

The debate is over.
Third title cements
James' legacy
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Legion baseball
Coverage of Post 2's
league game at Fairmont.
Wednesday



SEAN MANNING

'King' James quells social media coup

IN TODAY'S ERA of social media, it can be the fun thing to do to hop on a hate bandwagon, along with everyone else.

This is no more true than in the world of sports, especially at the professional level. There are a number of high-profile athletes who have become the butt of jokes — the same mostly boring ones — and that joke never seems to die. A stigma is connected like a tick to a dog.

Tony Romo, an all-pro quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys, has been maligned ever since he became the starting QB in 2006. A lot of it has to do with playing the most prominent position in American sports for the most popular team in the most popular sport.

But regardless of how well Romo plays in any game, his one mistake will overshadow it all. Twitter and Facebook will explode with memes, and the "Romo isn't clutch" narrative will become a week-long giggle-fest.

There are other athletes who get the same treatment — **Alex Rodriguez**, of the New York Yankees; **Sidney Crosby**, of the Pittsburgh Penguins; and golfer **Phil Mickelson**.

But no athlete is more scrutinized and criticized than **LeBron James**. People love to hate him, regardless of the huge amount of success he has attained. Most believe the self-proclaimed "King" only has himself to blame, but that's not fair.

Since he was drafted into the NBA in 2003, there was pressure on James to be the next **Michael Jordan**. As an 18-year-old kid that hadn't set foot on an NBA court before, people knew he was the next big thing.

And he hasn't disappointed. He has lived up to almost every expectation, which seems impossible with the amount of expectations that were heaped upon James from the beginning.

But during his first run with the Cleveland Cavaliers, he couldn't win the championship. While being compared to Jordan and Kobe Bryant — two players who knew nothing but winning — it was a black eye on James' career.

And then came "The Decision," where James announced he was taking his "talents to South Beach," and a promise to win not one, not two, not three, not four, etc., titles with **Dwyane Wade** and **Chris Bosh**.

Winning two titles in four years with the Miami Heat, it just wasn't good enough for fans. The stigma that James isn't clutch as stuck, regardless how false that is, due to only winning 43 percent of his Finals appearances.

But let's make no mistake about it, James is one of the best players to ever set foot on a basketball court. Winning a title for Cleveland cements that. He may not be on the level Jordan was, and he may never be, but it doesn't matter. At 6-foot-8, 250 pounds, he can do everything on the court, and does it than most.

After his 13th professional season, James is 13th all-time in scoring during the regular season, with 26,833 points, and 18th in assists, with 6,815.

His playoff totals are even more impressive. James is 4th all-time in points, with 5,567; 3rd in assists, with 1,348; and 9th in rebounding, with 1,758. And he's only 31.

You don't have to like him, but just sit back and enjoy one of the greatest basketball players of our generation.

SEAN MANNING is a sports reporter for *The Dominion Post*.

Spotlight-wary West wishes on youth

BY JUSTIN JACKSON
The Dominion Post

JERRY WEST COLLECTION

One of Jerry West's bigger truths is he is more comfortable when he is behind the scenes.

When he is center stage, much like he was Monday, at the Downtown Wise Library for the unveiling of the Jerry West Collection, West admits to being a fidgety soul.

"I would rather be anonymous," West said. "Anonymity is probably

the most important thing in my life right now. I still don't have it."

The NBA Hall of Famer and former West Virginia men's basketball standout may never have it.

Not in the professional basketball world where he led the Lakers to seven NBA Finals in his playing days before building them into a dynasty in the 1980s and 1990s as the

general manager.

And not here in West Virginia, either, where he may consider himself simply as, "Just a kid from Cabin Creek," but knows he is often viewed as the greatest player ever to wear a WVU uniform.

"When I came to West Virginia [as a player], I remember the big poster they had of you," WVU

SEE WEST, 4-B



Mark A. Shephard/For The Dominion Post

WVU and NBA legend Jerry West was honored on West Virginia Day at WVU's downtown campus library.

WEST VIRGINIA BLACK BEARS 4, BATAVIA MUCKDOGS 1



Kathleen Batten/The Dominion Post

West Virginia's Erik Forgione goes for the ball at second base as Batavia's Javier Lopez slides.

Krause claims walk-off redemption

Catcher shakes off botched bunt sign, blasts three-run homer in 9th to keep Bears perfect

BY TODD MURRAY
The Dominion Post

GRANVILLE — Kevin Krause wasn't about to make the same mistake twice Monday night.

The West Virginia Black Bears catcher missed a sign and bunted with runners on the corners and one out in the seventh inning of a one-all contest against Batavia.

West Virginia failed to score, as Will Craig was tagged out between third and home.

When Krause stepped to the plate in the same situation in the ninth, he knew what he had to do.



Kevin Krause

"The next at-bat was kind of redemption from that," he said.

Krause drove a two-ball, no-strike fastball deep over the left-field fence.

His three-run walkoff home run gave the Black Bears a 4-1 victory before a Monongalia County Ballpark crowd of 2,167.

"I was looking for something out over the plate, something I could handle," Krause said. "The count played to my

advantage. Luckily I had a nice swing."

Krause had collected just one hit in his first eight at-bats of the season before coming through with the game-winning homer.

"What a great swing for him," said Black Bears manager Wyatt Toregas, whose team improved to 4-0.

"That ball was hit very hard. I kind of wanted him to do that the time before when he bunted. He crushed it."

Krause's first long ball of the season meant everything to the Pittsburgh Pirates' 2014

SEE KRAUSE, 4-B

Locke shuts out Giants as Bucs best Bumgarner

PITTSBURGH 1 SAN FRANCISCO 0

BY STEPHEN J. NESBITT
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

PITTSBURGH — Pitted against one of the best pitchers in baseball, left-hander Jeff Locke was superb. He pitched 6 2/3 scoreless innings and squarely defeated left-hander Madison Bumgarner, the San Francisco Giants ace who hadn't lost since April 20.

And that wasn't even the most surprising occurrence Monday night at PNC Park.

Erik Kratz, the light-hitting catcher just recently acquired, knocked a solo home run to left field in the fifth inning to snap an 0-for-16 slump since joining the Pirates. It proved the difference in a 1-0 Pirates win in a series opener and ended their five-game losing streak.

The Pirates touched down at Pittsburgh International Airport at 2:40 a.m. Monday after a disheartening sweep in Chicago that put the Cubs 12 1/2 games ahead in the NL Central — the second-largest lead at this point in the season since the divisional era began in 1969.

Not only did Locke have a bad track record in this matchup, with a 9.42 ERA in three starts against the Giants, he also was coming off two disastrous starts. He allowed 20 hits and 18 earned runs over 8 2/3 innings in those outings. He certainly didn't look like a stopper.

Locke, a master of showing up when it's least expected, strung together zeroes against a team that came to town riding a 27-8 run. He allowed five hits and struck out three over 6 1/2 scoreless innings.

Bumgarner, a three-time World Series champ, carried an 8-2 record and 1.91 ERA into the contest. He allowed five hits, two walks and one run in eight innings.

"He's going to try to get you to chase up and chase down," manager Clint Hurdle said. "We've got

SEE LOCKE, 2-B

Defensive 'crutch' missing as Mohigans mesh

Senior forward Adrian will lead a cast of newcomers for three-time state champs

BY MADISON FLECK
The Dominion Post

Coming off three-straight state championships, the Morgantown High girls' basketball team is hoping to keep its momentum despite losing four starting seniors after graduation.

Head coach Jason White, who has led the Mohigans to a title every year except his first, in 2013, said the group will have to develop and adapt to new positions in order to pull out a fourth state championship.

"That's what this three-week

period is for," he said. "Trying to develop the younger kids and find out which kids are really committed to the game and developing those skills they're lacking in."

The girls have been playing mock games to pinpoint their weaknesses and have worked on those weaknesses during practice. According to White, a lack of defense has stood out in the scrimmages.

"It's been the crutch we've leaned on the last three years, it's

SEE MESH, 4-B



Ron Rittenhouse/The Dominion Post

MHS senior forward Lydia Adrian defends during Monday's practice.

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Dustin's destiny altered after series of Majors mishaps

GOLF

Associated Press

OAKMONT, Pa. — Dustin Johnson already has shown he can take a punch. He also can take a joke.

Four months ago, he was playing the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in his regular pairing with Jordan Spieth, good friends and complete opposites.

Johnson had nothing but bad luck in the majors. Spieth already had the Masters and a U.S. Open that he won last year when Johnson three-putted from 12 feet on the final hole at Chambers Bay.

At Pebble, on the par-3 fifth hole, Spieth hit a tee shot that hopped the wrong way into a bunker.

"Man, when am I ever going to catch a break," he said with a slight grin and a sideways look.

Johnson picked up on it quickly.

"Bro," he said with a smile, "don't even go there."

Finally, the breaks fell Johnson's way Sunday in the U.S. Open at Oakmont, the toughest test in golf on

the toughest championship course in the land.

They had to eventually.

Johnson now has won in each of the nine years he has been on the PGA Tour, the longest active streak. He has too much talent, too much power. Eventually someone else would make the mistakes and a major would happen to him.

Sure, the three players who tried to chase him on the back nine — Shane Lowry, Scott Piercy and Sergio Garcia — each made at least two bogeys over the last four holes. The debate Sunday night was whether the biggest mistake belonged to USGA officials.

Johnson's ball moved as he stepped in for a short par putt on the fifth hole of the final round. He called over his playing partner, Lee Westwood, and the rules officials and it was deemed Johnson didn't cause it to move. There was no penalty and Johnson tapped in for par.

Less than an hour later, a USGA staff member who saw it on video thought it was worth another look. The USGA felt it had no choice but to approach Johnson on the 12th tee to



Dustin Johnson holds the trophy after winning the U.S. Open at Oakmont on Sunday.

ask him what could have caused the ball to move, and then told him to keep in mind that he might get one shot at the end of his round.

Try playing the final hour of a U.S. Open not knowing if you're one shot ahead, tied or one shot behind.

Johnson couldn't help but wonder — "maybe a little bit, for sure" — if he was jinxed.

He was kept out of a playoff in the 2010 PGA Cham-

ionship because of a two-shot penalty on the last hole when he grounded his club in sand without realizing it was a bunker at Whistling Straits. He was chasing down Darren Clarke a year later in the British Open when he sliced a 2-iron out of bounds and finished second.

Chambers Bay stung the most. It's still a mystery why his 5-iron into the 18th green didn't roll down the slope to 3 feet instead of leaving him a 12-foot putt

on a green as slick as a pane of glass.

"Just one more thing to add to the list, right?" Johnson said.

Instead of wondering what would go wrong, America's most powerful golfer took matters into his own hands.

His decision would suggest the Johnson of old, a guy who didn't keep his wits about him down the stretch. He chose not to look at a leaderboard the rest of the way. It was just him against the golf course, whether it was the first round or the fourth, whether he was leading or trailing.

Smart move.

"I tried my best not to look at the leaderboard because no matter where I stood, I was playing the golf course," he said. "And I was playing each shot how I was going to play it no matter if I was one back or one ahead. This golf course, that's what it demands of you. So that's what I was trying to do. Just play my game and not worry about what anyone else is doing."

Johnson hit all the right shots, even when he didn't need them.

Staked to a three-shot lead — or maybe it was two, no one was sure — he smashed driver down the fairway and a 6-iron to a back pin to 5 feet away.

"Even on the 18th green, after I hit it in there close, I had to ask my brother, 'Where do we stand?' I'm pretty sure I was ahead, but I had no idea," he said.

He made the putt, and his long wait was over.

Ultimately, this U.S. Open won't be remembered for no one knowing the score. The lasting image is Johnson scooping up his 18-month-old son, cradling the silver trophy. Among the first to greet him as he left the green was Jack Nicklaus, after whom the winner's gold medal is named.

Nicklaus won the first of his 18 majors at Oakmont in the 1962 U.S. Open.

Oakmont has the strongest list of U.S. Open champions, but for five of them — Nicklaus included — Oakmont was their first.

"It's definitely a good start," Johnson said. The silver trophy was at his side. The smile was wider than ever. Finally, the breaks went his way.

KRAUSE

FROM PAGE 1-B

ninth-round draft pick out of Stony Brook.

Krause missed all of the 2015 season after undergoing Tommy John surgery on his right elbow.

His elbow received quite a workout Monday as Krause made a number of throws to first base. His elbow handled the work just fine, though.

"It feels great," he said. "I was very diligent with the rehab process. A lot of people helped me get back to where I needed to be."

"Right now the biggest thing for me is getting reps and getting back in there and making throws. My accuracy will come with repetition."

The Black Bears' starter, left-hander

Steven Brault, who is on a rehabilitation assignment from Class AAA Indianapolis, pitched in a game for the first time since May 8.

He suffered a strained hamstring running to first base in a game against Louisville.

Brault worked the first four innings, allowing no runs on one hit, with five strikeouts and no walks.

Afterward, he gave a thumbs-up evaluation when asked about his outing.

"I felt great," said Brault, who threw 53 pitches. "This is my first time doing rehab. It's interesting coming back six weeks after it happened and throwing in a game again."

"The first few innings were a little bit tougher. Once I got to that fourth inning I felt good. There is



Black Bears pitcher Matt Anderson delivers against Batavia on Monday.

no problem throwing and letting them hit the ball with this team. This team knows what it is doing."

Brault does as well. Krause could tell Brault is a pitcher on the cusp of being ready to contribute for the Pirates in

to bury his pitches when he wanted. It's fun as a catcher to see that."

Batavia (0-4) scored its lone run in the sixth. Javier Lopez struck out but reached on a Krause throwing error.

He raced to third on a Kris Goodman single and scored on Samuel Castro's fielder's choice.

The Black Bears tied the game in the seventh. Clark Eagan led off with a double for his first professional hit.

Craig walked, and Jordan George sacrificed the runners to second and third.

Hunter Owen followed his first pro hit, a single to right that plated Eagan.

The Black Bears' bullpen kept Batavia off the scoreboard in the fi-

nal three innings, setting the stage for Krause's dramatic home run in the bottom of the ninth.

West Virginia's bullpen surrendered only one hit in the final three frames, with six strikeouts and no walks.

"They are executing pitches," Toregas said. "They are competing, going after guys and being aggressive with the fastball in the zone. They are throwing their off-speed pitches and doing what they want with them."

"We had very few misfires, very few missed locations. When you pitch that way, it's really hard to hit. ... They're pitching like they want to pitch and get everybody out."

The teams wrap up the series at 7:05 p.m. today.

WEST

FROM PAGE 1-B

head basketball coach Bob Huggins said. "I put it on the ceiling above my bed, so that I could look at Jerry West every night before I went to bed."

"That lasted until I was a junior here and I replaced it with Chris Evert."

It is high praise West laughs at and appreciates — "So many have said to me, 'You know you're im-

portant to this state and you represent it the way we like to present it,'" West said — but he quickly shrugs off the notion that his collection of memorabilia that includes his one NBA championship ring as a player, as well as photos and papers dating throughout his career was meant as a kind of shrine to him.

"When I was going to school here, I was still very much like I am today. I never wanted to do anything to

draw attention to myself," West said. "With this event, I'm calling attention to myself, which is completely out of order for me."

Instead, West wants the collection to serve as motivation for future children of West Virginia who may not believe that they can make an impact in their world.

"Hopefully what it will do is some young kid will come here and realize that hard work, dedication and perseverance can lead them

to have a career completely in a different direction," said West, who is now on the executive board of the Golden State Warriors. "I'm hopeful some young kid can get inspired by my life and maybe change the direction of his life and maybe do something that will be special for him."

Much of the credit for the successes chronicled in the display cases West quickly gives to WVU.

He makes a point of giving

back, either in the form of donations or in the creation of scholarship foundations.

Much of it is done out of the spotlight. West does not want news made of his generosity.

Sometimes, though, he does get word of what his help has created, and that's when West gets a real sense of pleasure out of his accomplishments.

"As you go along and your life changes, I knew I couldn't have gone to college without an athletic schol-

arship," West said. "I probably would have had to have been a part-time student."

"The most gratifying thing for me is when I see someone who was a beneficiary of some of the scholarships funds I have; when I get letters from kids thanking me for helping them get through school, at the end of the day, that's a lot more meaningful for me than any publicity that I have received in my life."

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MESH

FROM PAGE 1-B

the thing that has always been consistent for us," he said. "But it hasn't been there so far this summer."

This team is going to be smaller than in years past, which means the Mohigans will rely more on guard play and running the ball in the upcoming season. White said he's counting on the players who have experience to lead.

Senior forward Lydia Adrian is leading the team by example, and she said the girls need to focus most on trusting one another.

"It's a team meshing issue that we have right now," said Adrian, "because none of us have really played on the same floor all together. Once we get used to playing with each other, it'll be a lot more relaxed, and we'll be able to actually do what each of us do individually — together as a whole."

After a 25-1 season, the Mohigans don't expect the 2016 campaign to be any better, they just hope to keep their consistency.

Adrian sees a lot of potential, especially in the younger players. Once they get the hang of playing with each other, they'll learn when to exude energy and learn when to hold back.

"They want to work hard, and they want to give effort,"



MHS junior Fallon Nicholson (left) looks to pass.

Adrian said. "They have the heart, they're just not sure where to give it, and that's where we need to practice."

Part of high school sports is the change and adaptation with each new year as players learn new

positions and take over for those who graduated.

"It's going to be a different brand of basketball," White said. "Developing the depth to keep this run going is really my biggest concern right now."