

C-J Sports

Dundee caps off disappointing season for DeSales hoopsters

20-8 second quarter spells doom for Saints

By Richard A. Kiley

This has been a tough season for Tony Alvaro, third-year boys' basketball coach at DeSales.

So instead of his squad enjoying a breather before the second season begins, it was only fitting that his up-and-down Saints (11-7) finished their regular season against the rugged Scotsmen of Dundee on Tuesday night, February 17. And despite Same DeMetro's 30 points, DeSales fell short in a 76-67 loss in the Finger Lakes West Division contest.

DeMetro was the offense for the Saints most of the night, until the senior roving guard was lost to fouls with 3:49 left in the game. He had pulled DeSales to within one, 60-59, with 4:39 left in the fourth quarter after Dundee had established what appeared to be a comfortable lead.

The Scotsmen led 58-51 with six minutes left in regulation, until the Saints put together an 8-2 run spurred by DeMetro and Phil Sindoni. Dundee led 60-56 until Sindoni converted a layup underneath, and was fouled in the process. Sindoni missed his free-throw, but after a scramble on the floor, DeMetro nailed a short jumper to cut the lead to one.

That was as close as Alvaro's squad would get, however. Dundee ended any hopes of a DeSales win with a 10-2 spurt of its own to close out the game.

After DeMetro was lost to fouls, the Scotsmen took control. The back-breaker for the Saints came with :21 left, when Joel Pinckney's three-point play gave his teammates a 74-67 advantage. Dundee's Mike Huber also proved a factor down the stretch, icing four out of five free throws.

The Saints were in command of the game early, with DeMetro scoring 12 of his team's 16 points in the first eight minutes. He also scored most of DeSales' points in the second quarter — unfortunately the Saints tallied a mere eight points in all. The Scotsmen outscored their hosts 20-8 in the second quarter to break open what had been a tight contest.

Eight different players scored for Dundee in the second quarter, as the Scotsmen consistently beat the Saints' press. The score was 20-20 with just 5:35 left in the half, before the Scotsmen outscored DeSales 14-4 in the final two and a half minutes. Kevin Howell upped the lead to 29-24 with 1:30 remaining in the half, before Kenny Disbrow scored four points in the final half-minute to give Dundee a 34-24 lead at intermission.

"They beat us in the second quarter with their long outside shooting," Alvaro said after the game. "They didn't score all those points because they beat our press."

Alvaro said the Scotsmen's ability to work the ball inside for a higher percentage shot was a bigger factor.

"When they got the ball up the court, they'd set it up and pass it up to the key," Alvaro said. "And if they can get their half-court game going, it's tough to stop them, because they're a bigger team than we are."

Bigger not only in size, but in number. Dundee is a Class B school competing in the Finger Lakes West Division, while DeSales is considered a Class C school. The Finger Lakes West also includes schools all the way from Class A to Class D.

The Saints didn't go down easy, however, trimming the 10-point halftime deficit to three points going into the final quarter. DeMetro once again was the catalyst, but this time was helped by the play of Brent Holdridge and Peter Parshall. Holdridge was instrumental in the comeback, through both his scoring and passing.

The senior point guard cut the lead to 50-46 with :45 left in the third quarter, and had a nifty assist on Parshall's bucket to cut the margin to one, 50-49.

DeSales trailed 52-49 after three quarters.

The fourth quarter was nip-and-tuck until DeMetro was lost to fouls in the crucial final moments. The situation became even more bleak when Holdridge fouled out with 1:04 remaining.

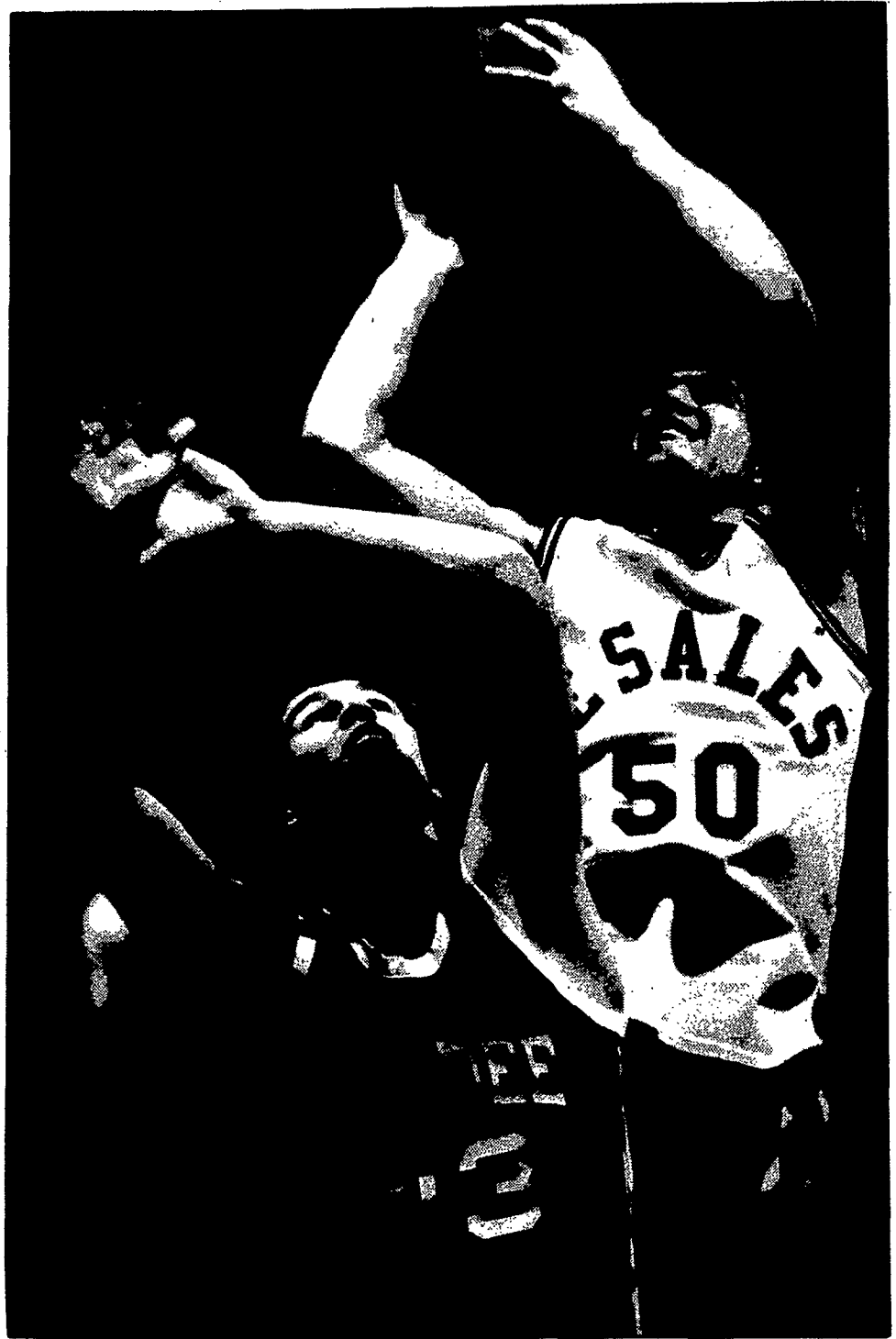
The Saints were never able to cut the lead to less than seven points the rest of the way.

"It was a real tough game; they (Dundee) shot real well, especially in the second quarter," Alvaro said. "They did a lot of things right, so you've got to give them credit."

Although he was encouraged by the way his team bounced back in the second half, Alvaro was still bothered by the players' tendency to rely too heavily on DeMetro — a tendency that has sometimes cost them games.

"We have to play as a team. Other teams are going to key on Sam (DeMetro) and Brent (Holdridge), so we have to get the ball underneath and score more," Alvaro said, adding that even when his team was able to get the ball underneath they didn't always score. "If we miss (shots) from the outside, we're only going to get one shot. Get the ball inside and you've got a few tries at it. You have to work; you have to pay the price."

"I think sometimes Sam assumes he has to carry the load," Alvaro said. "But if we



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

DeSales' Sam DeMetro shoots over South Seneca's Rich Andrews during second-quarter action. Despite DeMetro's 30 points, the Saints dropped their regular season finale, 76-67.

can't get the ball underneath, there's not much you can do."

And when DeSales is able to work the ball inside, the Saint head coach said, it has to eliminate costly misses underneath.

"My assistant coach (William Riley) counted five or six missed layups in the second quarter," Alvaro said. "We don't need to put any more pressure on Sam (to score)."

"We're just not playing up to the caliber that I want them to play," Alvaro continued. "I think we can do better, and we'd better start (playing better) if we want to do anything (in the sectionals)."

The Saints are seeded seventh in this year's Class C pairings, the identical spot they held in last year's tourney. During the '86 sectionals, they disposed of Scio, Fillmore and Arkport by a total of nine points and went on to lose a heartbreaking one-point

game to Harley-Allendale Columbia in the Class C final at the War Memorial.

Alvaro said his Saints have to start anew in the second season if they have any hopes of getting to the "big house" again.

"We just have to pretend this is the first game of the year, and just try to stop whatever they (opposing teams) try to do," the DeSales coach said. "Like John Wooden (the famous college basketball coach at UCLA) said, 'You've got to forget yesterday's victories and forget yesterday's defeats.'"

In order for DeSales to capture Class C, it will have to go up against the likes of Cuba (18-0) and Honeoye (17-1). Honeoye defeated the Saints twice during the regular season.

DeSales was scheduled to open the second season against Pavilion, the No. 10 seed, on Wednesday night, February 25.

Quest to play in 'the big house' begins for Section 5 high school cagers

By Richard A. Kiley

The teams and players may be different, but their goals are the same: to play against the best at Rochester's War Memorial. That goal is what makes the Section 5 high school basketball tournament so exciting.

Just ask first-year Bishop Kearney Coach Mike Ruff. When he was coaching at Aquinas last year, his core of seniors wanted to go out in style. They weren't disappointed, making it to the final game of the Class AAA bracket.

"Every team's goal is to make it to 'the big house,' my kids are talking about how great it would be to play there," Ruff said. "That's our team goal, and we think we may be able to upset a few teams to get there."

The 13th-seeded Fighting Kings (8-11) began their quest on the right foot Friday night, February 20, with a convincing 75-46 win over No. 20 Penn Yan (0-19) in Kearney's gym.

The former standout cager for Fairport, who played for current Fairport coach Jeff Fitch

the last time the Red Raiders won the sectionals, said the game served as a good warm-up for what is yet to come.

"We got a good seeding; I'm glad we didn't get a bye," said Ruff, referring to the fact that the first 12 teams in each class sit out the first round of play. "I don't think it's good to sit and wait to play; it gets the guys out of rhythm."

The next hurdle for Ruff's squad was Waterloo (Kearney was scheduled to play the Indians Tuesday night, February 24), which is seeded fourth Class AA. The Finger-Lakes-Division team finished the regular season at 13-5. One of those 13 wins came at the expense of Kearney in the Waterloo Tournament back in December.

In his analysis of Class AA, the Kearney coach said that No. 1-seed Rush-Henrietta Roth and No. 2-seed Newark are "obviously the favorites" in the 66th annual Section 5 tournament. But, he said, because the sectionals are "do or die," there always seems to be

a dark horse.

"My old Aquinas team is playing well; they're a big squad," Ruff said. "They may be a sleeper. I also like Monroe because of Kevin Burton."

Who can blame Ruff for liking the chances of his former club? Current Coach Mike Dianetti has done a masterful job in his first season, overcoming the unfamiliarity between him and his team, and the inconvenience of not having a gym to practice or play in most of the season.

The Little Irish are riding a five-game winning streak and are seeded eighth in the tourney.

"We're looking forward to the sectionals," said Dianetti, whose Aquinas team finished at 10-8 and will face No. 9 seed Geneva (10-8). "The kids are starting to believe in themselves, and we've got a pretty positive flow now."

The first-year coach of Aquinas said it would take "quite a game to beat a team like Roth," adding that the Royals "aren't far below East or McQuaid."

Dianetti also likes Newark's chances of getting to the final game, but also offered some possible "Cinderella" teams.

"Monroe can advance with the bracket they're in. I also like the winner of the Waterloo-Kearney game. But the odds-on favorite (team) has to be Roth."

In Class AAA, the division his overachieving seniors took by storm last March, Ruff likes Sal Rizzo's East squad. "They are far and away the heavy favorite."

"One analogy that could be made is that East High is getting a reputation ... I don't mean to call them dirty, but the way they press you and intimidate you, they're getting a mystique about them ... like Georgetown," said Ruff, referring to the perennial beasts of the Big East Conference. "It's going to be difficult to upset them. They're not just Quinn Smith and Dave Rizzo anymore. They just have too many weapons."

For a dark horse in Class AAA, the Fighting King Coach likes Penfield. "They have a good inside game," Ruff commented.