

C-J Sports

State high school officials snub Rochester

Executive committee awards hoop tourney to Glens Falls until '92

By Richard A. Kiley

Just when Section 5 coaches and officials thought it was safe to plan on the state boys' high school basketball tournament returning to Rochester some time soon, the executive committee of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association has snatched the annual hoop classic from the city's jaws.

During a meeting of New York's 11 sectional basketball chairmen last June, Rochester had been tentatively named the site for the 1990 state boys' basketball tourney. For the second time in three years, however, the NYSPHSAA executive committee overruled its basketball chairmen and granted a three-year contract to Glens Falls.

The annual high school hoop classic — a three-day gala featuring four schools in each of the four classes — has been held at the Glens Falls Civic Center since 1981.

The tourney will continue to be played there through 1992, following the decision set down at the NYSPHSAA meeting in Niagara Falls on Thursday, August 6.

In June, seven of the state's 11 basketball chairmen voted to bring the tournament to the War Memorial in Rochester in 1990 to 1992. The official tally was 7-3-1 in favor of the Flower City hosting the championships.

Most delegates, however, had a change of heart during the most recent meeting.

The decision came as something of a sur-



C-J file photo

The state high school basketball tournament won't be within Rochester's grasp until at least 1993, after the NYSPHSAA executive committee overruled its chairmen's recommendation to have the tourney held at the War Memorial.

prise, because it was believed that basketball chairmen and coaches were anticipating moving the hoop classic around, thus giving it more widespread exposure.

Those sentiments were shared by Catholic high school basketball coaches, who thought all followers of the popular sport should get

a first-hand view of the state's best teams and players.

"The tournament should be moved around; all major cities should get a crack (at hosting) it," said Ed Nietopski, who coaches the varsity basketball team at Cardinal Mooney High School in Greece.

"It's a documented fact that Section 5 has one of the most organized and well-attended (high school basketball) tournaments in the state," Bishop Kearney head coach Mike Ruff said.

Ruff added, however, that Rochester "is not the only basketball haven," and apparently state officials agree.

A similar situation — one in which the executive committee overruled a recommendation by its chairmen — existed back in 1984, when the state hoop committee elected to award the 1987-89 tournaments to Binghamton, only to be overruled by the executive committee.

One reason for the decision may be that state high school basketball officials are trying to establish a permanent home for the championships. For several years, other sports among the high school ranks have found homes in various New York communities, such as was the case with ice hockey in Glens Falls and wrestling in Syracuse.

Glens Falls, however, has exactly been a whirlwind of activity come tournament time. The city by far enjoyed its best attendance figures this past March, when nearly 19,000 fans turned out for a total of 12 games.

The rise in attendance may have swayed the executive committee to stick with Glens Falls, hoping that the trend continues through 1992.

SportS shorts

Defensive duel

In contrast to last August's offensively explosive affair in which 73 points were scored, this year's Eddie Meath All-Star Game was a defensive battle on both sides. The East squad, which was led by two touchdowns from Clyde's Calvin Johnson, scored the game's first 16 points against the West stars on the way to a 16-6 victory at the University of Rochester's Fauver Stadium.

The win gives the East a three-to-two game edge in the five-year-old series.

Offensively, the game was a far cry from last year's 49-24 East triumph, in which five of the 11 touchdowns covered 49 yards or more. Johnson's touchdown runs covered a mere five yards total — the first run from the one-yard line and the second from the four-yard line. The two scores came after Robert Grims (Penfield) had given the East a 3-0 lead with a 22-yard field goal. The West's Rodney Griffin (Franklin) accounted for his team's only points when he found the end zone from four yards out.

Players from Catholic schools competing in the annual summer classic were McQuaid's Jason Jenkins for the East and, for the West, Joe Altobelli (Aquinas), John Bell (Mooney), Gregory Beoats (Bishop Kearney), Daniel Hawryschuk (Mooney), and Brian Mackey (Aquinas).

Realignment will create new challenges, rivalries for Notre Dame grid team

By Richard A. Kiley

The Elmira Notre Dame football team, a longtime slayer of many Goliath-like teams in Section 4 Class C, will now be doing battle with some new gridiron giants this fall.

Last spring's realignment of all football teams in Section 4 into eight divisions — a process which has been in the works for the past four years — will now provide the Crusaders with competition more suited to their size.

According to Notre Dame Athletic Director Mike Johnston, the realignment became necessary after smaller schools expressed reservations about "going head-to-head" with schools that are larger both physically and in number.

Johnston said the arrangement of new di-

visions — comprising teams from the Sullivan Trail Conference, the Independent Athletic Conference, the Southern Tier Athletic Conference and the Susquehanna League — will allow smaller schools to face off against comparable competition.

The realignment also took geographical locations into consideration and should cut down on teams' traveling expenses.

Yet the move does not necessarily mean the Crusaders will cruise through the upcoming season. On the contrary, head coach Mike D'Aloisio said he and his players have their work cut out for them, especially with several perennial Section 4 powers on the schedule.

"This will be one of the toughest schedules we've had in my seven years here," said D'Aloisio, whose Crusaders finished 4-5 last year af-

ter losing Twin Tier passing-record holder Jim Polcyn and standout receiver Dan Gizzi to graduation. "Chenango Forks is a perennial power, and Seton Catholic has been to the bowl four or five times in the past seven years."

Notre Dame will also battle Newark Valley, owners of one of the top winning streaks in the state, on October 10. The last time the two Section 4 powers met was back in "Mud Bowl '85." Newark Valley emerged from the game's arctic-like conditions with a 2-0 win. "We're still going to be playing established football programs," D'Aloisio said.

What the Notre Dame coach and his players won't be doing is spending their Friday nights and Saturday afternoons on a bus. Among forthcoming away games are short jaunts to Watkins Glen, Newark Valley, and Dryden.

"I still think these schools are more physical than Notre Dame though," said D'Aloisio, who is hoping to change that by implementing a new weight program at Notre Dame.

Although the Crusader coach admits he is not that familiar with some of the football programs he will see this season, he and his assistants have become acquainted with most of them through scrimmages and bowl games. "We don't have film on some of (the teams) so that might cause us problems," D'Aloisio said. "But it (the realignment) will build up new rivalries ... a lot of our kids have attended camps with kids on the schedule. And play-

ing teams like Edison and Watkins Glen gives you (geographical) bragging rights if you win."

D'Aloisio is hoping that the schools he is not that familiar with are scheduled toward the middle and end of the campaign, so he can get a chance to scout the teams beforehand.

Knowing that unfamiliarity among the newly realigned teams goes both ways, the Notre Dame coach will continue to use any and every play in the playbook, a philosophy that should send opponents into fits this season.

"We have over 400 offensive plays and, unlike other (high school) teams, we like to throw the ball 35 to 50 times a game," D'Aloisio said. "We felt that because of our size, or lack of size, that the passing game would be a great equalizer. We felt that we would do better by spreading out defenses ... isolating players one on one and then getting them the ball."

"Teams that haven't played us (consistently in the past) are going to have problems defending that."

D'Aloisio also uses 30 formations during the span of a game to confuse opposing defenses. Never one to back down to challenges, he is anxious to get the upcoming season underway. And with All-League quarterback Kevin Harney and potential Division I running back Bob Grosvenor returning, who can blame him?

"I just wish there was a cakewalk or two on the schedule this year," D'Aloisio said. "But if I have to play (traditionally) strong teams, this would be the team I'd play them with."

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