

Sports

Our Saviour Lutheran ends McQuaid's season

By Richard A. Kiley

With four minutes remaining in the second quarter of their Federation Tournament game against Our Saviour Lutheran Friday, March 25, the McQuaid Knights looked invincible, leading 36-22 before 1,810 impressed — and maybe a little surprised — fans at the Glens Falls Civic Center.

McQuaid seemed to be a mere 20 minutes from a victory over the defending Class A Federation champion — just 20 minutes from advancing to the Class A final game and a crack at St. Nicholas of Tolentine, ranked the nation's top high school basketball team by *USA Today*.

Unfortunately for the Knights, they actually were 20 minutes from defeat.

That's when Danny Tirado, the Bronx team's flashy 5-foot-7 point guard, took the game into his own hands. Tirado changed the game's momentum with a running three-point jum-

per just before the halftime buzzer, and then handed out nine of his tournament-record 15 assists in a stirring second-half comeback. Our Saviour Lutheran ended McQuaid's hopes for the overall state boys' Class A title with an 80-73 win.

Tirado's play was sometimes capricious but in the end brilliant. His second-half heroics, combined with a defensive switch that helped hold Greg Woodard to four points over the final 16 minutes, spelled doom for McQuaid (26-2). Joe Marchese's Knights entered the game as the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Class A champion, after winning their second consecutive Section 5 Class AAA championship.

A junior in his final season of eligibility on the court, Tirado mesmerized the Knights and the fans with an array of look-one-way-pass-the-other plays and fancy dribbling. His biggest play of the day came just as the second

quarter came to a close, when his jumper from more than 30 feet out trimmed the Knights' lead to 42-33.

Tirado's buzzer beater seemed to inspire his teammates in the second half, and OSL went on a tear. The Falcons outscored the Knights 47-31 over the final two quarters, pouring in 30 points in the fourth period alone.

OSL coach George Booker opted to switch from a man-to-man defense to a zone in the second half in hopes of denying the ball to Woodard, who was the main contributor in the Knights' early surge. After the Falcons opened

the game with three unanswered baskets — on assists from Tirado, of course — Woodard went on a scoring tear of his own, on his way to 18 first-half points. The 6-6 forward was able to get off just six shots the entire second half, as he was held to four points, finishing with 22 for the night. No matter where the Villanova-bound senior roamed, he had a Falcon defender in his face.

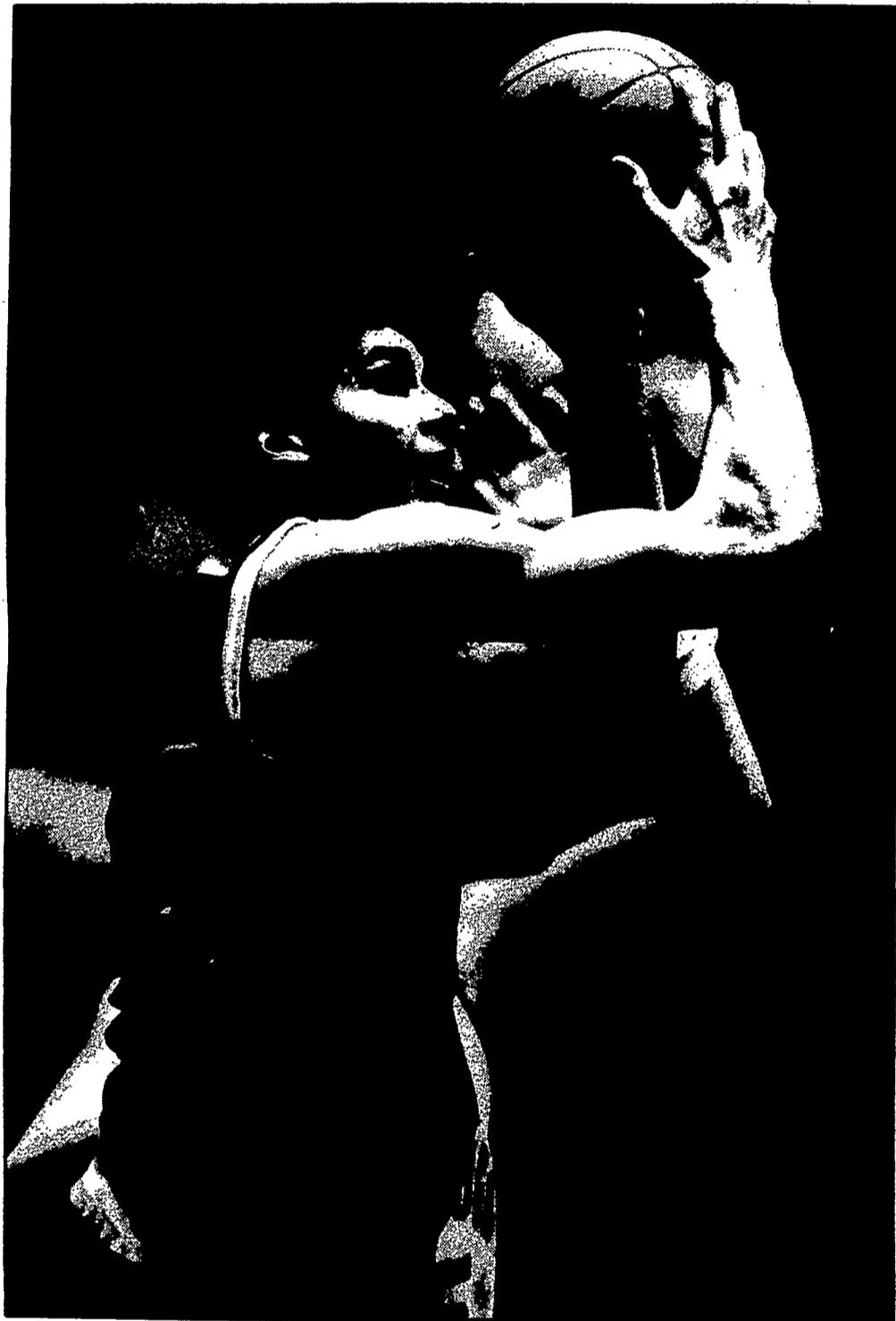
Our Saviour Lutheran, the top-ranked small school in the state according to the latest New York State Sports Writers Association poll, took the lead for good with 2:31 remaining in the game, when Tirado converted a layup to make the score 70-68. The point guard then dished out two more assists to big Tyrone Warren in the next minute, to up the margin to six points.

The OSL win overshadowed a sparkling performance by McQuaid's point guard, John Kelly. The quarterback of the Knights' offense scored a season-high 17 points and added eight assists. Included in his offensive arsenal for the night were consecutive baskets that gave McQuaid a 53-50 lead heading into the fourth quarter. He also nailed a clutch three-point shot in the fourth quarter to knot the game at 68-68. Kelly was 2-for-7 from three-point range. Overall, the Knights were 6-for-16 on three pointers.

Jay Gangemi, who will play at Johns Hopkins next year, finished his career in a big way, shooting 7-for-15 from the floor. Scott Martzloff closed out his career with six points on 2-for-6 shooting from the floor. Reggie Wade, who will be back next season for Marchese, also finished with six.

McQuaid out-rebounded Our Saviour Lutheran 36-34.

IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP game on Saturday. *Continued on Page 9*

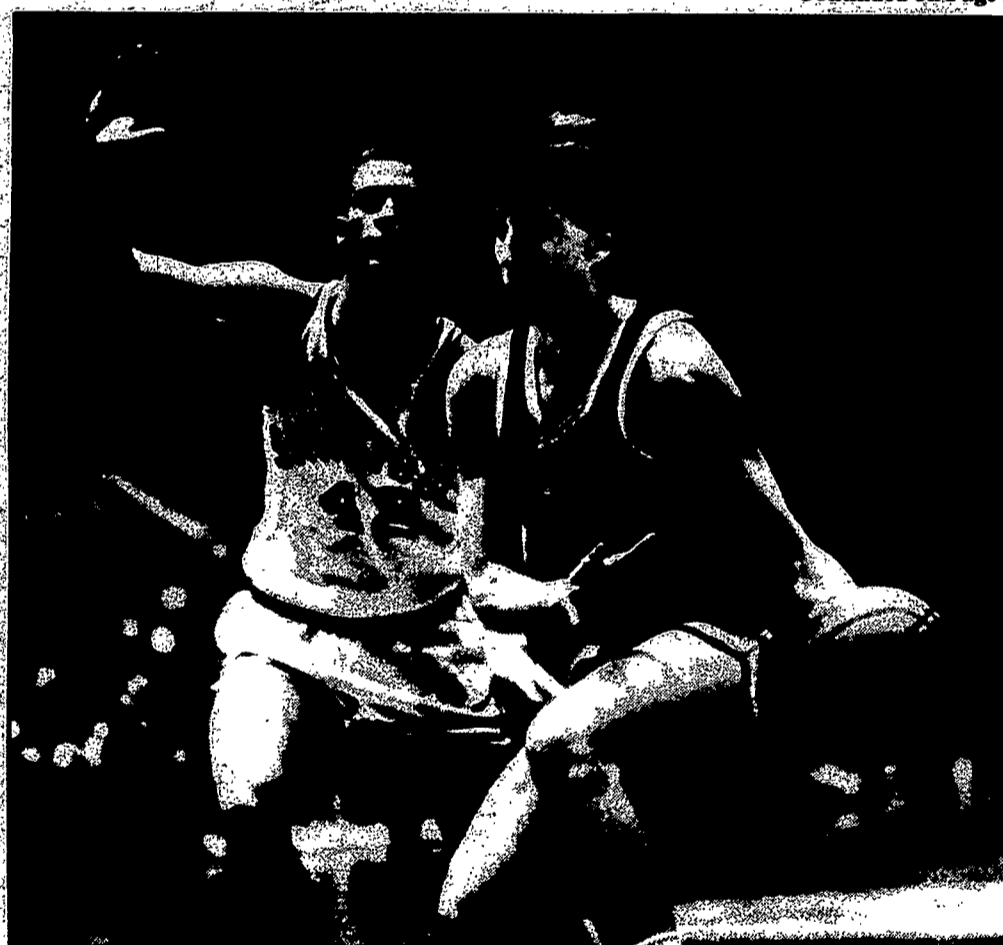


Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

Greg Woodard, who scored 18 points in the first half against Our Saviour Lutheran, was held to two baskets over the final two quarters.



Joe Marchese has now coached McQuaid to 47 wins in 51 games over two seasons.



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

McQuaid's John Kelly, shown here in a Class A state semifinal game against Saratoga, scored 17 points to go along with eight assists during the loss to Our Saviour Lutheran.

McQuaid

- December 1 — Defeated Gates-Chili, 63-50
- December 4 — Defeated Franklin, 88-64
- December 8 — Defeated Fair, 65-43
- December 15 — Defeated ...
- December 18 — Defeated ...
- December 22 — Defeated ...

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