

# Sports Week



Mike Miller records an assist for Dallas during a recent volleyball game.

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Post Editor

LEHMAN TWP. — Noah Pickett never felt the sting of a Wyoming Valley Conference or District 2 loss during his days as a member of the Lake-Lehman volleyball team.

And the streak continues as a coach. Less than a month into his first season as head coach, Pickett has the Black Knights in a first-place tie with Bishop Hoban in the WVC. Both teams have perfect 9-0 records.

"We were very optimistic coming into the season," said Pickett, a 2000 graduate who took over the reins of the team from longtime head coach John Baranowski. "The Lake-Lehman volleyball program was always good. People expect them to be good. I don't know if we'll go undefeated, but we want to aim high."

The Dallas volleyball team is also enjoying success this season under head coach Mike Williams. The Mountaineers took a 4-1 record into a game against Berwick earlier this week. Dallas finished with a 6-9 record a year ago.

"I honestly didn't know what to expect coming in," said the second-year coach. "I thought

## Black Knights, Mounts rising to the challenge



Dallas volleyball players Josh Reese, left, and Jesse Reese rise above the net during a recent WVC volleyball game in the Dallas gym.

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### BASEBALL, SOFTBALL TEAMS A BIG HIT



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

The Dallas and Lake-Lehman baseball and softball teams continued to play well during recent action in the Wyoming Valley Conference. The Dallas baseball team - the only undefeated team remaining in the WVC - took a 5-0 record into Thursday's game against second-place Bishop Hoban. The Lake-Lehman baseball team has rebounded nicely after a slow start, including a 1-0 win against GAR for its second consecutive victory. The two Back Mountain high schools took center stage in a fantastic softball game last week, with Dallas posting a 1-0 win. Winning pitcher Sarah Swepston struck out 10, while pitcher Sheree Horvath recorded 14 strikeouts for Lake-Lehman. Horvath followed that performance with a 17-K, perfect game against Bishop O'Reilly. Above, Kasey Corbett scores the lone run for Dallas against Lehman.

## Mountaineers on track to win championship

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Post Editor

DALLAS TWP. — With everything Matt Samuel has accomplished during his five years as the head coach of the Dallas cross country and track teams, the following sentence is hard to believe:

The Mountaineer boys track and field teams have never won a Wyoming Valley Conference championship under Samuel.

There's a good chance that could change this year.

Dallas recently defeated Meyers and GAR to remain unbeaten in the WVC Division II. The Mountaineers have four meets remaining, including season-ending contests against Hanover Area and Lake-Lehman that should decide the championship.

But don't expect Samuel to be despondent if the team fails to bring home the title. "Winning a conference championship would be a nice little present and I think we have a good shot at winning it," said the highly-successful coach, who has won District 2 and state championships with the Dallas girls cross country and track teams. "I care a great deal about winning conference titles, but I really care a lot more about dis-

tricts. That's our time to shine. We want to be peaking at district time."

The Dallas track and field team is home to approximately 90 athletes. Even with three assistant coaches, running the program is a huge task.

"It's very difficult," said Samuel. "There are so many different events going on at the same time. Safety is always in the back of your mind and you also don't want to miss a kid competing. I want all of the kids to compete, do well, and have a good experience. A small victory for them is a large victory for

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## Knights hoping to clear hurdles to title

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Post Editor

LEHMAN TWP. — The reports of the contest came by cell phone.

While his girls team was competing in an early-season showdown with one of the better track and field teams in the Wyoming Valley Conference Division II, Lake-Lehman head coach John Sobocinski was in a hospital room visiting his newborn daughter.

And the Black Knights came through for their head coach.

The Lake-Lehman girls posted an easy 90-60 win against Hanover Area, establishing themselves as one of the premier track and field teams in the WVC and District 2 Class 2A.

"The win against Hanover was huge," said Sobocinski, whose daughter Julianna was born the day before the meet. "We knew coming into the season that Hanover and Dallas had very good teams. That (win) gave us a lot of confidence."

The Black Knight girls have remained unbeaten in the WVC, setting up a May 2 showdown against Back Mountain rival Dallas. But the third-year head coach says his team isn't looking past any competition.

"Our philosophy has been to take it one meet and one week at a time," said Sobocinski, whose team won the WVC Division II championship in 2003 and 2004. Dallas won the 2005 championship. "We're always trying to improve our individual performances



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Tina Watkins of Lake-Lehman, left, battles Desiree Finley of Hanover to win the 100 hurdles.

and position ourselves for the (District 2 championships). But we also know the Dallas meet will be big. I think there's a great chance the champion will be from the Back Mountain for the fourth year in a row."

The Black Knights have more than 30 girls on the roster. That includes freshman speedster Kelsey Amy, who competes in the 100 and 200 runs. She is joined by versatile junior Jaime Lipski, a middle distance

standout who can also run sprints, and Tina Watkins, the returning district champion in the 100 hurdles. Watkins is also the defending runner-up in the 300 hurdles. The 4x800 and 4x400 relay teams are also strong, said Sobocinski.

"We should make some noise in those events at districts," he said. "It's going to be

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