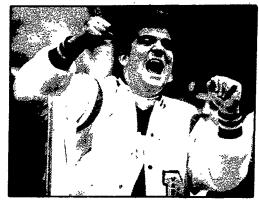
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Sports

McQuaid dumps Liverpool to take state



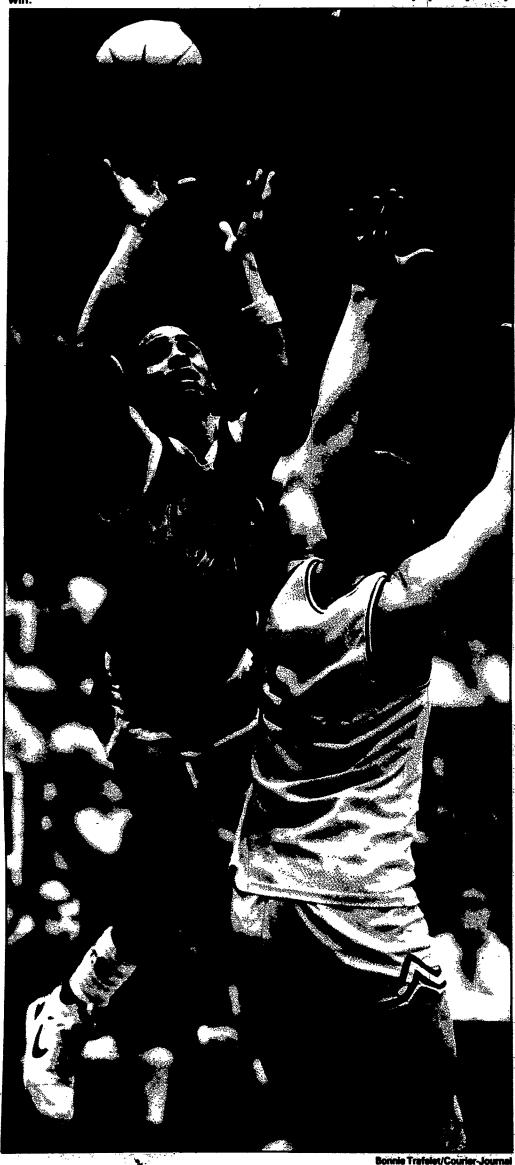
Mike Tobin, a senior at McQuaid, likes what he sees during the Knights' title-clinching win.

By Richard A. Kiley

For the McQuaid Jesuit basketball team, yet another piece in the puzzle has been put neatly into place.

Avenging their only loss of the season thus far, the Knights took the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Class A championship with a convincing 77-67 victory against Liverpool of Section 3 in front of 2,684 fans at the Glens Falls Civic Center last Sunday, March 20.

And they did it despite playing most of the game without two of their most imposing players. Scott Martzloff and Drew Henderson, two thirds of a front line that would give some Division 1 college teams trouble, played sparingly in the championship game after both came down with flu-like symptoms just days



before McQuaid's big weekend in Glens Falls.

Greg Woodard was his usual invincible self, scoring 31 points — including 14-for-17 from the free-throw line — to earn the tournament's most valuable player award. The Villanovabound Woodard had poured in 25 points the night before, as McQuaid defeated Saratoga, 76-62, in the semifinals of the Class A tourney. The 6-foot-6 senior now has 615 points for the season.

Jay Gangemi also turned in two more stellar efforts, scoring 19 points against Liverpool and 15 against Saratoga to also earn a spot on the all-tourney team.

Still, playing much of the championship game without his 6-11 center and 6-8 power forward was enough to make Marchese a little queasy himself.

"Scott and Drew were so sick, they really needed to be rested," said the McQuaid coach, who has now guided the Knights (26-1) to their first-ever Section 5 title and state championship after just two seasons at the helm. "The kids really reached inside themselves."

McQuaid, which is the first Section 5 team to ever win the Class A state public title, will return to the Glens Falls Civic Center this weekend for the Federation tournament. The Knights will play the Alliance of Independent Schools representative — defending tournament champion Our Saviour Lutheran of the Bronx (25-1) — at 7 p.m. Friday, March 27.

The New York City Class A public and Catholic champions will battle in the other semifinal game at 9 p.m. That game will feature the Bronx's St. Nicholas of Tolentine (27-1) — ranked the No. 1 high school team in the country by USA Today — and Brooklyn's Abraham Lincoln (25-0). The Federation championship game will be played at 9 p.m. on Saturday at the Civic Center.

In clinching the state large-school berth, McQuaid was able to withstand two secondhalf rallies by Liverpool (22-4) and prove its only loss of the season may have been somewhat of a fluke. In December at the Bulldog Boosters Christmas Tournament at Syracuse Nottingham. McQuaid was assessed a costly technical foul for having an incorrect number recorded in the scoring book. The Warriors, who also shot an impressive 12-for-24 from three-point range, went on to defeat the Knights 74-73.

"It's kind of funny the way all the pieces of the puzzle came together when you look at the total picture," said Marchese, who improved his career record to 47-3. "It all came together perfectly ... To avenge our only loss really felt great."

Martzloff and Henderson were feeling anything but great against Liverpool, forcing Marchese to go to his bench early and often. According to his coach, Martzloff missed two days of school last week and wasn't able to practice the Friday afternoon before the semifinal against Saratoga.

Henderson's condition worsened over the weekend. And even after both players were given the OK to play by a doctor, Marchese knew he would need a big effort from his bench.

He got it.

Reggie Wade, McQuaid's flashy junior guard who could most likely start on most other Rochester-area teams, came in and scored 12 points for the Knights as he periodically relieved Martzloff and Henderson of their inside duties.

Wade's offensive success was dwarfed by his defensive play, however. His unenviable job was to try to shut down Tom Furr, whose 17 points the day before — including four three pointers — helped oust Hempstead of Long Island from the tournament. Wade held the Liverpool senior to four points on 2-for-7 shooting.

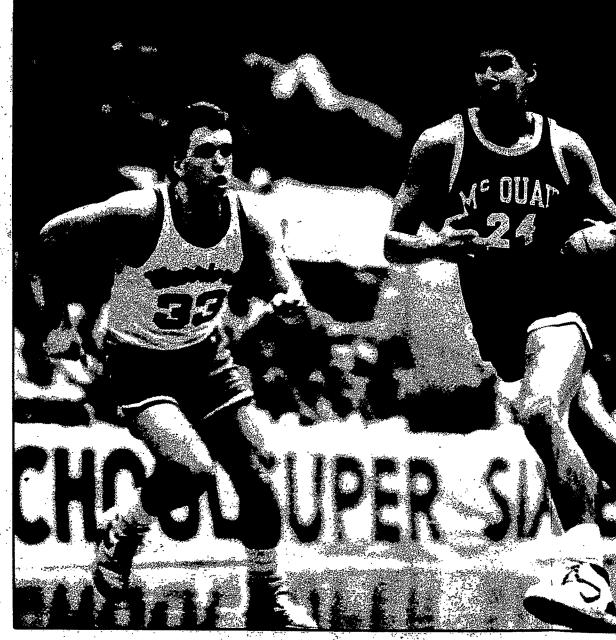
"We knew we had to stop (Furr) to be successful," Marchese said. "Reggie Wade did a great job against him; (Wade) played two great games for us."

The Knights' coach was full of compliments for all his reserves, who picked up the slack, as Martzloff and Henderson alternated in and out.

"I can't say enough about these kids; the job that Matt Parrinello did handling the pressure when they tried to press us was just fantastic. They didn't get many turnovers ... He did a decent job."

Woodard and Gangemi were the two white Knights for McQuaid even as the team struggled early. With just more than five and a half minutes remaining in the first half, McQuaid led by just 20-18, but the return of Martzloff from his rest on the bench seemed to spur the Knights. Woodard scored 17 points in the first half, and Gangemi tallied 11 to give McQuaid a 38-33 halftime lead.

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Reggie Wade came off the bench and played two strong games for McQuaid.

McQuaid's Greg Woodard, shown here driving past Liverpool's Jeff Lannier, whe named the state tournam