

schools, size of their fan base has multiple variables



Due Griffins defeated Mora during the Class AA State Basketball Tournament in March in the

nable support

out high school sports in recent
 object of public school-private
 have shown that private schools
 publicly funded brethren do not.

facilities. Most smaller private schools do not
 have on-campus gymnasiums in which all their
 trophies, plaques, team photos and newspaper
 clippings can be displayed.

Monte del Sol, for instance, leads a nomadic

the faded yellow yearbooks that form the base
 of a family tree.

In small towns like Pecos, Mora, Gallina, Ojo
 Caliente and all points in between, the local
 school and, by extension, its basketball teams,
 form the basis for community pride.

It's in the tiny gyms and creaky bleachers
 that an entire fan base can unite, reminisce and
 cheer on the source of civic unity.

Some day, perhaps, the Desert Academics of
 the world will have the same extended influ-
 ence as the public schools that surround them,
 but for now it's clear that the small school level
 in high school basketball is dominated by the
 history and tradition of the schools that have

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Here are some small-school
 players to watch from North-
 ern New Mexico this season:

BOYS

LORENZO CHAVEZ MORA

An all-district selection at
 guard for the Rangers as a
 junior, this 5-foot-10 senior is
 one of those rare breeds who
 can literally fill any position on
 the floor.

In certain sets he can post
 up against larger players in
 traffic or crash the boards with
 reckless abandon as a forward
 or wing. When production is
 needed, he's Mora's guy.

JOHNNY VIGIL PECOS

At 6-feet he's a giant on a
 Panthers roster that's vertically
 challenged.

His size, however, makes him
 a major headache for oppo-
 nents as he can run the floor
 like a guard or bump fenders
 with the big guys in the paint.

In head coach Russ Gilmore's
 new system, just expect plenty
 of high-octane points from this
 wing specialist.

WILL LENFESTEY SANTA FE PREPARATORY

He's officially listed as a post
 player, but this 6-foot-4 junior
 has the range to let it fly from
 the outside and the quickness
 to break down opponents off
 the dribble.

A role player on last year's
 state semifinal squad, he'll be
 called upon to be a dominant
 scorer and rebounder this
 winter.

ELLIOTT RADSLIFF SANTA FE WALDORF

The senior point guard for
 the Wolves was an iron man
 for most of the 2011-12 season.

He rarely saw the bench on
 a team that had little depth,
 but averaged 14 points and five
 assists per contest. His role
 won't change this season, but
 the expectations have — the
 Wolves are a favorite in 5B.

BRANDON GONZALES ESCALANTE

Instinctive and blue-collar,
 Gonzales is a natural-born
 rebounder and deceptively
 above-average scorer.

He averaged 17 points and
 10 rebounds per game and led
 the Lobos to double-digit wins
 in head coach Bill Russom's
 first season. The Lobos won
 only six games the year before.

Look for him to again be the