

Around Rap Around Rap Around Rap Are

Championship Play Beckons ND Basketball

By MARTIN TOOMBS

Elmira—Being introduced as the "defending Class A state champions" at away games has served to "put a lot of pressure on our team this year," Coach Michael Johnston commented recently.

But, he points out, the championship squad "was last year's team," and with only three players back from the state champions, it is a different team representing Notre Dame this year.

Playing the same tough competition that Notre Dame has played the past few years, the Crusaders have 9 wins and 5 losses following Friday's game against neighboring Southside. They played Sayre at home last night.

Johnston takes some comfort in their battle for the championship — two of their remaining three games are division championship — two of their remaining three games are at home. That should help as the Crusaders try to make it four straight Bi-State division titles.

The home court has been a definite advantage for Notre Dame since Johnston became coach. His home record is 32 and 4, including two years when the team was undefeated at home. When the Crusaders opened their home season this year with a loss to Horseheads, they broke a 22-game home winning streak. Since then, they've started another, and have gotten it up to four games.

The home court "is a decided advantage," Johnston

commented, adding that he thinks many opposition players, not used to a gym with all the seating on one side, think the gym is small. He noted that opposing players often take shots further from the basket at Notre Dame than they do on their home courts.

This year's team is young, he noted, with only Carl Schiefen and Steve Agan, starters from last year, and Mike Gustin back. The other nine players have only junior varsity experience. Players need "a lot more playing time at the varsity level" before they reach their peak, Johnston said.

"We've beaten good teams," he noted, including Notre Dame of Utica, and Elmira Free Academy, which was undefeated before losing at Notre Dame Jan. 16.

But after the EFA win, they lost in overtime at Hornell and to Horseheads.

They quickly ended the losses with a 48-32 win at Corning East, in which Agan scored half of his team's points.

While this year's club is the tallest he has had at Notre Dame, "we don't have the great foot quickness" of past

years, he noted. Quickness is valuable, he said, placing its importance for a winning team just behind attitude.

"Our kids are learning, and they work awfully hard," Johnston said, especially complimenting the team's dedication.

As for the division championship, "ourselves and Hornell have the best shot at it," Johnston commented, adding that the league is much better balanced this year, with three of four teams in their division with winning records, and three of five in the Capitol division also posting winning marks.

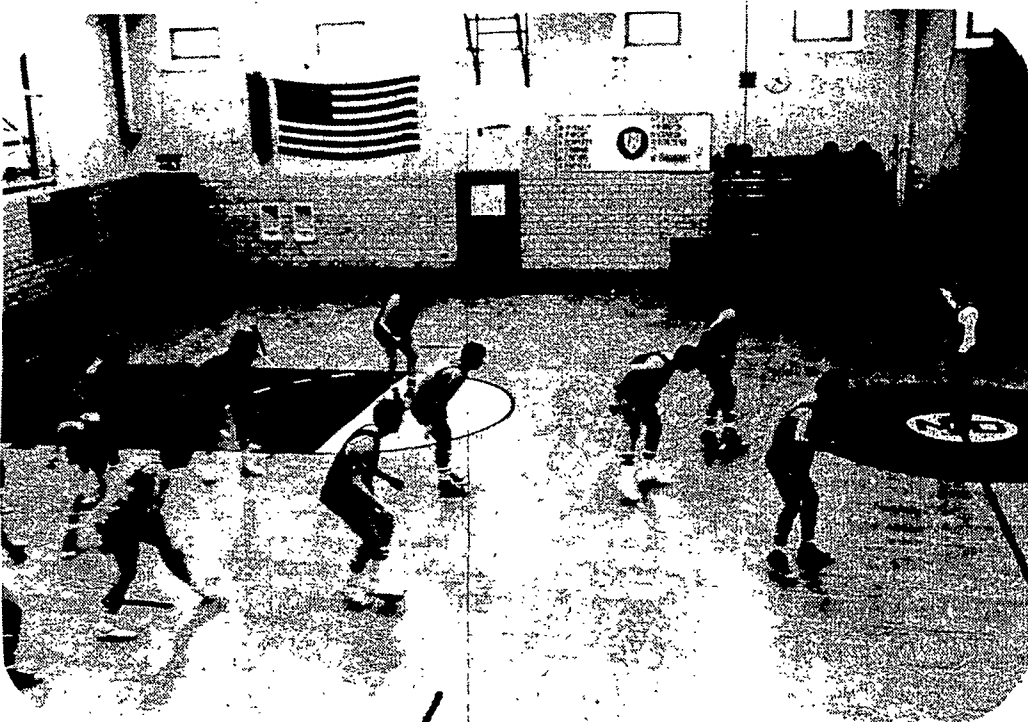


Photo by Martin Toombs

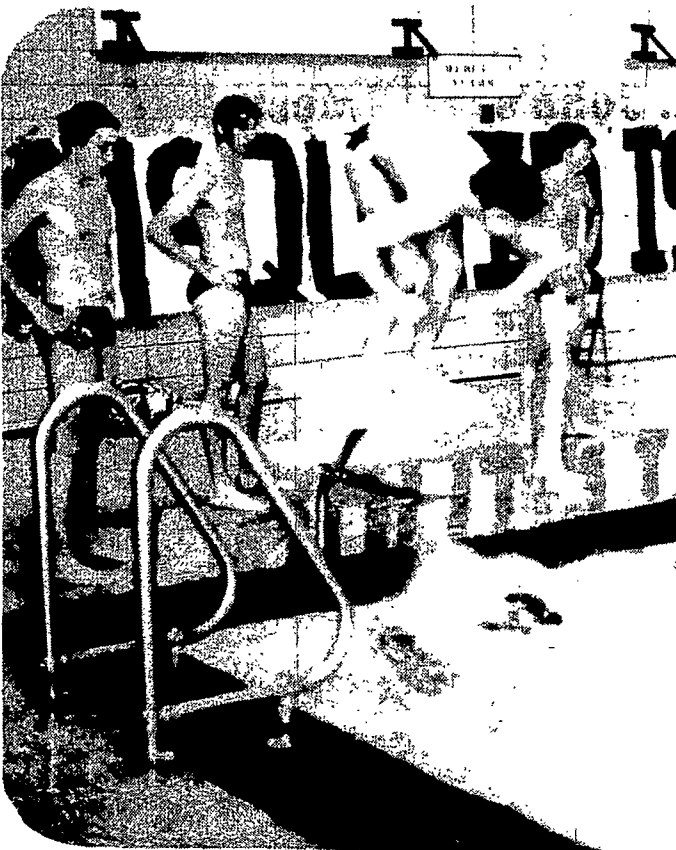
Coach Johnston putting his players through a quickness and agility drill in preparation for last Friday's game against Southside High School.



Photos by Susan McKinney

Split Victory

Above, Cardinal Mooney's Maureen Kretschmer goes up for basket in the girls varsity basketball effort against East High School, Thursday, Feb. 1 at East. East went on to win 65-41. Below, McQuaid's swim team handed East a 61-22 defeat, in meet action on the same day at East. In photo are members of the McQuaid junior varsity relay team take to the water. On the starting mark is Bill Ouweleen.



Sports Who's Who

Neil Brophy won the 200-yard and 500-yard freestyle events to lead McQuaid to their 100th consecutive dual swim meet victory last week over Eastridge, 115-51.

The Knights' streak is exceptional because all 100 wins have been on the road. McQuaid does not have its own swimming pool.

In later action, McQuaid clinched a tie for the City-Catholic League Division I swimming title with a 61-22 victory over East High School. Again, the Knights were led by Neil Brophy and Marty Mahoney, who won two events apiece.

Mercy High School's varsity basketball team opened its 1979 season winning its first two games, 43-21 over Nazareth Academy and beating Franklin, 59-44.

High scorer for Mercy in the Nazareth game was senior Michelle Miller with 11 points. Miller shared top honors in the

Franklin game with sophomore Ann Murphy. Both scored 14 points.

Mike Eblacker scored 16 points and Scott Quist added 13 to lead Bishop Kearney to a 58-53 upset win over rival Irondequoit at Kearney last week.

Although they haven't won a game in the City-Catholic League, the Kings (3-10 overall) claimed the "championship" of the town of Irondequoit by winning three out of four games in the intra-town rivalry, splitting two games against Irondequoit (5-7) and beating Eastridge (5-8) twice.

John Taille made 36 saves and Mark Howard assisted on three goals as McQuaid extended their hockey unbeaten streak to 12 games with a 4-2 victory over Irondequoit at RIF last week.

As a result, the Knights have been awarded a ranking in the New York State Sportswriters' Association poll, making

them the first hockey team from Section Five to be so honored.

The Monroe County Private-Parochial Volleyball League all-stars were announced.

Representing Cardinal Mooney are seniors Marian Rhodes and Debra Berk; from Mercy, Becky Kaltenbach (junior) and Michelle Miller (senior); and from Nazareth, Joanne Wedow (senior).

GRAD-NOTES Nick Urzetta (ex-Bishop Kearney) scored 16 points to help St. Bonaventure to a 107-78 basketball win over Assumption College in Olean last week.

Scott Delgatti (ex-Cardinal Mooney), formerly property of the World Champion New York Yankees, was traded to the Baltimore Orioles last month and come this spring will be wearing the jersey of the Rochester Red Wings.

Marriage Courses

Two marriage courses are offered at McQuaid. The first which is part of the junior theology program is entitled, "Marriage and Relationships". Its purpose is to help students understand what is involved in any healthy and sound human relationship while studying marriage and its requirements as one of these relationships. Since grace, builds on nature, this understanding of marriage in its human dimension helps students to understand it as the Sacrament of Christ's union with his Church.

"Marriage and Relationships II" is a senior seminar course intended for those students who have a serious desire to learn more about love in marriage. The course content is in part dependent on the concerns of each group. Class members share in the selection of topics.

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