

LHS' Hopson commits to Trinity

By CLAY WHITTINGTON
Staff Writer

Once Heath Hopson stepped foot on campus, he knew he belonged. After encountering numerous opportunities to attend other institutions, the Lampasas High School basketball standout gave Trinity University a last-minute look.

He liked what he saw. "I really think that is where God was leading me to go," Hopson said. "It was just kind of a different reaction."

"It's a feeling you can't explain." Last week, the District 25-4A MVP made it official, and perhaps nobody is more excited than his future coach, Pat Cunningham.

"We really like his offensive skills," the coach said. "He has a chance to be a really good offensive player."

While the basketball program had a lot to do with the reason behind Hopson's decision, the academic

credibility of the Division III school was the deciding factor.

"The main thing it came down to was academics," Hopson said. Hopson plans to become a veterinarian.

"[He's] choosing Trinity for the right reasons," Cunningham said. "In addition to that, he wants to play basketball, versus the other way around."

For the senior, traveling the recruiting trail this season has been more like riding a roller coaster as he considered multiple schools, including Division I and Division II universities.

"There were ups every time a new school came to [me], and I thought that this is what my hard work has done for me," Hopson said. "But it was definitely a down every time [I] had to call a coach and tell them [I] wasn't considering their school. "That was the hard part."

In the end, it came down to Trinity and the University of Texas at Dallas.

Hopson's high school coach, Scott Harrelson, agrees with the decision.

"He's going to play at an academic university that is second to few," Harrelson said. "If he puts his mind to it and works at it all summer, then he could make an impact [on the court] his first year."

Hopson will have an opportunity to make immediate noise as the Tigers are graduating six seniors, leaving the floor wide open for new players to emerge. Trinity will sport four freshmen on the upcoming roster.

The Tigers went 22-3 last season with a 13-2 record in the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference.

While the Badgers failed to excel as a team last season, Hopson had no problems producing. He set new single-season records in points, rebounds and blocks, becoming the school's career-leader in all three categories in the process.

"It is just fantastic to coach a guy that you know what he is going to give you night in and night out," Harrelson said. "That's what is really special about Heath. Every night he gave you everything he had."

"We will miss Heath, and we will miss knowing that we can get 27 points a game out of him. [And that's] on a bad day."



PHOTO BY RICHARD AKRIDGE
Badger sharpshooter Heath Hopson, joined by Lampasas head coach Scott Harrelson, left, and his parents DeMar and Hilton Hopson, signs to play basketball at Trinity University.

I have caught several large fish, but no records

While channel surfing recently, I viewed a program on an outdoor channel called "The Quest for the One." The program follows a person trying to bag a large deer, elk or other game animal, or a trophy-sized fish.

The program got me to thinking about some of the largest fish I have caught. None of them would make the record books, but they all are very special.

I have caught largemouth bass in a number of Texas lakes including the Highland Lakes, Brownwood, Falcon, Amistad and Toledo Bend. None of them would qualify for the Sharelunker Program (heavier than 13 pounds), as very few exceeded four pounds.

My heaviest largemouth bass was taken from an unusual place. It was caught in a medium-sized hole in the Blanco River. The fish bit a small, purple plastic worm and weighed just over eight pounds. That may not be large by Texas standards, but for a small Hill Country river it is a trophy, at least in my opinion.

I also have landed a few smallmouth bass, with the largest caught in Inks Lakes. It weighed almost three pounds.

In the true bass family, I have caught many white bass, but very few exceeded two pounds. The same for striped bass; my largest striper came from Lake Buchanan and weighed about 10 pounds.

Sometimes it is where or how a fish is caught that makes it a trophy. That is the case with the largest channel catfish I have landed. I was fishing with my wife and her parents in Lake Brownwood. Fishing was slow, so I decided to take my inexpensive Zebco 202 road and reel and see if I could catch some perch.

I baited my hook with worms and did catch a few. On one cast I had a strong bite, and the fish took off with the reel drag screaming. After about 10 minutes I managed to land the catfish. The channel catfish weighed just over 12 pounds.

Outdoors With Mat Taylor



I was tired after landing the fish, but the cheap reel was ruined as most of the gears were stripped. I discarded it in the trash.

My largest freshwater fish is another memorable catch. I was visiting my sister in Clarksville, Tenn. One day I decided to fish in the nearby Cumberland River. I used my spinning reel and baited my hook with commercial stink bait, hoping to catch a good catfish.

I fished for several hours without a bite and was ready to call it quits, when something took the bait and took off. After several minutes, I pulled a large carp from the river. Using my hand-held scales, the fish topped 14 pounds. It was not a catfish but a trophy nonetheless.

I haven't done a lot of saltwater fishing, but my wife and I made one trip to the red snapper banks on a boat out of Port Aransas. We caught a number of snappers, and I also hooked and landed a 21-pound amberjack. That was the largest fish I have caught on a rod and reel.

As I said, none of these fish are records, but they are trophies to me.

Speaking of big fish, I see where Texas Parks and Wildlife will expand its Angler Recognition Program with a public water body catch-and-release record category for 39 saltwater and freshwater fish species, beginning June 1. Currently, the only catch-and-release records accepted by the department are for state records.

The records will be determined by total length. As with state

records, the only fish that will be recognized for water body records are those that meet the minimum qualifications for a freshwater or

saltwater Big Fish award. Some 22 saltwater species and 17 freshwater fish species are listed in the Big Fish award program.

"By adding a public water body category, we are allowing more anglers — especially kids — to obtain a record without having to locate certified scales," said TPWD Angler Recognition Program Coordinator Joedy Gray. "We've also long wanted to expand this program in a way that does not require an angler to kill a fish to be recognized for an achievement. This does that."

To qualify, an angler must submit a photograph of the fish next to a tape measure, as well as a photo of the angler with the fish and a signed application.

If an angler has a portable, certified scale, he can get as many as five certificates: state record for weight, state record for total length, water body record for weight, water body record for total length and a Big Fish award.

Current state and water body records, as well as rules and application forms, may be found on the TPWD web site at www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

Former Soil Conservation Service employee and longtime writer Mat Taylor offers his outdoors column for Dispatch Record readers. He can be contacted at (254) 518-2262 or via e-mail at mmtaylor@agristar.net.

HEARING TESTS ARE IMPORTANT



Dr. Sandy Schick
Audiologist

Everyone should have their hearing checked at least once a year. If you have a hearing problem of any kind, you owe it to yourself to have a hearing check-up to determine what can be done to help you.

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Our Lampasas office is located at 1507 S. Key #2; 1-877-693-0109. We also have locations in Marble Falls, Georgetown, Cedar Park & Austin. Call 1-877-693-0109 for an appointment! Repair service and cleaning are available for your present hearing aid, no matter what brand or where you bought it.

SPORTS SHORTS

LMS

The Lampasas Middle School athletic department invites all incoming seventh-grade boys and girls to attend a free introduction to its weight program.

Additionally, basketball, football and volleyball drills will be conducted by the junior high coaching staff.

The clinic will be conducted at the high school weight room and gymnasiums on May 11-13 and May 18-20 from 4 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

On two days, coaches will teach football and basketball skills to the boys while girls learn about volleyball and basketball. The LMS football coaching staff, along with Scott Harrelson (boys' basketball), Stuart Beckwith (girls' basketball) and Beth Rutland (volleyball) will serve as instructors.

For more information contact McQueen at 556-2327 or email mcqueenjo@lampasas.k12.tx.us.

5K Run

The fifth annual Jack Rabbit Run will be held Saturday in Copperas Cove at 8 a.m.

Hosted by the Copperas Cove Chamber of Commerce, all proceeds from the event benefit the Hope Pregnancy Center.

The 5K race begins at Ogletree Gap Park and continues through surrounding residential areas.

Cost is \$18 for 5K walk, 5K run and 10K run, and increases to \$20 after Wednesday.

Medals will be presented to the first three male and female finishers in each age group. All other finishers receive a commemorative pin.

The Jack Rabbit Run is one of two annual races in Copperas Cove and makes up part of the Centex Race Series.

For more information, email rabbitrun4hope@yahoo.com or visit rabbitrun4hope.com.

SOFTBALL

Rex Wootan, a longtime softball pitching instructor from Llano, will be available in Lampasas for a free two-hour pitching clinic.

Wootan will show girls the correct way to pitch and avoid injury.

For more information, call 325-247-5331 or email rexwootan@verizon.net.

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Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days

WHERE?
SATURDAY, MAY 9 • CITY OF LAMPASAS
PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY
(201 BROWN STREET, LAMPASAS)

WHEN?
9:00AM—2:00PM

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?
Open to all residents of Bell, Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Milam, Mills, and San Saba counties. PARTICIPANTS MUST SHOW PROOF OF RESIDENCY (DRIVER'S LICENSE, WATER BILL, ETC) AND WILL BE ASKED TO COMPLETE A VERY BRIEF SURVEY...NO PERSONAL INFORMATION WILL BE ASKED.

WHAT CAN BE DROPPED OFF?
Accepting paints, automobile batteries, motor oil, antifreeze, household cleaners, household chemicals, pesticides, flammables, corrosives, and other hazardous household products.
TIRES FROM PASSENGER CARS AND TRUCKS WILL BE ACCEPTED. LIMITED TO 8 TIRES PER HOUSEHOLD.
A \$1.00 SURCHARGE WILL BE PLACED ON EACH TIRE OVER THE LIMIT. NO TIRES WITH RIMS, PLEASE.

THIS COLLECTION IS FOR HOUSEHOLDS ONLY. Large quantities from businesses, farms, or commercial operations will not be accepted.

PROHIBITED ITEMS
PROHIBITED: infectious and medical wastes, biological and radioactive materials, compressed gas cylinders, ammunition, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and explosives. NO EXCEPTIONS!

The City of Lampasas will be providing special roll-off containers for Citizens to dump their bulk trash items in.

For more information: Contact the Central Texas Council of Governments at (254)-770-2364.

THIS IS A FREE SERVICE!
Please utilize this opportunity to keep these hazards out of our waterways and natural environment.

