

PREP SCENE

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Boys basketball

Allocco savoring return to heritage

HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOLS arrival in the Bay Valley Athletic League is giving coach Frank Allocco and the De La Salle basketball team a chance of a lifetime.

Allocco is going back to his New Jersey roots, and he's bringing the nationally ranked Spartans with him.

Because Heritage won't start competing at the varsity level until next season, four byes were built into the schedule of each BVAL varsity team. It so happened that one of the byes fell on Feb. 10, allowing Allocco to accept an invitation to the prestigious Prime Time Shootout in Trenton, N.J.

The Shootout consists of four days of showcase games between the nation's top programs. De La Salle, which began the week ranked No. 6 in the state by CalHiSports.com and No. 11 in the nation by USAToday.com, will face Mount Vernon (N.Y.) at Sovereign Bank Arena on Feb. 11.

But that's not the game Allocco is most looking forward to.

As opposed to traveling for just the one Saturday game, Allocco has scheduled a game two days earlier at New Providence (N.J.) — where he proved himself as an athlete.

"My (high school) football coach is still the football coach there, my quarterbacks coach is the athletic director and my basketball coach is the golf coach," Allocco said. "It's going to be a big event."

Allocco, who was an all-state athlete in three sports at New Providence, will speak at a school assembly and have a chance to show his players the basketball he used to score his 1,000th high school point.

According to Allocco, New Providence is comparable in size to Miramonte and is having an up-and-down season. However, relatives have assured Allocco that the gym will be full.

"It's the biggest ticket in town," Allocco said. "And I've

TIMES BOYS BASKETBALL POLL

Rank	School	Record	Comment
1.	De La Salle	17-1	Allows just 10 points in final 27 minutes of win over Deer Valley
2.	Campolindo	16-3	Cougars rout Concord in only game of a light week
3.	Foothill	18-2	First place on line tonight as Falcons seek to avenge loss to SRV
4.	Skyline	17-4	Titans still unbeaten in OAL after squeaking past Castlemont 60-57
5.	Salesian	16-4	Resolve will be tested in a week without coach Bill Mellis (surgery)
6.	San Ramon Valley	15-5	Loss to Monte Vista snaps 14-game EBAL winning streak
7.	Las Lomas	16-3	Knights vent frustrations with a 45-point pasting of Alhambra
8.	San Leandro	15-4	Moves back into first-place tie in HAAL by beating Tennyson 54-44
9.	Monte Vista	14-6	Rivalry atmosphere spurs host Mustangs to an upset of then-No. 3 SRV
10.	St. Joseph Notre Dame	17-5	Pilots have won eight of nine, have Round 3 against St. Mary's tonight

Also receiving votes: Deer Valley (14-5), De Anza (14-5), Pinole Valley (13-5), Tennyson (16-3). The Times boys basketball poll incorporates all East Bay high schools and is compiled by the staff of Contra Costa Newspapers. Records are through Wednesday.



CHACE BRYSON
Times staff writer

warned my relatives that I'll have an assistant coach whose sole job will be to keep an eye on the stands. If any of them so much as pump their fists for New Providence, we'll know."

ANOTHER MELLIS MAL-ADY: Salesian coach Bill Mellis wants to stop having these conversations — the discussions that begin with him describing his most recent ailment.

For the second time in four seasons, Mellis will be forced to miss time on the sidelines. The first time came in the 2002-03 season when he was diagnosed with a collapsed lung on New Year's Eve. His second setback came last Friday afternoon when he tore his left Achilles tendon while playing basketball with some students.

"I was basically trying to act

"My (high school) football coach is still the football coach there, my quarterbacks coach is the athletic director and my basketball coach is the golf coach. It's going to be a big event."

— De La Salle coach Frank Allocco, on his return to his hometown of New Providence, N.J., for a basketball game

younger than I am," said the 36-year-old Mellis, who is in his eighth season as the Chieftains coach. "I just had a little snap in my leg."

Mellis was taken to the hospital, where his leg was X-rayed and put in a splint, and then he had a game to coach. Though forced to sit the entire game, he coached Salesian past Piedmont for its 12th straight win.

"It was definitely a change," Mellis said of sitting for the entire game. "I got to know my assistant coaches a lot better."

Led by Eddie Foster, it was those assistant coaches who were to be in charge Thursday at Kennedy, and will lead the Chieftains in Monday's home game against St. Patrick-St. Vincent. Mellis, who underwent surgery earlier Thursday, hopes to return to the team for the Feb. 8 game at Albany.

Mellis will be on crutches for four weeks and will wear a protective boot for two to three months after that.

BRUIN BOMBER: St. Patrick-St. Vincent isn't quite having a season to remember, but its senior shooting guard is.

Brandon Cabos eclipsed 90 3-pointers for the third straight year last week, breaking the Bruins' single-season record that he already owned from the previous season. Cabos entered Thursday night's game against Albany with 97 3-pointers this season. His previous school record was set at 95 last season.

Cabos has converted a career total of 281 shots from behind the arc.

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