

## Sports

## Diocesan boys' soccer teams gearing up for second season

By Richard A. Kiley

A changing of the guard has taken place this season in the City-Catholic League as McQuaid's varsity soccer team has finally loosened Cardinal Mooney's six-year stranglehold on the league crown.

Now Dan Schied's Knights, who defeated Paul Forte's Cardinals twice by identical 3-1 scores this season, must deal with being highly touted — just like Mooney has been for the past six seasons.

Only recently have Schied and his Knights (14-2, 8-0 league) really drawn increased attention to the soccer program at McQuaid, which in the past has been more recognized for its basketball and football teams.

"(The attention) hasn't really hit us until recently," Schied said. "But I tell them (his players) that we can always do better."

What Schied means is that McQuaid — which is ranked in the top 15 in the New York state high school soccer poll — still has a little way to go if it wants to beat Arcadia and Pittsford Mendon, to which the Knights lost earlier in the season.

Still, the Knights will be one of the top seeds in the upcoming sectional tournament, which gets underway next week. This will be the second year in a row that Section 5 will use a World Cup format, in which 12 teams will be broken up into three groups of four, and the top three teams as well as a wild card will advance to the tourney's semifinals.

Schied believes his club will benefit from the format, especially if the players have some post-season jitters.

"All in all, it's a better way to go," Schied said. "It gives you at least a second shot if you lose the first game. I think it's a much better way to go."

Things have been going very well for Schied, who took over the varsity program after coaching the JV to a perfect season last fall. The Knights have been finishing off teams by creating and taking advantage of opportunities.

"This team creates more (opportunities) than any McQuaid team in the past," Schied said. "We've been fortunate. In a few games we've had this year, the breaks have gone our way."

**PAUL FORTE AND** his Cardinals (9-6-1, 6-2 league) haven't been able to say the same in this season. Their breaks have been mostly bad.

A few of those came against McQuaid earlier in the season, when two of the Knights' three goals went off of Mooney players and then crossed the goal line.

"We've taken our lumps," Forte said. "Some of our losses have come after we lost our con-

centration at critical points in the game."

And it seems like Mooney has paid for each mistake it has made this season. In losses to McQuaid, Hilton and Mendon this season, Forte's Cardinals didn't take advantage of the opposition's mistakes.

That's why Forte is impressed by what McQuaid is doing this season. "(McQuaid) takes advantage of the mistakes you make," he said. "Good teams do that."

The Mooney coach hopes his team's luck has changed. In recent games against Aquinas and Brighton, the Cardinals have shown an ability to come from behind. Against the Little Irish, Mooney scored the only goal of the game with :30 remaining on the clock to notch a 1-0 win, and the Cardinals came from two goals down to tie Brighton.

"With the exception of (a 3-1 loss to) Irondequoit, we've played quality soccer lately," said Forte, whose club has found itself in overtime four games this season. "We've got the talent ... We just have to play a solid 80 minutes."

**AQUINAS COACH** Emilio Monti watched his Little Irish (6-9, 3-4) play a solid 80 minutes against Mike Bianchi and Greece Arcadia, and they still lost. A head shot by Bianchi eluded Aquinas goalie Mike Compisi 4:30 into the match for the game's only goal in the Titan's 1-0 win at Aquinas Saturday, Oct. 17.

The breaks have also been few and far between for Monti this season — both on and off the field. The Little Irish have been slowed by injuries to players in key positions and only recently have been able to play at full strength.

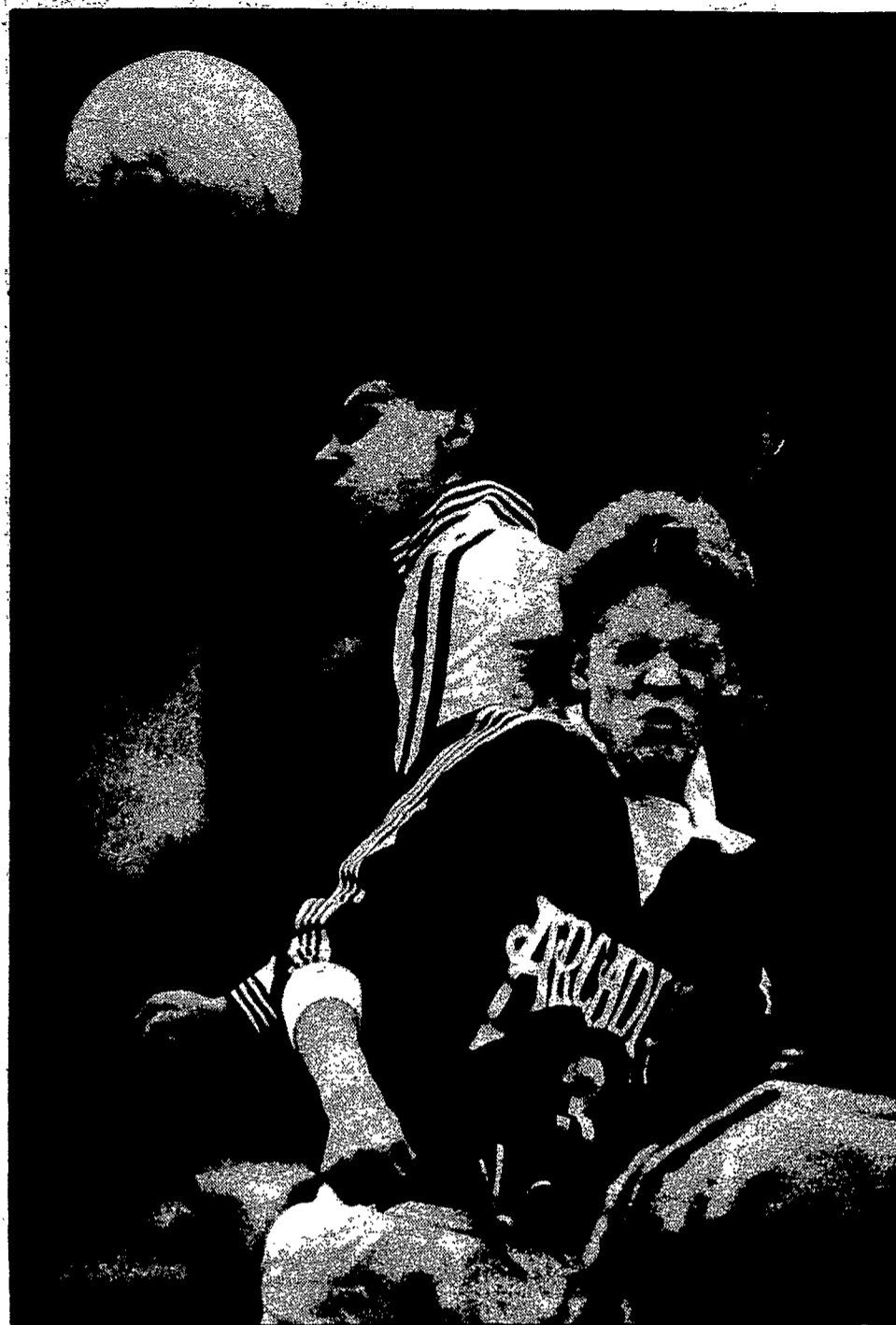
"We've played well the last five or six games since we got a few of the (injured) players back," said Monti, whose Little Irish fell to Arcadia in a Class B playoff game last October.

Against Arcadia last weekend, Monti saw his club control much of the action — especially in the second half. "We had some dangerous opportunities, but their keeper made some great saves," Monti said.

But like Forte's Cardinals, Monti's Little Irish have been victimized by some late goals against them. And if the Little Irish wish to get as far or farther than they did last fall, they will need to eliminate any late-game blunders.

"We're a better team than we were last year," Monti said. "This year's team has played a lot of good teams tough. The kids really have high spirits right now."

**OVER IN SECTION 4** Class C, the Crusaders are riding an emotional high after beating previously undefeated Elmira Free Academy, 3-2, Thursday, Oct. 15. Despite being outshot 33-5 and finding themselves down



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

Although the Little Irish played heads-up soccer for 80 minutes, they were unable to remove Arcadia from the undefeated ranks.

2-0 early in the game, Henry Ferguson's Crusaders got goals from Nik Mackler, Mike Ramich and Mark Donahue to nail down the biggest win of the season thus far.

Ferguson has been battling adversity all season, losing players for reasons ranging from injuries to disciplinary action and academic probation.

The ND coach hopes the win over EFA will overcome those problems. "That win has to give them confidence," Ferguson said. "EFA is really strong, and we know if we beat them we can beat anybody in the sectionals."

And that's exactly what the Crusaders did last season and hope to do again in the upcoming weeks.

## Girls' soccer teams look to gain post-season form as campaign winds down

### Private-Parochial teams look to better last year's sectional performances

By Richard A. Kiley

The champion of the Private-Parochial League will be determined this week when unbeaten Mercy (13-0) faces off against defending champion Mooney (9-4-1) in a pivotal soccer game for both teams.

In addition to deciding a league champion, the game will prove a good indicator for both Mercy coach Kathy Boughton and Mooney coach Scott Morrison as their teams ready for the upcoming sectionals.

Boughton's Monarchs also were scheduled to play Pittsford Mendon, one of the top girls' soccer programs in Section 5 this week. As if they haven't already made it clear, a win over the Lady Vikings would prove the Monarchs' Cinderella season was no fluke.

For Mooney, a win over Mercy could be what it needs to gain the confidence necessary to do something big in the sectionals.

Morrison said his Lady Cardinals appear to have weathered a storm they created for themselves after losing three games out of four. One of those defeats came at the hands of Holley, a respectable team but certainly not of Mooney's caliber.

"That was the icing on the cake," Morrison said. Since that loss, the Lady Cards have reeled off three consecutive 2-0 wins to return to their old form.

The Mooney coach has remedied the situation by tightening up the Lady Card defense and emphasizing short-term goals.

"Before our games now we talk about how many shots we're going to allow and how many goals we're going to try and hold them to," Morrison said.

In its last three games — against Livonia, Sam Fame's Bishop Kearney team, and Dick Hendricks' Nazareth squad — Mooney has blanked them all.



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

Greg McMaster's Aquinas team is determined to do something big in the upcoming sectionals.

Morrison's Lady Cards were facing a recently revitalized Aquinas team when the two Catholic schools battled each other on Tuesday, Oct. 20. Little Irish coach Greg McMaster believes his team is peaking at the right time. McMaster said his squad will bear little resemblance to the team that fell 4-0 to Mooney last September.

"The kids were intimidated by the Mooney mystique in that game," said McMaster, whose team is 7-6-1 thus far this fall. "We pretty much gave them the game; we weren't ready mentally."

Aquinas has been bolstered recently by the play of two players called up from its junior varsity. Using its JV as a feeder program is a luxury AQ didn't have when it was starting out in the girls' soccer scene.

"It's getting to the point where we now can compete against Mooney and Mercy now because we can keep a freshman on the JV until she's ready to handle (the caliber of play on) the varsity," said McMaster, who teaches at Cardinal Mooney.

Mary Radford and Kristy Prame, whose brother Tom has been finding his scoring touch for the McQuaid boys as of late, are two underclassmen up from the JV who have begun to come forward as scorers recently.

Overall, McMaster has an extremely young team. And although Aquinas is not having the season it had last year when it jumped out to an 11-0 start, the Little Irish youth may come into its own in the sectionals.

"We're playing really well right now; we've traded that physical play from last year for passing and more skilled play," McMaster said.

"We're hitting a nice stride."

**IN SECTION 4 CLASS C**, Steve Weber and his Lady Crusaders have been finding the going a little tough as the regular season comes to a close.

Injuries to key players, including starting keeper Tine Maloney, have slowed the progress Weber was hoping to see in the second half of the season.

"Injuries have hurt us," said Weber, whose team fell to last-place Bath while injuries were healing.

A lack of offense has also hindered Weber and his club, which is competing in only its second full varsity season.

"Our offense has struggled all year; speed has helped us get more shots, but we're not scoring on our opportunities," Weber said. "It's tough to learn how to score."

The ND coach has had to shuffle his lineup to keep opposing teams from scoring more. Lisa Boulas, a midfielder capable of scoring from anywhere, has had to move back to a full-back spot to stabilize the Lady Crusader defense.

On offense, however, the team has relied too much on Nat Kozlowski, who is finding herself draped with defenders in the latter part of the season.

Despite his team's offensive shortcomings, Weber believes his girls might be able to ride a strong defense far into the sectionals.

"We have a good chance because of our defensive play," Weber said. "We know if we can hold teams to two goals or less, we have a good chance of winning."