

Dallas soccer team comes up big at end of season

Mountaineers win Cleary Cup

TOM ROBINSON
The Dallas Post

Rewards were plentiful for the Dallas boys soccer team on the final night of the regular season.

Dallas won the Cleary Cup by taking its annual rivalry game, clinched the Wyoming Valley Conference Division 1 title outright and pronounced itself ready for the upcoming District 2 playoffs with a convincing 6-0 romp over host Lake-Lehman Tuesday night.

The win was part of a championship sweep by the Dallas soccer programs. The boys went 13-1-1 in the WVC to finish first out of six teams in Division 1 and post the best record in the 17-team league. The girls went 14-1 to win the league title with all 16 teams competing against each other as one group.

Both teams will be high seeds in the District 2 Class AA tournaments. Play-in games are scheduled for Tuesday with quarterfinal games — where Dallas will play for the first time — set for Thursday through Saturday. The playoffs proceed toward Oct. 31 championship games.

Dallas looked ready with a strong late-season run as the team got healthy, capped by the rout of Lake-Lehman in its first game after losing standout defender Brandon Scharff for the remainder of the season with a broken arm.

The same depth that got the Mountaineers through a series of early injuries will be a factor in playing without Scharff.

“We just got everyone back and then one of our best players goes out,” said coach Chris Scharff, Brandon’s father. “We still have a good team, obviously. Fortunately, we always have four or five players off the bench that are good enough to play.”

“We’re fortunate that I have up to seven different players who could start for most other programs. They’re not bad players;



Referee Bruce Weinstock recites the PIAA sportsmanship message to the captains of Lake-Lehman and Dallas before the Annual 1st Lt. Michael Cleary Soccer Game.



Jack Cleary, father of 1st Lt. Michael Cleary, speaks to the Lake-Lehman and Dallas soccer teams about his son's life.

we just can't fit them all on the field. They're very good players who just don't get as much playing time.”

Brandon Scharff was injured Oct. 11 when Dallas all but locked up the title with an impressive 3-0 victory over second-place Coughlin. Nate Wood, Zach Goodwin and A.J. Nardone scored goals in the win while Blake Williams (two saves) and Rory Burns Mullin (three saves) turned in their usual strong play as a goalkeeping combination with the shutout.

“We’re playing well the second half of the season,” coach Scharff said.

“About halfway through the season, we got our entire team back from injuries and it showed the last six or seven games.”

That strong play continued into Tuesday night.

Nardone scored less than four minutes into the game, then added the final two goals in the second half. Already the WVC’s overall scoring leader, he took over as goal-scoring leader with 22 following the hat trick.

While Nardone has thrived as the league scoring leader, Scharff pointed out that there are other key players who made major contribu-

tions to the team’s fourth straight division title.

“A.J.’s fortunate to be the forward on our team because we have five or six other guys who could play forward and score all the goals, too,” Scharff said. “But, you have to fill all the spots. A.J. is a force up there, but we have other players who could play there who play other positions to help the team.”

“Nate Wood and Matt Saba are forwards, but they play center mid for us because we need it. Zach Goodwin and my son play defense because we need it.”

Wood and Saba are



Lake-Lehman's Ian Dawsey, left, heads the ball as Dallas' A.J. Nardone defends during the 1st Lt. Michael Cleary Soccer Game.



Dallas' Nate Wood, left, scores his team's third goal as Lake-Lehman's Mike Minsavage defends during the 1st Lt. Michael Cleary Soccer Game.



Lake-Lehman's Bryan Peck, left, and Dallas' Brian Butler chase down the ball during the 1st Lt. Michael Cleary Soccer Game.

second and third on the team in scoring. Wood had a goal and two assists against Lake-Lehman, giving him 13 goals and allowing him to pass Nardone for the team assist lead with eight. Saba had a goal, giving him nine goals and five assists on the season.

The Lake-Lehman game was also the fourth time in the latter part of the season that Dallas

played on artificial turf. The Mountaineers looked good in those situations, which could be helpful as the playoffs progress and all games eventually wind up on that surface.

“You’re able to spread a team out and pass because there is more space,” Scharff said. “And, every bounce is true. When you score goals on turf, it’s usually because of a true bounce.”

“A lot of teams try to just pack it in on us, but it’s very hard to do that on the larger turf fields.”

The Dallas girls clinched their title with Monday’s 8-0 win over Tunkhannock.

Talia Szatkowski, the team scoring leader and one of the top scorers in the WVC, had a hat trick and an assist. Ruby Mattson and Danielle Walsh added two

BMT golfers win championship

Back Mountain residents produced the top three scores on Oct. 10 to help Holy Redeemer earn a return trip to the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association Team Golf Championships.

Shavertown’s Mariano Medico, the individual District 2 Class AA champion, had four birdies while shooting a 72 at Eagles Mere Country Club to lead

Holy Redeemer to a 307-339 victory over District 4 champion Danville for a spot in the Class AA team tournament.

The PIAA team championships will be decided Oct. 23 at Heritage Hills Golf Resort in York, following two days of individual competition.

The Royals fell just short of a state title last season, losing in a one-hole

playoff after tying for first.

Chase Makowski and Mike Boland, both from Dallas, shot 75 and 79 to help Holy Redeemer earn its return trip.

Makowski will join Medico in the individual state championships.

—Tom Robinson

Forced to choose between two sports

Parsons' decision has paid off

Staff Report

Vanessa Parsons was in a select group of Wyoming Valley Conference female athletes.

Exactly halfway through her high school career, she was forced to choose between her two sports.

Parsons was not alone in deciding whether to continue with soccer or field hockey when Dallas and other WVC schools joined the rest of the state by moving girls soccer to the fall prior to the start of the 2012-13 school year.

While she was among dozens of girls facing that decision, Parsons had the added factors of already being well established in both sports with significant time ahead of her. She was a two-year starter on a championship-caliber soccer team but had also been a two-year varsity player and a starter as a sophomore in field hockey.

Parsons chose field hockey and the decision has paid off.

After being among the WVC’s top scorers a year ago, Parsons led the entire conference this season as a senior.

“This year, especially, a lot of the goals as a team have been scored off of corners,” Dallas coach Kylie Fisher said. “She’s also very capable of eliminating defenders all on her own and taking shots or simply being in the right spot to take a rebound or receive a pass.”

“She’s an all-around great player. She’s able to score in multiple ways.”

Parsons scored a league-high 27 goals and added six assists while helping make Dallas the second-most productive offense in the 23-team league. The Mountaineers went 9-4-1 to land a spot in the District

2 Class AA playoffs, which begin this week.

Part of the decision process for Parsons was sticking with a group of classmates and friends. She is among a group of nine seniors, seven or eight of whom can usually be found in the starting lineup.

“As a whole, they’ve been together since junior high,” Fisher said. “I think how close they are and how they have continued to play together has really strengthened the team.”

Fisher also credited Parsons’ commitment to club teams and national festivals in the offseason for making her into the force she has become in one of the strongest field hockey conferences in the entire nation.

“We only lost three girls, so going into the season, we were really confident,” Parsons said.

What she did not anticipate, however, was the number of goals she would produce. The center forward had a career-high six goals

against Wallenpaupack and four more against Hazleton Area.

Parsons said senior center midfielder Michelle Thompson, who went into the final week tied for sixth in the league with seven assists, and the rest of the forward line have worked well with her to create scoring opportunities.

When necessary, Parsons can create her own space as well.

“I usually try to just pull around defenders then use my speed,” she said.

While she has received attention from recruiters and is outscoring major college prospects, Parsons expects to wrap up her playing days whenever the Dallas playoff run ends. She plays to concentrate on academics and does not expect to play while attending one of the four local colleges to which she has applied.

“It’s bittersweet,” Parsons said of her final days in the sport. “I’m going to miss all my friends.”



Parsons

A successful tennis season ends with significant losses

TOM ROBINSON
The Dallas Post

Dallas had a successful girls tennis season come to a close with semifinal losses in the District 2 Class AA doubles and team tournaments.

Grace Schaub and Kajeel Patel followed up, reaching the doubles semifinals with two upset victories of seeded opponents by winning in singles to provide two of the points that helped Dallas into the team semifinals with a 3-2 victory over Holy Redeemer Oct. 11.

Wyoming Seminary ended the Dallas season with a 3-0 semifinal victory Tuesday afternoon before falling to Scranton Prep, 3-1, in a championship round battle of

unbeaten later in the day at Kirby Park.

Four of the five Dallas-Holy Redeemer matches either went to the third set or had one of the two sets go at least 7-5.

Schaub downed Emily Kabalka, 6-2, 7-5, and Patel rallied past Natalie Coffee, 3-6, 6-2, 6-4, at second and third singles.

Lauren Butruce-Maddie Ross posted the only convincing victory, topping Angela Malinovitch-Hanna Thornton, 6-3, 6-3, at first doubles.

Patel was ahead of Wyoming Seminary’s Jacqui Meuser in the second set of third singles when the semifinal match was halted because the Blue Knights had enough points to

clinch the win and advance. Patel had lost the first set, 6-4, but was ahead in the second, 4-1.

Wyoming Seminary secured its three points by losing only two games total in the first singles, second singles and second doubles matches.

Dallas and Holy Redeemer each went 11-2 to tie for second place behind Wyoming Seminary among eight teams in the Class AA Division of the Wyoming Valley Conference.

Schaub and Patel had won three district doubles matches to reach the semifinal where they fell to top-seed and eventual champion Emily Jonsson-Grace Reilly of Scranton Prep, 6-3, 6-0.

Bevevino wins the MAC tennis title

Dallas graduate and King’s College senior Tony Bevevino won the No. 3 singles championship at the Middle Atlantic Conference Men’s Tennis Tournament.

Bevevino won the championship of a tournament in which Wilkes University claimed nine of the other 10 flight titles in singles and doubles.

For the fall season, Bevevino had the best singles record for King’s at 8-2, including six straight wins to finish. He was also 7-3 in doubles competition.