

Sports



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal
Martzloff (right) played a notch above the competition in wins over Rush and Webster.



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal
McQuaid Coach Joe Marchese got a workout in the last few minutes of his Knights' 62-59 win over Webster at the War Memorial.

Martzloff helps carry McQuaid to Class AAA title

By Richard A. Kiley

Watch out Worcester, Massachusetts. A potential earthquake-causing presence is headed your way, and could be rumbling there by fall. Its epicenter will be in the college gymnasium.

Scott Martzloff, McQuaid's 6-foot-11 center who will play basketball at Holy Cross next season, could be the best thing to come to the New England city since Bruce Springsteen.

Martzloff scored 33 points, grabbed 28 rebounds and blocked eight shots in wins over Webster in the Class AAA championship game and against Rush-Henrietta in the semis, as McQuaid won its second consecutive Class

AAA championship title last weekend.

Thanks to some late-game heroics by the mighty center, the second-seeded Knights (23-1) turned back top-seeded Webster, 62-59, in front of a sold-out War Memorial crowd on Saturday, March 5.

The game was somewhat reminiscent of last year's championship game, in which top-seeded Fairport roared out to an 11-0 lead on the Knights in the game's early minutes. McQuaid kept its composure and won the game.

This time around, it was the Knights who came out of the gate like a wild horse, jumping out to a stunning 19-2 lead over Webster.

The Warriors failed to make a field goal in the game's first seven minutes.

McQuaid Coach Joe Marchese wasn't fooled by the game's start. "That's what happens when you play such an emotional game," said a thrilled Marchese, who's a perfect 2-0 in Class AA title games. "I knew they weren't that bad a team, and we weren't that good."

He was right.

After Webster Coach Bill O'Rourke called his second time-out in the first quarter, his team responded with a comeback that probably won't be rivaled for some time. Webster pulled to within two points at halftime, 29-27, and actually took a 52-47 lead with seven minutes to go in the game.

That's when Martzloff — who finished with 18 points, 14 rebounds and five blocked shots — took the game into his own hands. The domineering center helped keep his reeling teammates from going down to defeat by icing a 10-foot jump shot in the lane with 1:15 left and converting two clutch free throws with :15 remaining, to propel the Knights past Webster.

According to Marchese, Martzloff's Mission began in mid-January.

"Scott was really down after the (Bulldog Booster) tournament in Syracuse," Marchese added. "He was feeling low, but then he came to the realization that this was his last year. He knew then he'd have to get the job done.

"Since then he's become so much more mature, more confident. He wants the ball now and he's showing his determination," the coach continued.

Martzloff may show his McQuaid teammates the road to Glens Falls as well. The Knights will play Hamburg Frontier (Section 6) in the state Class A quarterfinals at Erie Community College South this Friday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m. Frontier defeated Williamsville North, 62-57, in the Queen City Saturday night.

Ironically, the Knights have already seen Frontier this season — at the Bulldog Booster Tournament last December 30. McQuaid defeated Frontier, 63-47, in the consolation game of the tourney.

The Knights looked as if they would get everyone and the waterboy into their game against Webster, until the Warriors battled back.

Villanova-bound Greg Woodard, who was named the tournament's most valuable player for the second consecutive year, spurred McQuaid's early run by scoring 10 of his game-high 21 points — to go along with 11 rebounds — in the first quarter. The McQuaid student body was in a frenzy.

But the game's complexion changed dramatically thereafter as Webster took charge with its balanced scoring and stifling pressure. Bill Mason (15 points), Chuck Blackmon (14) and Sean Hickey (12) were all part of the comeback

that enabled Webster to trail by just 29-27 at the half.

The Warrior run silenced the McQuaid student body. "It was dead quiet in the locker room at halftime," Marchese said. "The guys were down because they squandered a lead in such a big game."

The game was never separated by more than five points in the second half. Moments after McQuaid managed to take the lead after trailing, 52-47, a steal by Blackmon and a subsequent three-point shot gave Webster a 59-58 advantage.

Martzloff's jump shot then gave his team a 60-59 lead, before he nailed two big free throws with :15 left. O'Rourke tried to ice the McQuaid center by calling a timeout after Martzloff made the first, but the cool senior swished the second shot as well.

Jay Gangemi contributed to the win with 13 points, six assists and three steals. Drew Henderson, who transferred this season from Harley Allendale-Columbia, added 10 rebounds and blocked four shots.

MCQUAID ADVANCED to the championship game with a 69-48 win over No. 3 Rush-Henrietta at the War Memorial on Wednesday, March 2. The Knights blew open a tight game in the second half, outscoring the Royal Comets 42-25 during the final 16 minutes.

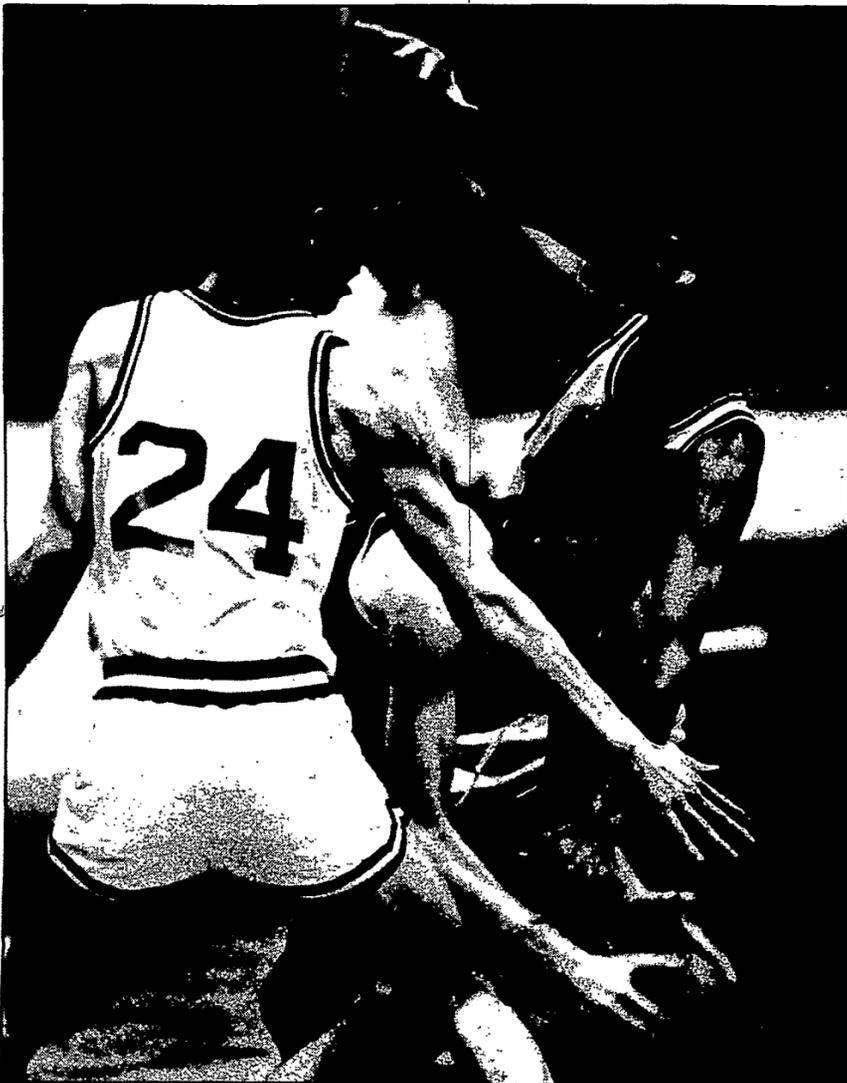
McQuaid's success in the second half came after it began to solve Rush-Henrietta's press, but the game's turning point came at 6:48 with the score at 27-23. After picking up his fourth foul, Rush's Pete Buntich was assessed a technical for apparently disputing the referee's call. A few moments later, Rush-Henrietta Coach Jim Cox was given a technical foul for disputing the call. Woodard iced all four free throws and a turn-around jump shot in between to finish an 8-0 run to put the Knights ahead by 12 points.

Rush pulled to within 36-30 at one point, but Woodard was perfect on a three-point shot from the wing and tipped in a rebound of shot from Reggie Wade to make the score, 45-32.

Woodard led everyone with 27 points — to go over 500 points for the season — but it was Martzloff who seemed to inspire his teammates when the game's pace was being dictated by Rush. The McQuaid center scored 11 of his 15 points after halftime. He also grabbed 14 rebounds, blocked three shots and added three assists.

On several occasions, Martzloff dribbled the ball upcourt to break Rush-Henrietta's pressure. But his real moment came with :46 left when his resounding slam let Rush know that the night belonged to McQuaid.

Woodard, Martzloff and Henderson all made the all-tournament team, as did Webster's Blackmon, Hickey and Mason.



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal
Webster's press, shown here giving McQuaid's John Kelly some trouble, enabled the Warriors to make a game of it against the Knights.

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