

by Nathan Teada

Some of the richest, most well known athletes in the world are the top players in the NBA. The NBA season is a long grueling season that is loading with, "did he just do that?", moments. The playoffs are intense with tensions often running high and boiling over. When ten six foot eight inch athletes who can jump out of the gym, tensions are bound to boil over. The season is also the most unpredictable because much of the game has to be based on teamwork and unity. That being said, I am going to try my best and predict how the teams will finish.

The Atlantic Division is a rather weak division.

The Celtics should reign supreme again with Kevin Garnett. The 76ers are still young but if those players give into the system they could claim a wild card spot again. The Knicks make some progress as they get out of the cellar and finish third while the Nets get fourth and the Raptors finish last.

The Central Division is home of the king LeBron James. Arguably the best player in the league and the face of the league leads his Cavaliers to another division title once again. One of the youngest teams in the league are the Bulls, nicknamed the Baby Bulls. The young talent carries the Bulls to second and a high wild card spot. The once great dynasty of the Pistons has come to an end. However this team still has the talent to be in the playoffs and



J. Crossen, Echo

The West is the toughest of the two conferences which makes it that much harder to predict. In the Northwest the Nuggets were the team to beat. This year I think they finish second winning a wild card spot while the Blazers steal the division crown. The Jazz have one of the best home court advantages in the league and I think that helps them finish third and win a low wild card spot. The Thunder are young and make a move to fourth while the Timberwolves fall to last.

will get a wild card spot. The Bucks then finish in a tight race for fourth over the Pacers.

The toughest division in the East is the Southeast. The Magic worked their magic to get to the finals last year. After a few offseason moves, the team is right back in the hunt and should win this division. The Heat have an explosive team and are on the fast track to a wild card spot again this year while finishing second. The Hawks are an inconsistent team, that being said, I think they can get into the playoffs and maybe pull another first round upset. Senior, Mike Stecz, thinks the Bobcats are going to surprise people, "They are as talented as any team so this is the year they put it together and make a run for the division." I am not jumping on this bandwagon yet, but they are an improved team. The Wizards are a team that suffered many injuries last year. However this year they struggle to work as a team.

The Pacific is the home of finals champion Lakers and that's about it. The Lakers win the division easily while the Suns continue to go in the wrong direction and miss the playoffs again. The Warriors finish second, while the Suns finish

followed by the Clippers and Kings.

The hardest division to predict is the Southwest. Almost every team has a real chance to win the division. I think the Spurs win it once again. The Mavericks get back on track and finish second with a wild card spot. The Rockets lose Artest but still finish third and win a wild card spot. The Hornets finish fourth and another wild card spot. While the Grizzlies finish last and have one of the worst records in the league.

When I asked Senior, Matt Frawley about who he thinks will play in the finals he said "The Lakers repeat again over the Cavaliers." I agree with him on half of that. The Lakers will be there but I think with the return of Garnett the Celtics can and will make a run to the finals. LeBron won the MVP award last year but this year Dwayne Wade takes it after taking his team deep in the playoffs for no help around him. This appears to be the deepest MVP race since the 80's. Dwight Howard continues to get better and wins the defensive player of the year for a second straight year. Coach of the year usually goes to the coach who does the most with the least and this year Vinny Del Negro of the Chicago Bulls wins this award. Blake Griffin looks like a bona fide star in this league and wins rookie of the year while playing big minutes for the struggling Clippers.

This should be an interesting year as many of the NBA stars are unrestricted free agents at the end of the year. The biggest player in the league, LeBron James, could be spend his last year as a Cleveland Cavalier.

winter sports preview

by James Crossen

With change in the weather comes with a change in sports. Enough of the outdoors, we're going to the gym for our winter sports preview. This season is sure to be an exciting one from the very beginning starting December 11, winding down to the end of January. The basketball team this season is looking to build off of last year, starting with the off season. Senior starter Mike Stecz explains how the practices are conducted, "We do conditioning, run through our plays, conduct drills that apply to what we need to work on, and we go over a scouting report on our next game." Preseason practices are Mondays and

Wednesdays in the A-Wing Gym at 7pm. These are open to all boys at Pen Argyl High School. Looking forward to this season coach Frew plans to start the season and continue on a wave of enthusiasm throughout the season, "I am looking forward to all of our games. The Colonial League has realigned our conference so we have a whole new set of teams in our division we will be playing each night. I enjoy preparing to play each one. One out of league game I am looking forward to is playing Bethlehem Catholic opening night December 11."

Excited for the upcoming season, the girls basketball team is welcoming their new coach Mr. David Moyer. The girls have been working hard

perfecting their game since the summer and several times a week, with practices focusing on skill. Coach Moyer has a couple games he has his eye on including Bangor, Northern Lehigh, and Stroudsburg in the Christmas tournament, along with winning the colonial league, then districts, and the state title. Moyer explains his goals for the season, "We are going to work extremely hard, be competitive and improve each game." The girls open up home against Pocono Mountain West December 11.

The wrestling squad is gearing up for the 2009-2010 season, workouts are held every Tuesday and Thursday on "The Hill" from 6:30 to 7:30 since last April, they have also been lifting every Tuesday and Thursday at 6 a.m. Head coach Scott Kupec tells a little about these practices, "They are mostly live wrestling workouts coupled with some one-on-one instruction based upon the needs of each wrestler. Wrestling in District XI doesn't have an off-season. If you don't put the work in, you will fall behind." The squad doesn't rely on just one wrestler they are ready to work together in order to win. Kupec explains the unity by, "We need each wrestler to think



Courtesy of S. Kupec

and act as one. If they can act as a team, they will accomplish many great things. If they cannot, they could fall apart. It will be up to the team to decide their fate." They open their season away at Wilson on December 16.