

Sports Week



TIMES LEADER STAFF PHOTO/PETE G. WILCOX

Lisa Giacometti, a cross country and track and field standout at Dallas High School, recently signed a letter of intent attend Syracuse University. Attending the ceremony are Barbara Giacometti, mother; Lisa Giacometti, scholarship recipient; and Joe Giacometti, father. Second row: Matt Samuel, Dallas coach; Jack Wolensky, athletic director; and Tom Traver, assistant principal.

Giacometti juiced about the Orange

Dallas runner accepts scholarship offer from Syracuse University

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

DALLAS TWP. — With every championship she won as a member of the Dallas cross country and track and field teams, Lisa Giacometti established herself as one of the premier long-distance runners in Pennsylvania.

Now, she's taken her place in even more elite company.

Giacometti recently accepted an offer to attend Syracuse University, receiving a financial aid package not often seen in the world of collegiate cross country and track, says her high school coach.

"I don't know too many athletes who have gotten that kind of an offer in these sports," said Matt Samuel, who was a standout performer at the University of Pittsburgh. "It hard to turn down that kind of offer, especially from a good school like Syracuse."

Wearing a Syracuse shirt and a white skirt, Giacometti made her announcement during a ceremony last week in the Dallas library. Although she didn't discuss specifics of the financial aid package, the three-time District 2 Class 2A cross country champion said it was an offer she couldn't refuse.

"I got a great (financial aid) package from a school with great athletic and academic programs," she said "How could you not go there?"

During the last four years, Giacometti has improved as an athlete and team leader, says

Samuel.

"Lisa has matured in the last few years to become a leader on the field of competition and off," said. "She's great with her teammates. She's a great example of how to be a great athlete and a great leader."

The daughter of Joe and Barbara Giacometti of Dallas finished her high school career as one of the most dominant long-distance runners in Wyoming Valley Conference and District 2 history.

In addition to her three individual district championships, the 17-year-old also led Dallas to four consecutive district team titles, as well as Class 2A cross country state championships in 2003 and 2005. She finished sixth in the state meet during her sophomore year.

Giacometti has also been outstanding in track and field, capturing three consecutive 3,200-meter district championships and three titles as a member of the 4x800 relay team. And she still has her senior season ahead of her.

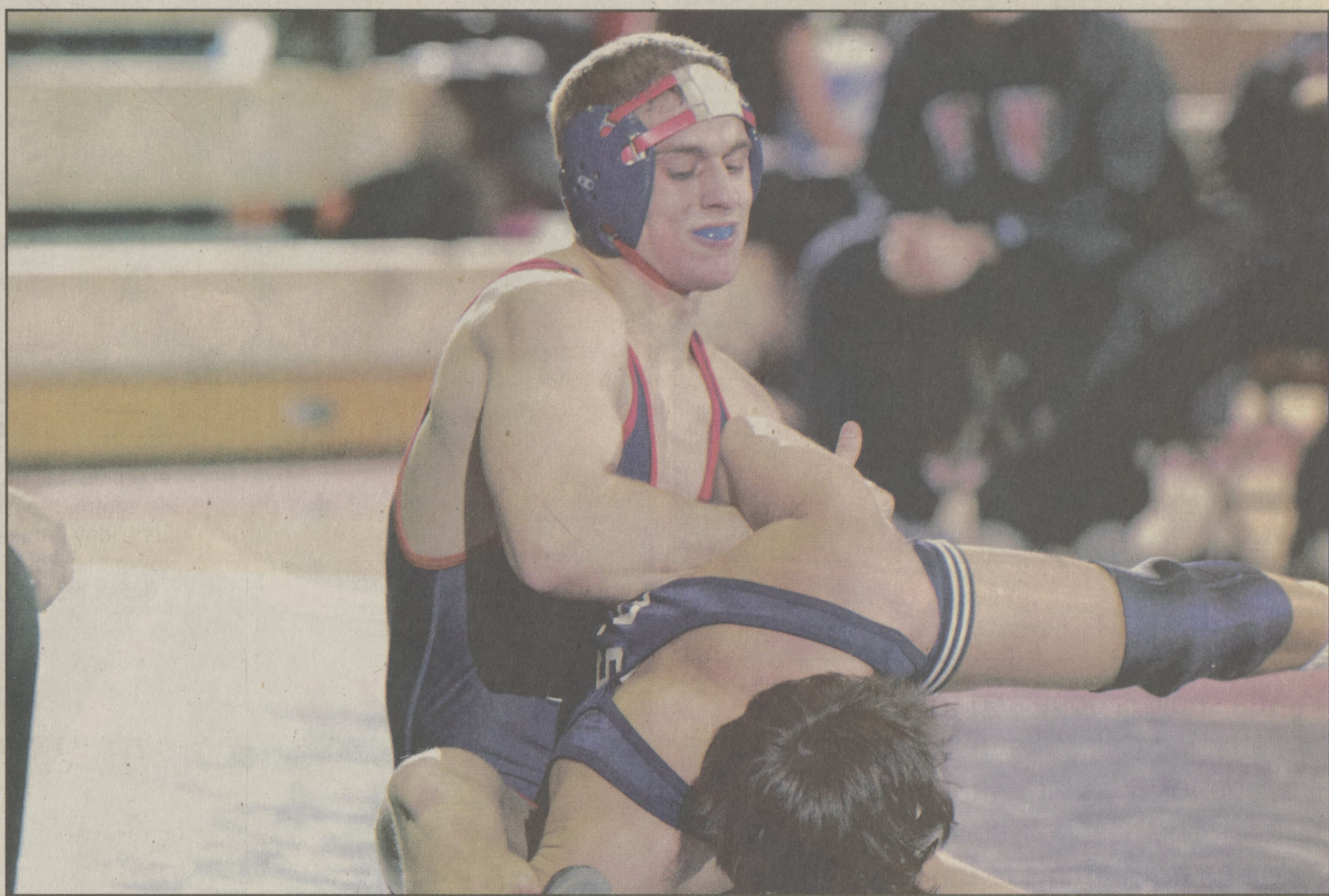
"She has all of the tools to run on the Division I (college) level," said Samuel. "She was great in high school, but I think she has even more to give. I told the coaches who were recruiting her that I don't think they'll be getting a finished product."

Giacometti considered attending Maryland, Penn State and Pittsburgh before choosing Syracuse. She will compete for the cross country team, in addition to competing for the school's indoor and outdoor track programs.

"I like cross country better, but I think I'm better in track,"

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Dragon hopes to be All-American in Oklahoma City



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PENN ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS

Former Lake-Lehman standout Matt Dragon recently qualified for the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships in Oklahoma City.

Sooner or later

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

On the surface, it might appear as though things come pretty easy to Matt Dragon.

After all, the former Lake-Lehman wrestling standout entered the University of Pennsylvania with hopes of winning an Ivy League championship.

He did. Dragon wanted to win an Eastern Intercollegiate Wrestling Association championship.

He did. And Dragon wanted to qualify for the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships in Oklahoma City.

He did. But the 149-pound Quaker freshman — who is well-known in the wrestling community for his tireless work ethic and intense conditioning program — didn't accomplish though feats with a snap of his fingers.

"It's been a lot of hard work," said Dragon, who became the first Penn freshman to win an EIWA championship since 2001 and only the third in program history. "I spent a lot of time preparing for those matches. It's very satisfying that all of the hard work is paying off."

Dragon was recently named to the All-Ivy League all-star team. He finished with a 6-0 record in league dual meets and defeated several nationally-ranked opponents in non-league matches. The son of Matthew and Deborah Dragon of Harveys Lake entered the EIWA Championships in Bethlehem as the top seed.

Dragon recorded a pin and a major decision in his first two matches, before posting a convincing 11-1 major decision against Lehigh University's Trevor Chin, who also wrestled in Pennsylvania during his high school days.

"I just took it one match at a time," said Dragon. "I wrestled smart and aggressive. That's what you have to do to be successful on this level."

The success at the EIWA tournament earned Dragon — who is four wins shy of setting the Penn record for victories by a freshman — a berth in the national championships. He entered the prestigious tournament as the No. 12 seed. The top eight finishers in each weight class earn All-American status.

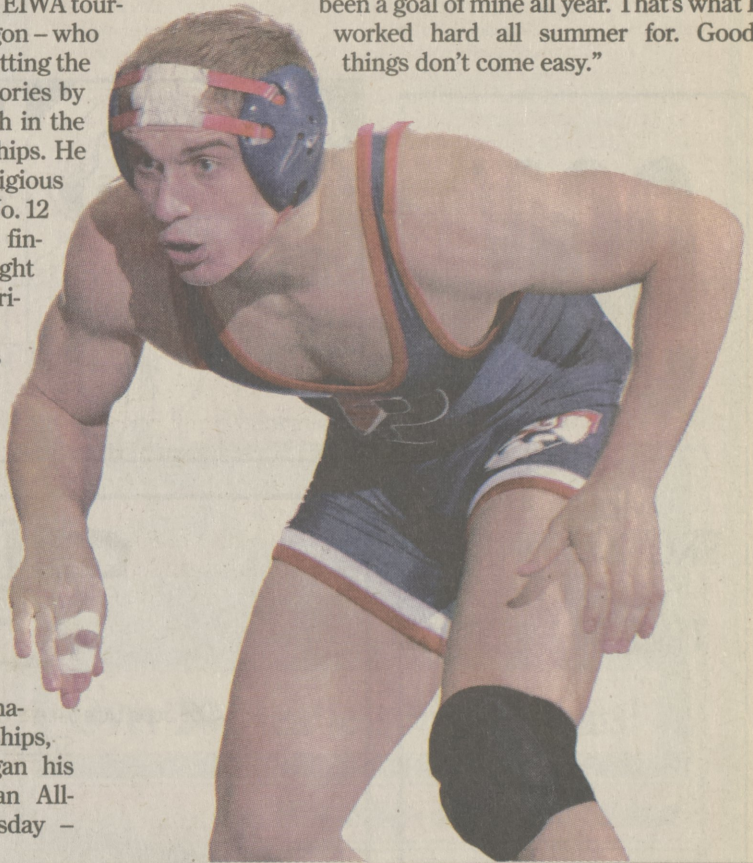
"One of my goals was to win (EIWAs)," he said. "That was a stepping stone. My next goal is to become an All-American. You have to start with smaller goals and work your way up to bigger goals."

Going into the national championships, Dragon — who began his quest to become an All-American on Thursday —

knew it was going to be tough road to the medal-winners' podium.

"All of the guys here are going to be tough," said Dragon, during an interview from his Oklahoma City hotel room. "You go into most matches not knowing anything about your opponent. The good thing is that they don't know you either."

"Being on the podium would be huge. It's been a goal of mine all year. That's what I worked hard all summer for. Good things don't come easy."



The Ross Elementary boys basketball team recently captured the championship in the Lake-Lehman PTO/PTA fifth and sixth grade league. Members of the team, from left, are Shane Kreller, Zack Manganella, Jake Lawson and Aaron LeValley. Second row: coach Jim Partington, Josh Davenport, Jared Novitski, Justin Partington, Ryan Hoyt, Steven Hagenbach and coach Mark LeValley.

Manganella, Kneal lead teams to titles

Zack Manganella made three free throws in the final 30 seconds to lift Ross Elementary to a 33-31 victory against the Lake-Noxen Shorties in the Lake-Lehman Elementary PTO/PTA fifth and sixth grade boys championship game at Lake-Lehman High School.

Ross Elementary was led by Jared Novitski's game-high 26 points. Novitski scored 20 of those points in the second half and also connected on two critical free throws in the game's final minutes. Manganella added five points, while Steven Hagenbach chipped in two.

Christopher Edkins led the Shorties with 19 points. Christopher O'Connor added eight points, while Danny Williams and Ryan Higgins each scored two points.

Ross Elementary ended Lake-Lehman-Jackson's two-year reign as champion by defeating Lehman-Jackson Gold, 30-26, in a semi-

final contest. Five different players scored for Ross Elementary, led by Novitski's 14 points. Zack Manganella added six points, while Justin Partington and Aaron LeValley finished with four points apiece.

Cody Poepperling scored a game-high 16 points to lead Lehman-Jackson Gold. Teammate Kevin Bohan added eight points.

Ross Elementary finished the season with a 10-1 overall record. The championship is the first title for Ross Elementary in its third year of league play.

DALLAS YOUTH BASKETBALL

7TH/8TH GRADE GIRLS
Burger King's Sara Kneal scored 15 points and Samantha Martin added 12 to post a 37-30 win against Intergrated Power in the playoff championship game. Lauren Skudalski added

10 points for the winners. Intergrated Power was led by Ellen Arnaud, who finished with a game-high 21 points. Sarah Muldoon added five points while Demetra Szatkowski and Taylor Kapral chipped in two points each.

5TH/6TH GRADE BOYS

Alex Zubko and John Murray each scored 13 points as Gordon Smith Insurance/Eyecare Specialists captured the playoff championship with a 47-39 win against Dough Company. FJ Constantino added 11 points, while Chris Ostrum chipped in six and Chris Boland finished with four.

The Dough Company was led by Jason Simonovich's 16 points. Donnie Behm added nine points, David Miller had eight and Rudy Georgetti chipped in four.

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