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# WATER POLO ATHLETE OF YEAR: North Penn's Dunigan stood above rest

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By KEV HUNTER

Chosen as The Reporter's Athlete of the Year for boys water polo, Pat Dunigan provided so much for the North Penn boys water polo team this past fall.

Dunigan led the Knights in multiple ways and stood out as one of the premier players in the state, and the good news for North Penn is, there is more to come.

"It was hard coming into the season — I had some big shoes to fill," the junior said. "I thought I played to the best of my ability, and I just wanted to win. I don't like to lose."

Dunigan led the Knights to a 26-8 season and the fifth-place spot in the state, by virtue of their 14-8 victory over La Salle at the state tournament.

Only the top 10 players in the state earn the distinction as First-Team All-State, and Dunigan's performance throughout the year was so commanding that he was selected as one of those special 10.

"Most of our offense runs through Pat, to either create a scoring opportunity for himself or set up drivers on the perimeter," Knights coach Jason Grubb said. "He finished the year with over 122 goals, and that is the highest number of goals a North Penn player has scored since I have been involved with this program."

Dunigan became only the second NP player ever to go over 100 goals for a season, underlining his production as an offensive force.

The Knights' primary two-meter man also was the most accurate shooter on the team, hitting on 56 percent of

his shots, he was tied for fourth on the team with 42 steals, and he added 16 assists.

“When you play with the same group of guys, you know where everybody is,” Dunigan said.

The two-year starter also earned First Team Suburban One League honors and was First Team Eastern Conference. He was the Most Valuable Player for North Penn, and in all of Suburban One.


Dunigan remembers what first drew him to water polo.

“I started playing when I was nine — I had swam for two years before that,” said Dunigan, who also swims for the Knights. “My cousin was like ‘you should try water polo.’ Instead of just chasing a black line (like in swimming), it seemed so much more fun playing with a ball.”


Dunigan had plenty of fun this year, and 2011 could be even better. The Knights will return all but two starters next fall.




“With Pat only being a junior,” Grubb said, “we look for big things for North Penn next season.”

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