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From The Morning Call

Once forgotten, PIAA to recognize Trojans' 1975 softball champs

By Keith Groller
Of The Morning Call

When members of the 1975 Parkland softball state championship team gather to be honored Wednesday night before the current Trojans play Emmaus, they will have one more reason to celebrate.

The PIAA will finally recognize the 1975 team's title.

For years, players, parents and fans connected with the team wondered why the PIAA never listed the 1975 championship, either in the game program sold at Shippensburg's Robb Field during the state championships or on its Web site.

As it turns out, the PIAA lost the records from the 1975 tournament, the first time a state softball champion was crowned.

"The PIAA's old offices, which were located on Second Street in Harrisburg, were flooded out a couple of times," District 11 softball chairman Betsy Wilson said. "And they evidently lost records from the first softball tournament. Their records only went back as far as the 1976 tournament."

After a reporter brought the situation to the attention of Wilson Sunday night, she immediately contacted Bob Lombardi, one of the PIAA's associate executive directors.

Lombardi said that as long as Parkland has the '75 championship trophy, or other proof of its state title — which was earned with a hard-fought 4-3 win over Coatesville in Topton — the PIAA would update its records and appropriately recognize the first state softball champs in PIAA history.

"I'm not quite sure why no one brought this to the PIAA's attention before this because sometimes all it takes is a phone call," Wilson said. "But I'm glad that we were able to do it now and give these ladies their proper recognition. They should be happy when they hear the news."

Making a dent: The Lehigh Valley Yankee Fan Club will have U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (R-15th) on hand at its 6:30 p.m. May 30 monthly meeting at the Blue Monkey in Catasauqua to discuss baseball's steroids issue.

Dent was on the congressional committee that investigated Major League Baseball. If you're interested in attending, please contact Chuck Frantz at 484-347-8331.

Teeing off for No. 100: The Kiwanis Club of Easton is commemorating the upcoming 100th renewal of the Easton-Phillipsburg football game with a golf tournament on June 2 at the Riverview Country Club.

It's called the "Kick-Off Classic" and proceeds will benefit local charities and youth organizations.

Both head coaches, Bob Stem and Steve Shiffert, will be playing, and Don Mengel of the Kiwanis Club said the organization will be designating golfers to represent both the Stateliners and Rovers.

"We're hoping that the coaches will give their teams a locker room speech to fire them up," Mengel said. "The winning coach will win a \$500 gift certificate for the youth charity of his choice."

For more info, call Mengel at (610) 758-7307 or Donna Murphy at (610) 759-3511.

The historic game is set for Nov. 23 at Lafayette's Fisher Field.

Friend in need: Joe Ludrof III, a 1973 Central Catholic grad who played basketball for the legendary Mike Koury, recently suffered a stroke and is going through rehab at the Good Shepherd Hospital.

This is not the first time Ludrof, who will turn 51 on Thursday, has battled adversity. While a student at Bloomsburg, he was hit by a car in June of 1975 and spent four months at Good Shepherd. The accident ended his playing career.

He returned to the workforce and coached women's basketball at Northampton Community College and was named Allentown Jaycees' "Man of the Year" while tirelessly helping the organization in several charity events, including its LARC and Via all-star basketball tourneys.

"Needless to say, he could use some encouragement right now," a family member said.

Good Shepherd's address is 631 St. John St. in Allentown.

JV Summer hoops: Thanks to the assistance of A.D. Jocelyn Beck, Lehigh-Carbon Community College, will be the site for an indoor JV Summer League. Several Colonial League teams have already committed. Interested teams should call Dave Boardl at (610) 760-0979 or Bill McGinley at (570) 657-6926 for info.

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