

Dallas boys basketball program has bright future

Seventh and eighth-grade cage teams enjoy championship seasons.

By TOM ROBINSON
For the Dallas Post

The future of the Dallas boys basketball program is looking bright.

The current eighth-graders reached a league championship game for the second straight year and the seventh-grade class just wrapped up an undefeated West Side League championship.

Both Dallas Middle School teams took part in the Feb. 15 league championship double-header at Wyoming Seminary after winning West Division titles.

"Doug Miller, the (high school) head coach, is very involved with the teams at the Middle School level," said eighth-grade head coach Vito DeLuca. "He's been at a number of our games. His fingerprints are all over what we've done at the eighth- and seventh-grade levels."

"All the teams work together."

After falling to Crestwood in the championship game last year on the seventh-grade level, this year's eighth-grade class went 14-1 to win its division and return for another shot.

Dallas rallied from a 15-point deficit in the championship game while trying to avenge a 3-point, regular-season loss to GAR.

GAR held on for a 43-41 win. Dallas went 9-for-12 from the line in the fourth quarter while cutting into the 34-23 GAR lead.

Michael Farrell hit all four of his foul shots while scoring 10 of his 16 points in the quarter.

Lee Eckert finished with 10 points and Dalton Gattuso added five.

Jason Anderson and Nico DeLuca were the team's other starters.

Paul Zablotney, who missed the playoff game because of an injury, was one of the key reserves along with Ethan Szczecinski, Collin Pertl, Charles Giacometti and Zach Charlton.

Cody Coolbaugh, Christo Huntington, Justin Marshall, Connor Phillips, Ryan Phillips, Jim Powell, Jacob Serafin, Jacob Stritziner, Joey Thompson and Andy Zehner complete the roster.

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Vito DeLuca
Dallas eighth-grade coach

Mark Farrell is assistant coach.

"They're very unselfish," said coach DeLuca, who has led most of the group that has played together since being part of a travel team in fourth grade. "They probably make one pass too many more often than they don't pass enough."

"They're all good friends." The seventh-grade team, coached by Jim Gattuso, went 15-0 in league play then topped Solomon/Plains, 29-20, in the league championship game.

Andrew Kovalick, Jay Bittner, Mason Gattuso, Matt Mathers and Brody Strickland scored in the title game. Coach Gattuso credited David Shuster, David Chopyak, Nick Kocher, Alex Charlton and Ben O'Connell for their strong defensive play.

Gattuso, Mathers, Kovalick, Shuster and Kocher formed the starting lineup for much of the season.

Charlton, Bittner, O'Connell and Chopyak were the top subs on a large roster.

"We had 28 kids when we started the first day of practice and we finished with 28 kids," said coach Gattuso, who was assisted by Ted Kocher and Doug Chapman.

Gattuso said much of the team's success came from teamwork and working on fundamental skills, such as dribbling drills, as part of every practice.

The remainder of the team roster included Joshua Holdridge, Christopher Murray, Adam Borton, Joshua Lydon, Joseph Parsons, Nate Maransky, Zachery Bloom, Evan McClain, Steven Finarelli, Matt Dillon, Bradley Adams, Edward Zochowski, Edward Grabowski, Max Dzigan, Joshua Jarnden, Malik Kaleta, Michael Huntington and Joshua Wyandt.



BILL TARUTIS PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Dallas' Andrew Kovalick, right, is double-teamed by GAR in the seventh-grade boys championship game at Wyoming Seminary.



Dallas' Nicholas Kocher, left, looks for an opening around GAR's Gerson Peralta in the seventh-grade boys championship game at Wyoming Seminary.



Dallas' David Schuster drives past two GAR defenders.

Score!

Adam Dizbon (No. 23) of Lake-Lehman puts up a shot in front of West Scranton defender Leo Ciullo (No. 42) during District 2 basketball action. The Black Knights won the game, 44-40.



ZAPOTICKY HEADED TO SHIPPENSBURG



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Dallas Senior High School football star Ryan Zapoticky has committed to playing football at Shippensburg University this fall. Shown here during the signing of his letter of intent at the Back Mountain Memorial Library are, from left, first row, Donna Zapoticky, mother; Ryan Zapoticky, Brady and Stephen Zapoticky, brothers; and Nick Zapoticky, father. Standing, Bob Mahe, John Saba, assistant coaches; Ted Jackson Sr., former head coach; Bob Roper and J.P. Antosh, assistant coaches.

SHIELDS

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their 30-plus year history and nine PIAA state finals between 1985 and 2012.

"If there was a game, he was there," said Holdredge, whose late father Ernie coached Tunkhannock to a state title, two other championship match appearances and a 249-match conference winning streak. "He was always involved, trying to help

and encourage people to play the game.

"He loved the sport and he represented the area very well."

Promoting the sport included encouraging enthusiasts to become involved as officials.

"Right up until the last moment, he was always trying to get new blood into refereeing," Holdredge said. "This past year, he got a few young men who had graduated high school to call the college lines and try to introduce them to officiating. We're going to miss that."

Holdredge regrets that an at-

tempt to get Shields inducted into the Pennsylvania Volleyball Coaches Hall of Fame fizzled two years ago when he had trouble getting Shields to supply a thorough listing of his accomplishments in the sport.

Shields graduated from Bethlehem Catholic and King's College. He worked for Pennsylvania Gas & Water as a payroll officer and was later employed in the banking industry. He is survived by a sister, Gloria Sprinkle, of Altoona; and a brother, Edward, of Chattanooga, Tenn.

BOOKS

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memory of Eugenia DeRose and are presented by Virgie Johnson:

"The Last Runaway" by Tracy Chevalier (large print) and "This is How You Lose Her" by Junot Diaz (large print)

HONOR

In honor of Hans and Diana, "The Layered Garden" by David

L. Culp, presented by Clarence and Morag Michael

In honor of Carl Handman for a speedy recovery and good health, "Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtmakers' Strike of 1909" by Michelle Markel, presented by Barbara and Dr. John Kolchin

PUZZLE ANSWERS

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 21 mins.

SLAV	PRY	OHMS
LACE	ONE	BOIL
OVEN	PATIENCE	
BADEGG	INROAD	
ERRS	NOR	
PATRIOTS	NEIL	
UGH	MURAL	EW
NORM	PATERSON	
EAR	PUCE	
STATUE	RHESUS	
PATTERED	FIRE	
ALLEE	ALA	EDGE
MEND	SKY	REEK

Go Figure!

answers

4	+	9	x	1	13
+		÷		+	
6	-	3	x	5	15
x		+		x	
2	+	7	x	2	18
20		10		12	

Super Crossword

Answers

GAR	AMIA	ABACT	SCROOGE
ACETATE	DEVON	CHINNE	
WHAT	ISTHNAME	REMETTS	
SYS	TONE	UTE	QAR
SOME			
OFAN	ANIMATED	MUSICAL	
HENR	ABROAD	BLAIR	
ELSA	NOTME	TELA	ASTRA
ABOUT	WILD	ROARING	III
RAU	UTERO	ORT	LAS
ASTON	AVOTE	DAD	ENDS
FELINE	NEW	HOBE	CAME
MATT	ALA	NISAN	ELSIE
AMT	ENLA	AER	BUGLE
GSA	PAD	LEGENDARY	DUTCH
SLAP	GRO	ELEN	NOTE
GLOOM	AIM	STO	REOTI
FABULOUS	TYPI	SKILL	
IMAC	UNE	TET	LOUS
WEE			
RASHES	THE	LTON	CEYING
ETIENNE	RIDES	GUED	TO
DENSE	ST	ACOST	SUPPERS

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