



Samantha Martin is out at home, thanks to Northwest catcher Kim Howanitz.



Michelle Cragle shows her stuff on the mound for Northwest.



Sarah Konopki, of Dallas, slides into second base.

PLAY BALL!



Northwest's Mandi Black is safe at second. Attempting the tag is Lady Mountaineer Shauna Phillips.

Spring has definitely arrived and nowhere was that more evident than last Friday when the Lady Mountaineers softball team took to the diamond, hosting Northwest High School in an exhibition game.

Lake-Lehman basketball program turning around

By RYAN ENGLE
Dallas Post Correspondent

Lake-Lehman seventh grade boys basketball coach Brian Cutter has seen a tremendous turn-around in the basketball teams coming through his command. The two-year veteran recalls advancing to the finals last year but getting knocked out by Dallas. Despite the loss, the 14-3 seventh grade team made history as the Lake-Lehman boys have never before made it to a championship game at the junior high level.

The season also saw Jared James score over 400 points and both James and Dean Gregory named to the all-tournament team at the Freeland Tournament. But finally, Cutter's team moved onto Mike Sharok's capable hands as the eighth grade head coach.

Cutter watched the boys he coached the year before, including Josh Davenport, Brandon Kelley, Tommy Boyle, Aaron LeValley, Connor Balloun, Bill Hillman, Chris Edkins, Tom Chipeco and Cody Spriggs, tackle the same feat that had evaded them in the past.

At the Dallas Youth Basketball Tournament, Lake-Lehman finally squeaked by the two-year 41-0 Dallas, 46-45.

"The Dallas eighth grade boys' team is really a measuring stick for this area," said Cutter. "They have a fantastic team and we have a nice and respectful rivalry with them. I don't know if we are on par with them but we are really closing the gap."

Cutter's seventh grade boys team also beat Dallas this year at the Dallas Youth Basketball Tournament with a 34-24 final, giving them the tournament win.

The team, led by Jake Brominski, Adam Dizbon, Kyle Romanofski, Scott Bean, Chris Herrick, Vinnie Williamson,

Tyler Bonner and Cody Paraschak, won the regular division title with a 10-4 record and a perfect 8-0 in their division.

Also seeing a very nice turn-around in talent is ninth grade coach Jeff Shook. In his third year at the helm, he has taken a 6-16 team and turned it into a 15-7 season this year while also winning the Wyoming County Conference Division 3 title.

This team included Cody Poepperling, Chris O'Connor, Kevin Katchko, Kevin Bohan, John Butchko, Tim Piatt, Cole Barbacci and Jared James and Dean Gregory who were both moved up from the eighth-grade level to contribute.

Dave Clancy is currently in his fifth year as head coach of the Lake-Lehman varsity team and all of this talent is being pushed his way. Since taking charge in 2004, Clancy has redeemed a 1-45 record varsity team into a 10-13 season this year.

"He has done really well with his team but it has gotten to the point where he has become really appreciative as these junior-high kids progress and start playing at the varsity level," said Cutter.

"Our school has always been a wrestling and field hockey school but these kids are really starting to turn that around as our basketball teams get better," Cutter stated. "Changing the image of a school isn't easy but they are really pulling it off."

"We have a great group of bright, hard-working kids that are determined to put the program on the map," Cutter added. "More importantly, they are good kids that come from supportive families which is so important when you are trying to build a successful program. In my opinion, we are only a year or two away from competing for league titles and possibly Lake-Lehman's first district title since 1980."



Members of the Lake-Lehman ninth-grade basketball team are, from left, first row, Tim Piatt, Kevin Katchko, Jared James and John Butchko. Second row, Cody Poepperling, Dean Gregory, Chris O'Connor, Kevin Bohan, Jared Novitski and Coach Jeff Shook.



Members of the Lake-Lehman eighth-grade basketball tournament team are, from left, first row, Cody Spriggs, Bill Hillman, Aaron LeValley, Jared James and Josh Davenport. Second row, Chris Edkins, Connor Balloun, Brandon Kelley, Dean Gregory, Tom Chipeco, Tom Boyle and Tournament Team Coach Brian Cutter. Absent at the time of the photo were Mike Marr and Head Coach Mike Sharok.



Members of the Lake-Lehman seventh-grade basketball team are, from left, first row, Joe Wojcik, Aaron Traver, Brian Geraghty, Bobby Wright, Adam Dizbon, Tyler Bonner and Tyler Brobst. Second row, DJ Massaker, Chris Herrick, Vinnie Williamson, Dylan Pudimott, Brandon Chackan and Doug Albertson. Third row, Cody Paraschak, Jake Brominski, Scott Bean, Brandon Tucker, Kyle Romanofski and Coach Brian Cutter.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Girls soccer team conducting tryouts

USTA Strikers U-11 girls soccer team is currently conducting tryouts for players looking to play in the 2009 spring and fall travel league seasons. Premiere level training from a professional and licensed coaching staff is offered with a strong emphasis on individual player development.

Participants born after August 1, 1997 are eligible to try out. Registration fees will be waived for players who are chosen from the tryout sessions.

Serious soccer players should contact United Soccer Training Academy at 466-0262 or visit www.unitedsoccertrainingacademy.org for more information.

Baseball/softball organization will meet

The Back Mountain Baseball/Softball Organization will hold a meeting on Monday, April 6, at the Daddow-Isaacs American Legion, Memorial Highway, Dallas. A board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. with a general meeting scheduled for 8 p.m.

For information, call Jack at 675-0939.

SEMINARY ATHLETES RECEIVE AWARDS



Wyoming Seminary Upper School recently named the Back Mountain area athletes who received Most Valuable Player, Coaches Awards or Gold Awards for the winter season. Gold Awards are awarded to senior students who have received three or four varsity letters and one junior varsity letter. Award winners are, from left, first row, senior Katherine Farias, Shavertown, Gold Award, basketball; senior Katherine Levandoski, Dallas, Gold Award, swimming; senior Kelly Mericle, Shavertown, Gold Award, swimming; freshman Alex Kolessar, Shavertown, Coaches Award, swimming; and senior Sean Dickinson, Shavertown, Coaches Award and Gold Award, swimming. Second row, sophomore Lauren Skuldalski, Wyoming, Offensive MVP, basketball; senior Caroline Kropp, Shavertown, Gold Award, basketball; and senior Tyler Sichel, Shavertown, Coaches Award, basketball.