

FLYING LOW: Devils beat Flyers in overtime, **C6**



REACHING HIS GOAL: Parkland grad stars for Stevens Tech soccer, **C7**

PREVIEWS: LVC girls, Colonial boys hoops, **C2,3**

PITCH: Phillies talk to Derek Lowe's reps, **C8**

THE MORNING CALL

SPORTS

SECTION C

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BLOG: See Nittany Lines for a look at the '09 defense.

Hurricanes need to start fast

No repeat: They can't afford to fall behind North Penn again.

By **Andre D. Williams**
Of The Morning Call

Liberty appears headed for another grueling PIAA Class 4A Eastern final against North Penn, one that figures to be dominated by defense.

That was the case in the 2005 state semifinal when Liberty edged North Penn,

14-12. This season, Liberty's defense has been overshadowed again by its high-powered offense, but senior linebacker Daryl Klotz hopes that his unit will be forceful in helping the Hurricanes (13-1) win the rematch against the Knights (14-0) at 1 p.m. Saturday at Coatesville High School's Multi-Purpose Stadium in Chester County.

"The thing we are really stressing is that our defense comes out and plays smash-mouth football. Don't let

SATURDAY'S GAME

- **Who:** Liberty vs. North Penn
- **When:** 1 p.m.
- **Where:** Coatesville H.S.
- **TV:** Service Electric, RCN

them get nothing against us," Klotz said.

In the season-opening meeting in Bethlehem, North Penn built a 20-0 halftime lead, then held on for a 23-15 victory that set the tone for the Knights' season. Liberty has relied just as

much on its defense as its offense to win every game since.

Coach Tim Moncman hopes his defense is able to slow the Knights' potent rushing attack Saturday.

"They are a physical football team," Moncman said. "Traditionally their games have been close at the half. So far in the playoffs they've pulled away in the second half with big plays. We hope that's not the case with us. We've traditionally

LIBERTY PAGE C7



LIBERTY'S BRANDON BRADER is hoping to run over a few more North Penn defenders this time around. He was limited to 56 yards rushing in the first meeting.

Denise Sanchez
Morning Call file photo

SAUCON VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB OLD COURSE

A rave of a redesign



WORK ON THE BUNKERS were a primary focus of the recently completed Saucun Valley Old Course redesign. The 2009 U.S. Women's Open host course has received wonderful reviews from members and raters alike.

Rob Kandel
Morning Call file photo

SVCC gets Golf Digest honor for changes made in time for 2009 U.S. Women's Open.

By **Mark Wogenrich**
Of The Morning Call

Seven months before the U.S. Women's Open arrives, the Old Course at Saucun Valley Country Club has received applause for its recent makeover from Golf Digest. The magazine bestowed its Best Remodel award on the Women's Open host site as part of its Best New Courses 2008 issue, which hits newsstands Tuesday.

"What this award does is put Saucun Valley back on the map — not that it needed to be put back on the map," said Ron Whitten, Golf Digest's architect-

GOLF PAGE C5

BEST REMODELS

Golf Digest's top 5 golf course remodels of the year:

- 1. SAUCON VALLEY C.C. (OLD COURSE)**
■ **Location:** Bethlehem, Pa.
■ **Design fee:** \$60,000
- 2. SLEEPY HOLLOW C.C.**
■ **Location:** Scarborough, N.Y.
■ **Design fee:** \$100,000
- 3. HAIG POINT CLUB**
■ **Location:** Daufuskie Island, S.C.
■ **Design fee:** \$65,000
- 4. OMAHA C.C.**
■ **Location:** Omaha, Neb.
■ **Design fee:** \$27,500
- 5. MONTESOREO G.C.**
■ **Location:** Borrego Springs, Calif.
■ **Design fee:** \$85,000



Craig Kackenmeister The Morning Call

Eagles in do-or-die situation

Wake up or break up: Philly, like DL Howard, must step up against defending league champs.

By **Larry O'Rourke**
Of The Morning Call

PHILADELPHIA | Darren Howard signed a six-year, \$32 million deal with the Eagles as a free agent in the spring of 2006, had his customary welcome-aboard press conference, and promptly landed on the Birds' scrap heap of disappointing defensive ends.

But while 2003 first-round pick Jerome McDougle and 2004 free agent signee Jevon Kearse were

purged from the roster in the months leading up to this season, Howard re-invented himself with a new diet and work ethic and has become a big factor with a team-leading eight sacks.

It isn't quite a case of as Howard goes, so go the Eagles, but Philadelphia is 5-0-1 in games in which he has at least shared credit for a sack. The Eagles are 1-5 in games in which opposing quarterbacks have not ended up in his clutches.

So when it's time to talk defense in South Philly these days, Howard is the man to chat up. And with a season — and maybe the futures of a quarterback and coaching regime — on the line Sunday at Giants Stadium, the topic is obvious: What can the Eagles' defense do to help prevent a repeat of the 36-31 loss Philadelphia sustained a month ago against New York?

"When you go back and look at the film, see what they were able to do to us, you make adjustments," Howard said. "Basically, you try not to let them do it again. Pride comes into it, the scheme comes into it. We've made adjustments in



SUNDAY'S GAME

- **Who:** Eagles at Giants
- **When:** 1 p.m.
- **TV:** Fox
- **Radio:** WCTO-FM 96.1

Inside: Giants are one win from clinching NFC East Division. Scouting the Giants, **C5**

EAGLES PAGE C5

As temperatures fall, interest rises

The cold truth: Winter sports in gear already.

By **Val Geist**
Special to The Morning Call

A November cold spell triggered the snowguns at Pocono resorts before Thanksgiving, sending skiers and boarders out to gear-up earlier than ever.

Many expect a bountiful snow season, and when the cold weather kicks in early, winter sport enthusiasts go

shopping, said Peter Nestor, owner of Nestor's Ski Shop in Whitehall.

"There's a number of indicators pointing to a good ski season, not the least of which is the climate scientists, who think we are in for a decade of colder weather in the Northeast," Nestor said. He added that sales have been good so far.

"When the cold weather kicks in, the addiction kicks in, and when it's warm, people aren't looking for excuses to spend money," he said.

He said he thinks the



clothing trend this year in the area will be toward more technical, better quality attire.

"There isn't a skier who hasn't been miserable in the old days of bundling up and overheating and chilling or

having wind cut through insulation on a chair lift that broke down," Nestor said. "Now with the modern fabrics, it is incredible how comfortable you are skiing in a high-tech environmental bubble."

Staying warm

The North Face's Matt Page agreed with Nestor. Nestor's sells The North Face's products.

"If you were one of those people who bought a poorly

SKI PAGE C4



Contributed photo
SKIERS AND SNOWBOARDERS are off to an early start this year.

Villanova cruises; Lafayette loses

From Call wire services

Scottie Reynolds scored a season-high 23 points and had six assists and No. 17 Villanova stayed unbeaten with a 93-57 victory over Houston Baptist on Thursday night.

The Wildcats (8-0) continued their season full of romps and this one was over not long after the opening tip. They have yet to play a truly competitive game and won by 20-plus points for the fourth time this season. No game has been won by less than 13 points.

Villanova said the schedule was short a game and severely overmatched Houston Baptist (0-7) was available to fill the gap.

Corey Stokes scored a career-high 22 points and Dante Cunningham had 13 for Villanova.

Baron Sauls made all six 3-pointers and had 22 points for the Huskies, and Andrew Puzky scored 17 points.

Reynolds was shooting only 34 percent from the field entering the game. Villanova coach Jay Wright said this week that he knew how unhappy Reynolds was with his cold spell, so this had to satisfy him. He hit two 3s early in the second half and went 8-for-13 from the field to give him a shot of confidence.

He got a docile crowd on their feet when he converted a four-point play for a 69-33 lead.

The outcome was decided early. Stokes, Clark and Reggie Redding hit three straight 3-pointers for Villanova during a 15-0 run that built the lead to 26-8.

Hartford 97, Lafayette 82: At West Hartford, Conn., Michael Turner and Joe Zeglinski both scored 26 points as the Hawk dealt the Leopards their fifth consecutive loss.

Jaret von Rosenberg add-

ed 15 points for Hartford (3-5). Morgan Sabia had 14. Andrew Brown lead the Lafayette (2-5) with 20 points.

The first half saw nine lead changes. Lafayette cut Hartford's lead to 72-69 with 8:47 left, but Hartford went on a 12-2 run, and led by at least 10 points over the final 5:57.

No. 2 Connecticut 68, Buffalo 64: At Amherst, N.Y., Hasheem Thabeet had 21 points and 18 rebounds, Jeff Adrien added 18 points, and the Huskies survived a big scare.

The Bulls (3-3) nearly upset then-No. 2 Pittsburgh at Alumni Arena two years ago, losing 70-67 after leading by 10 points with 14 minutes left. A repeat performance seemed unlikely against the Huskies (8-0), who won their first seven games by an average of 24 points.

But Rodney Pierce had other ideas, scoring a career-high 28 points to keep Buffalo close the entire game.

No. 6 Oklahoma 73, Southern Cal 72: At Norman, Okla., Blake Griffin scored 11 of his 25 points after getting hit with a cheap shot elbow in the second half, and the Sooners staved off a rally.

Griffin, a preseason All-American, had to come out of the game briefly after getting elbowed below the waist by USC's Leonard Washington with 13:54 left. He was able to return and help the Sooners (7-0) keep the Trojans at bay.

USC (5-3) trailed by 11 early in the second half and got within one point three times, but Oklahoma had an answer every time.

Dwight Lewis led USC with 25 points.

No. 8 Texas 68, No. 9 UCLA 64: At Austin, Texas, A.J. Abrams scored 31 points, including the last



Sue Ogrocki Associated Press

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S DWIGHT LEWIS (right) goes up for a shot despite the defense of Oklahoma's Ryan Wright.

six of the game for the Longhorns. Abrams broke a 62-62 tie with a 3-pointer with 2:53 to play, then made two free throws a minute later to push Texas' lead back to three.

After the Bruins' Josh Shipp missed the front end of a 1-and-1 with 15 seconds left, Shipp fouled Abrams who made one of his two free throws for the final point.

The Longhorns (6-1) held UCLA (4-2) scoreless after Alfred Aboya's basket with 2:28 left pulled the Bruins within 65-64.

Darren Collison scored 22 points for the Bruins and Shipp added 15.

No. 19 Arizona St. 81, Jackson St. 60: At Tempe, Ariz., James Harden had 22 points and eight rebounds for the Sun Devils (6-1), who are off to their best start since they were 11-1 to open 2004-05.

WOMEN

Muhlenberg 83, Swarthmore 70: at Swarthmore, Pa., Alexandra Chili scored a career-high 23 points and Erin McSherry became the Muhlenberg women's bas-

ketball all-time leader in blocked shots as the 21st-ranked Mules won their fifth consecutive game.

Chili set a school record for freshmen with six 3-pointers adding eight rebounds and three blocked shots.

McSherry's four blocks increased her career total to 119, topping Lisa Ball's record of 116 in 1981. McSherry also had a season-high 11 points.

Gwynedd-Mercy 69, Cedar Crest 51: At Allentown, sophomore Lauren Rosar had 12 points and 13 boards to lead Gwynedd-Mercy in CSAC play.

The Falcons (2-3, 0-2) were honored in a pre-game ceremony with the 2007-08 CSAC (Formerly the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference) Sportsmanship Award, voted on by the league's players.

Cedar Crest freshman Liz Sunderhaus led all scorers with 13 points.

No. 8 Maryland 70, No. 17 Purdue 57: At West Lafayette, Ind., Kristi Toliver scored 22 of her 24 points in the second half, helping the Terps in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge.

EAGLES FROM PAGE C1

Eagles in a do-or-die situation

both."

To review: After Eagles defensive tackle Mike Patterson had an early pass interception to help set up Philadelphia for a 7-0 lead, the Giants rushed 45 times for 219 yards, including big Brandon Jacobs' 22 carries for 126 yards and two touchdowns.

The Eagles sacked Eli Manning only once, and allowed him to complete 17 of 31 passes for 182 yards and two touchdowns.

Yes, the Eagles' offense failed to get a late score that could have created momentum and maybe taken the Eagles off the course they've stumbled over for most of the last month.

But the defense also failed to stop the Giants after the Eagles took a 24-20 lead with 11:24 left in the third quarter.

"We know exactly what we need to do to stop the run," Howard said as the Eagles began preparations for the rematch.

The Howard Plan fundamentals:

■ Control the line of scrimmage.

"Since I've been here, our defensive line has gotten the better of their offensive line, but they returned the favor the last time," Howard said, looking past the fact the Eagles are 2-4 in games against the Giants since his arrival in 2006.

"History shows that 'Bunk' and 'Mike P' [defensive tackles Brodrick Bunkley and Mike Patterson] do a great job inside. We look for that same kind of performance. If we get that, we should have a good

chance."

■ Every Eagles defender has to make sure to hustle to wherever a teammate encounters and slows a football-toting Jacobs, who at 6-4, 264 pounds is practically his own lead blocker.

"You have to keep [Jacobs] from getting down field," Howard said.

"Once he gets that weight moving and he's going at a pretty good clip, he's tough to hold. You have to wrap him up at the point contact. You can't let him get extra yards. You can't practice that. We're not in pads [for practice]. It's just something we have to do."

■ Don't derive comfort from the absence of Giants wide receiver Plaxico Burress because of an accidental, self-inflicted gunshot wound.

"Last game we played them, they ran the ball up and down the field and Plaxico caught one ball [for a 17-yard TD]," Howard said.

"I don't think [the Giants' plan] is going to be too much different than that game."

For the Eagles, the result has to be different if they are to save a season.

Win, and they have a chance to get to the 10-5-1 record they almost certainly will need to have what at best would be a 50-50 or so shot at making the playoffs.

Lose, and it's time blow up Birdsland to save it from itself.

"Just like all the other games we've played [against the Giants] since I've been here, it's going to be a hard-fought, close battle to the end," Howard said.

"We've got to get a few plays here and there, get turnovers and stop the run. It's going to be close. We have to come out on top. We have no choice."

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Stoners tryouts set for Jan. 5-6 at Iron Lakes

From Call staff reports

After winning the championship of the National Premier Soccer League in their inaugural season, the Pennsylvania Stoners

aren't about to sit idly by and soak in the glory.

The team will be having tryouts for the 2009 squad on Jan. 5-6 at Iron Lakes Sports Club.

The tryouts, which will

be at 1 p.m. both days inside the club's domed facility, cost \$35 for players not rostered by the club in 2008.

Participants are required to fill out an activi-

ty release and a liability waiver.

For more information, visit the team Web site at www.pennstoners.org.

GOLF

FROM PAGE C1

Old Course longer, tougher

ture editor. "It reinforces the club's decision to strengthen the course, lengthen the course and get some 21st-century pin positions. I think they did a tremendous job."

In the fall of 2005, a few months after winning its bid for the 2009 Women's Open, Saucon Valley commissioned Tom Fazio's design group to administer a master plan that added new bunkering, four rebuilt greens, eight new tee boxes and nearly 350 yards to the 86-year-old course.

After more than a year of work, the course reopened in 2007 to near-unanimous raves among the membership, which increased play on the course by about 30 percent, said Andrew Warner, chairman of Saucon's golf and green

committee.

Fazio's group, led by senior architect Tom Marzolf, nominated the Old Course for the Golf Digest award, which covered courses remodeled between May 2007 and April 2008. The courses were judged in five categories: shot values, design variety, resistance to scoring, memorability and aesthetics.

"This is not a most-improved award," Whitten said. "Saucon Valley was a fine golf course before Marzolf and Fazio got involved with renovating it. It's an improved golf course now."

During a recent site visit, Mike Davis, the USGA's senior director of rules and competitions, said the renovation strengthened what he called an "already strong" course.

"It definitely came out better than I thought it would," Davis said. "I thought it would be a very positive thing, but the look to the bunkering is quite good, and strategically it's much better."

For Saucon, the award affirmed a decision that proved expensive and kept members off their course for parts of 18 months. The

club's intent was to freshen the course's look while retaining the characteristics of the original Herbert Strong design.

The primary work centered on tree removal and overhauling the course's 80-plus bunkers, to which 11 were added and 11 others removed. Several holes, notably the par-4 third and par-4 12th, were changed dramatically. Further, the course was lengthened to 7,126 yards, which Marzolf noted last year could be stretched to 7,500.

"The overwhelming majority of the members love it," Warner said. "We're excited that the course has been well-received from a membership perspective, and we're thrilled that Golf Digest felt it was exceptional enough to give us this award. We didn't strive for it, but we sure are honored."

Whitten said the award was based on at least 10 evaluations among course raters, of which more than 900 participated in the Best New Courses survey. That should put the Old Course on the radar of more raters, making it a contender for the magazine's biannual

Top 100 American Courses list in 2009.

To be eligible for that survey, perhaps the most influential course list in golf, a facility needs to be evaluated by at least 45 raters.

"Saucon may well compete," Whitten said. "[The Old Course] has two other fine sister courses [the Grace and Weyhill], and they're all strong contenders for the Top 100 list."

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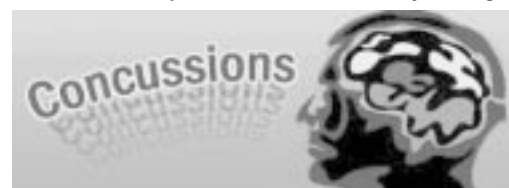
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