22-team conference. The Mountaineers rolled to an 8-0 record during the preseason, including wins against previously unbeaten Coughlin and Berwick. Dallas also

defeated District 4's Milton, which was ranked as the No. 9 Class 3A team in the state.

"I like that fact that we had some confidence right now," said the second-year head coach. "I think if we had gotten off to a bad start, it could have been a long season. Our guys give the maximum effort every time down the floor. We lost a huge bulk of our scoring and rebounds when (Myers and Nemetz) left. But we have a lot of kids who have stepped up their game."

Dallas is led by junior Brad Pagula, the only returning starter from last year's 18-8 team that advanced to the District 2 Class 3A quarterfinals. The 6-3 forward scored more than 150 points during this year's preseason. And center Eric Domzalski (sr., 6-5) has been an inside force for the Mountaineers.

"Brad has the ability to be dominating and take over a game," said Jackson. "Eric has started playing like that, too. We have other kids in the rotation who have adjusted to their roles. Everyone has played role in us winning."

Pagula and Domzalski will be joined in the starting lineup by guards Ben Thomas (sr., 6-2)

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"Our guys are angry at the world."

Ted Jackson
Dallas head coach

Building a program

Second-year coach Dave Clancy moving the Lake-Lehman boys basketball program in the right direction

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

LEHMAN TWP. — Dave Clancy isn't worried about his team's won-loss record during the preseason. The Lake-Lehman boys basketball coach has been too busy trying to rebuild a program.

And get his team ready for the games that mean something.

"I think playing a tough (nonleague) schedule is going to help us down the road," said the second-year head coach, whose team took an 0-4 record into Saturday's game against Meyers. "We're getting ready for our league games. Those are the games that count."

The Black Knights begin their 2005-06 season in the Wyoming Valley Conference Division III at MMI Prep on Tuesday night in Hazleton. Lake-Lehman returns just one starter — senior Alan Sheridan — from a team that finished with a 6-6 record in the division and a 6-18 mark overall.

"We have to keep stressing the positive," said Clancy. "We try to keep everything in

perspective. We have a lot of seniors that didn't see much playing time last year. They looked forward to playing and they're enjoying their time on the floor.

"Our strength is our young kids coming up. There's light at the end of the tunnel."

Sheridan averaged almost 10 points per game last season. The 6-foot shooting guard is expected to provide a huge portion of Lake-Lehman's offense this season.

"Alan is a real nice player," said Clancy, who coached at Elk Lake before taking over the Black Knight program. "He can score one-on-one or from anywhere on the floor. Everyone knows that and they'll be keying on him. But he's not backing down."

Sheridan will be joined in the starting lineup by point guard Dave Hossage (sr., 5-10), forward Jacob Novak (sr., 5-10), forward Kevin Racemus (jr., 6-0) and center Mike Sadowski (sr., 6-1). Racemus saw significant playing time last season.

Other players expected to receive playing time include junior guard Derek Shurmanek, freshman guard Mike Ryan, junior center/

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Ragukas isn't your typical All-American girl

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

LEHMAN TWP. — It's the kind of proclamation that stops you dead in your tracks. Especially when the subject is field hockey and the person making the statement is Lake-Lehman head coach Jean Lipski.

The longtime leader of the Black Knights program has been coached dozens of all-stars during her time at Lake-Lehman, including players who went on to become highly-successful in college at the Division I-A level.

But Traci Ragukas is in a class by herself.

"She's the best player I've ever coached," said Lipski. "And that's



Traci Ragukas

really is saying something. I've coached some great, great players. But Traci is special."

The Lake-Lehman senior took another place in school history by being named to the Penn Monto/NFHCA High School All-American Team for the second consecutive season. Ragukas is the only player in the tradition-rich Black Knight program to be named to the All-American team.

"It felt the same as last year. It's a very big honor," said Ragukas, 18, who joined Crestwood's Aime Sur-

villa and Elizabeth Drazdowski as the only Wyoming Valley Conference players to be named to the team. "It's a team sport, not an individual sport. I always have my teammates around me."

Ragukas, a three-time all-state selection who will play at Michigan State next fall, was the third-leading scorer for the Black Knights this year. But Lipski says the soft-spoken Ragukas had the ability to record much gaudier numbers.

"A lot of kids like to see their names in light," she said. "So many kids don't want to give the ball up. But Traci isn't like that. She's a team player almost to a fault. She's a great passer and she loves to pass the ball to teammates. She's the

most humble star I've been around."

Lipski expects big things when Ragukas begins her career in the Big Ten Conference.

"I think she's going to make an impact right away, even at place like Michigan State," said the Lake-Lehman coach.

Lipski hopes Ragukas' honor pays long-term dividends for the Black Knight program.

"I think it shows younger players that you can accomplish great things if you're willing to put in the time and commitment," she said. "You can do anything if you put you're mind to it. Traci Ragukas is a perfect example of that."



TIMES LEADER FILE PHOTO/FRED ADAMS

Lake-Lehman senior Traci Ragukas, right, was named to the Penn Monto/NFHCA High School All-American team earlier this week.