



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

A strong nucleus has the Dallas girls volleyball team all smiles as it enters the season.

DALLAS VB

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21 players on this year's roster. They don't realize that last season was a rebuilding year."

Dallas will be led by senior captains Theresa Hines and Vicki Piontkowski. Senior Brittany Allan and sophomore Shauna Phillips also return to the starting lineup. Allan is back in action after suffering a knee injury during basketball season. Fellow senior Jackie O'Brien saw significant playing time last season and sophomore Sarah Flannery is one of the team's talented underclassman.

Last year, Dallas suffered a huge blow even before the regular season began. All-star senior Caitly Green – one of the top players in the conference – tore the anterior cruciate ligament in her right knee during an August practice. Although she attempted to come back late in the season, she wasn't nearly close to 100 percent.

"That injury devastated is," Williams said. "It really shook up the girls."

Williams says the strength of this year's team – and the key to making a run at the playoffs – is its ability to serve. Hines and Piontkowski have been the team's best servers since they were sophomores.

"They've been serving great," he said. "We put a lot of focus into

it. In girls volleyball, serving is very important. If teams can't return the serve, you get points. A good serve keeps the other team on their heels. It all starts with the serve."

Williams also said team chemistry and confidence will go a long way in determining the team's success this season.

"We need to keep up the communication and follow the ball," he said. "If we play as one unit, we can go a long way. Our younger players aren't nervous anymore. They got over that last year when they got experience. We were competitive last year, we just didn't finish. The top eight teams make the playoffs. That's very much a goal this year."

L-L SOCCER

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ers and they are learning from each other and that will be a key to how we pick up the new system. So if our seniors can pick it up, we are optimistic."

Two of Lake-Lehman's three wins last year came against a Nanticoke Area team that went winless. The team returns its strong point, Jake Precone, who was the Knights' leading scorer last season with seven points. The senior midfielder tallied two goals and three assists.

Other key players returning for Lake-Lehman are seniors Aaron Smolow (defender),

Jordan Krawitz (forward) and Justin Amy (midfielder). That trio is joined by junior goalkeeper Jeremy Stull.

Kostroala knows leadership is the key to his team's success.

"They're picking up the new system, it's a different process but they are picking it up," he added. "I think our senior leadership and how well they adapt to everything and lead the others will be the key to our year."

The Black Knights began their quest for a Wyoming Valley Conference Division I Championship on Friday, when they opened up against Tunkhannock. Lake-Lehman will play Dallas on Thursday, Sept. 7 (home) and Thursday, Oct. 5 (away).

L-L HOCKEY

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Class 2A title in 2002. "That team was so focused and determined. That's what this group is like."

For the sixth consecutive season, Lipski will have a daughter playing on the field. But with Ja-

mie Lipski entering her senior year, her mother knows that streak is coming to an end.

"I'm going to try to enjoy her senior year," said Jean Lipski. "I've gotten so used to having a daughter with me. When Lauren (graduated in 2004), I still had Jamie. This time it will be tough. It's going to be real odd not having a daughter on the team."

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