

## 2009 Phillies Spring Training

## World Champs prepare to defend title

## Phillies pitchers and catchers report tomorrow

By RYAN LAWRENCE  
For The Reporter

CLEARWATER, Fla. — You can't move 10 steps inside the spacious Carpenter Complex in Clearwater — which houses Bright House Field, four extra diamonds and plenty of office space — without being reminded of 2008.

The big, bright, "Phillies World Series Champions 2008" signs greet you at every corner. There are eight such signs in the media dining room alone.

As the players begin to file into Florida, they too, will be reminded. There's a sizeable sign at eye level when you walk into the clubhouse.

They'll also hear about six zillion questions about defending their World Series Championship when the small smattering of media multiplies like gremlins next week.

Avoiding 2008 is impossible. But as the Phillies begin their 2009 campaign — pitchers and catchers will hold their first

workout Saturday — the goal will be to move on from last year, or better yet, build off the most memorable baseball season all of them have ever played.

"We battled the last few years to put ourselves in contention and last year we won a championship, but '08 is done," center fielder Shane Victorino said at a

media gathering at Citizens Bank Park last month. "Let's look forward to '09 and not look back."

"It's nice to be known as the champs, but that's (done). We're in '09 now and there's a whole new season ahead of us."

Despite the recession strangling the nation's economy and costing more people their jobs every day, Phillies season ticket sales are up a reported 20 percent.



You can't get through a shopping center in the Delaware Valley without seeing a Phillies hat, jersey or t-shirt. Lines for autograph sessions with players have been wrapping around blocks, taking a few hours to get through.

Please see PHILLIES on C4

## Underdogs galore

## Area boys hoops teams hit the road for playoffs

By KEV HUNTER  
Staff Writer

Local boys basketball teams are thinking upset this Friday when the District One Class 4A Playoffs get underway.

Three of the four area teams are the lower seed in their respective games, as No. 32 North Penn travels to top-seeded Chester, No. 17 Souderton Area travels to No. 16 Upper Darby, and No. 26 Methacton travels to No. 7 Plymouth-Whitemarsh.

No. 11 CB West is the one local squad to be playing at home — the Bucks host No. 22 Radnor.

No one has a tougher challenge on Friday than the Knights (11-11), who will be taking on the defending state champs.

"This is where we wanted our program to get to, and I guess there's no better time to experience it than the first year and let our younger guys see what this is all about," said coach Ron Hassler, who is in his first season with the Knights. "A couple years from now, we want to be playing Chester on our schedule and that type of thing — we're not quite ready for that at this point, but you gotta jump in sooner or later."

Hassler just earned his 500th career win this past week, and now the Knights get ready for Chester (18-3). North Penn will need a huge effort defensively and also will need to come out shooting it well — three-point specialist Derek Brooks could be a big key.

Chester has scored 60 or more points in 13 of its 21 games, and has three good scorers in Rahlir Jefferson, Lamont Redd and Kareem Robinson.

"Even if we lose, it's a great experience to play the defending state champs," Brooks said. "We're looking to get a win no matter what."

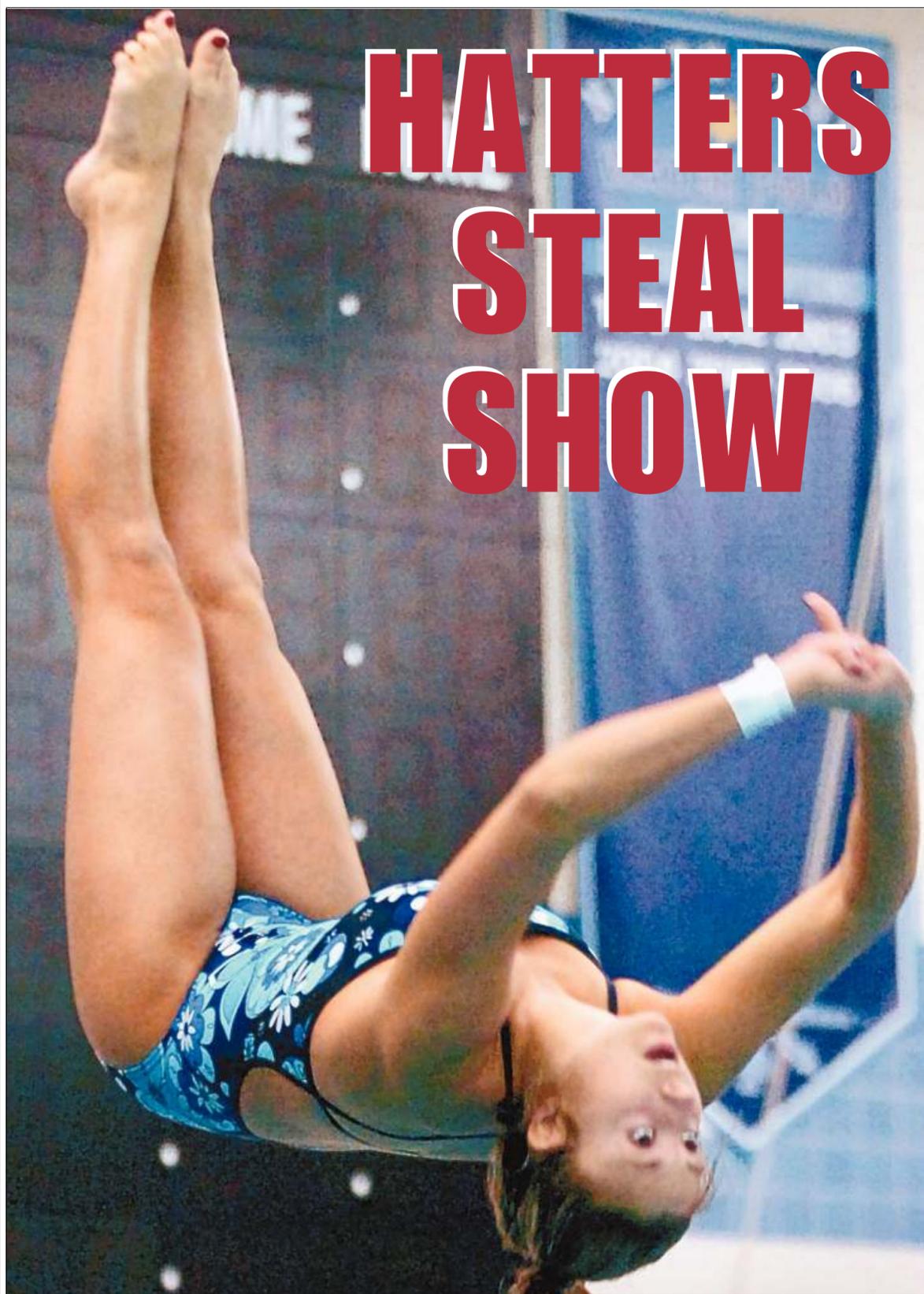
The Warriors also have a tough challenge on Friday, taking on an old rival from the Suburban One League.

"PW's a tough team," said Methacton coach Adam Slavin, whose team moved over to the Pioneer Athletic Conference this year and reached the PAC-10 Finals. "I've been following them a little bit throughout the year. We're gonna head up to PW, give our best effort and hope things go our way."

The Warriors have a big-game guard in T.J. Klinger, and need to get turnovers and transition baskets early and often.

Souderton, now playing with a healthy Jimmy Connolly, looks to begin its march to a third straight state tournament appearance, while the Bucks look to ride the momentum of a 17-5 regular season and break through to states for the first time since 2001. Reills Reichwein has been a versatile guy for the Bucks down the stretch.

Nine teams qualify for states this year, so the winners of Friday's games will at least have a chance for that final ninth spot. Teams that win the first- and second-round games automatically qualify.



MARK C. PSORAS / THE REPORTER

NORTH PENN'S Julia Tate spins through the air during the Suburban One League Continental Conference Diving Championships.

## Hatboro-Horsham takes top 2 spots

## NP's Tate third

By KEV HUNTER  
Staff Writer

TOWAMENCIN — Hatboro-Horsham divers Chelsea Adlam and Kelsey Tennett are good

friends — nothing comes between them.

Thursday night at the conference championships — no opposing divers came in between them. The Hatter duo continued their dominance, once again capturing first and second place like they have done almost all season.

## GIRLS DIVING

Adlam and Tennett went one and two in the Suburban One League Continental Conference Championships at North Penn High School, as the duo was tops in a tough field of 20 divers.

"Normally at this meet I'd be really jumpy and nervous, but today I was okay," said Tennett, a senior. "I'm hoping to do better this year (in the postseason) because I have more of a level head this time."

Please see DIVING on C5

## Temple survives against Hawks

By DAN GELSTON  
Associated Press Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Dionte Christmas had 19 points and 11 rebounds and Temple held off a

late run by Saint Joseph's, beating its longtime rival 61-59 in series thriller Thursday night.

The Owls (14-9, 6-3 Atlantic 10) needed this conference win more than the first-place Hawks and maintained their hold on fourth place in the standings. The first four spots earn the cov-

eted bye in the A-10 tourney next month in Atlantic City, N.J.

Ahmad Nivins scored 21 points for the Hawks and got the

Please see SURVIVES on C5

## Rams fall to Ghosts

## Leer scores 25 to lead Abington past Pennridge

By MIKE CABREY  
Staff Writer

ABINGTON — For a half, it appeared the Pennridge girls basketball team could pull off the upset against host Abington in Thursday night's District One Class AAAA first round contest.

But then Emily Leer decided to put the Ghosts on her shoulders and put an end to the Rams' season.

Leer, Abington's 6-2 junior, scored 11 of her game-high 25 points in the decisive third quarter, leading the ninth-seeded Ghosts to a 38-27 victory over No. 24 Pennridge.

"She's obviously a strong player. It hard to stop — with our size and her size, she can just dominate," said Pennridge coach Brooke Martin of Leer. "She played really well and took advantage of our height disadvantage."

The teams were tied at 14 heading into the second half, but an 11-0 Abington run early in the third gave the Ghosts a 25-16 advantage.

"We were right with them at halftime. I don't know, it was just those couple minutes they got basket after basket," Rams senior Lindsey Lyons said. "I think it took away our confidence a little bit."

Abington held an 11 point lead in the third before Pennridge (12-11 overall) cut the margin down to six on two Jenny Cooley

DISTRICT 1-AAAA GIRLS BASKETBALL	
ABINGTON	38
PENNRIDGE	27

Please see RAMS on C5

## Flyers go down quietly

By ANTHONY J. SANFILIPPO  
For The Reporter

PHILADELPHIA — Chalk this one up as one of those weird games that just happens during the course of a season.

The Flyers had more chances than the Ottawa Senators. They dictated the play in Ottawa's end for most of the game.

In a lot of aspects, they were the better team. But a couple of unfortunate bounces, a stupid penalty and a misread by the goalie later and the Flyers found themselves on the wrong end of a 5-2 decision

Please see FLYERS on C5