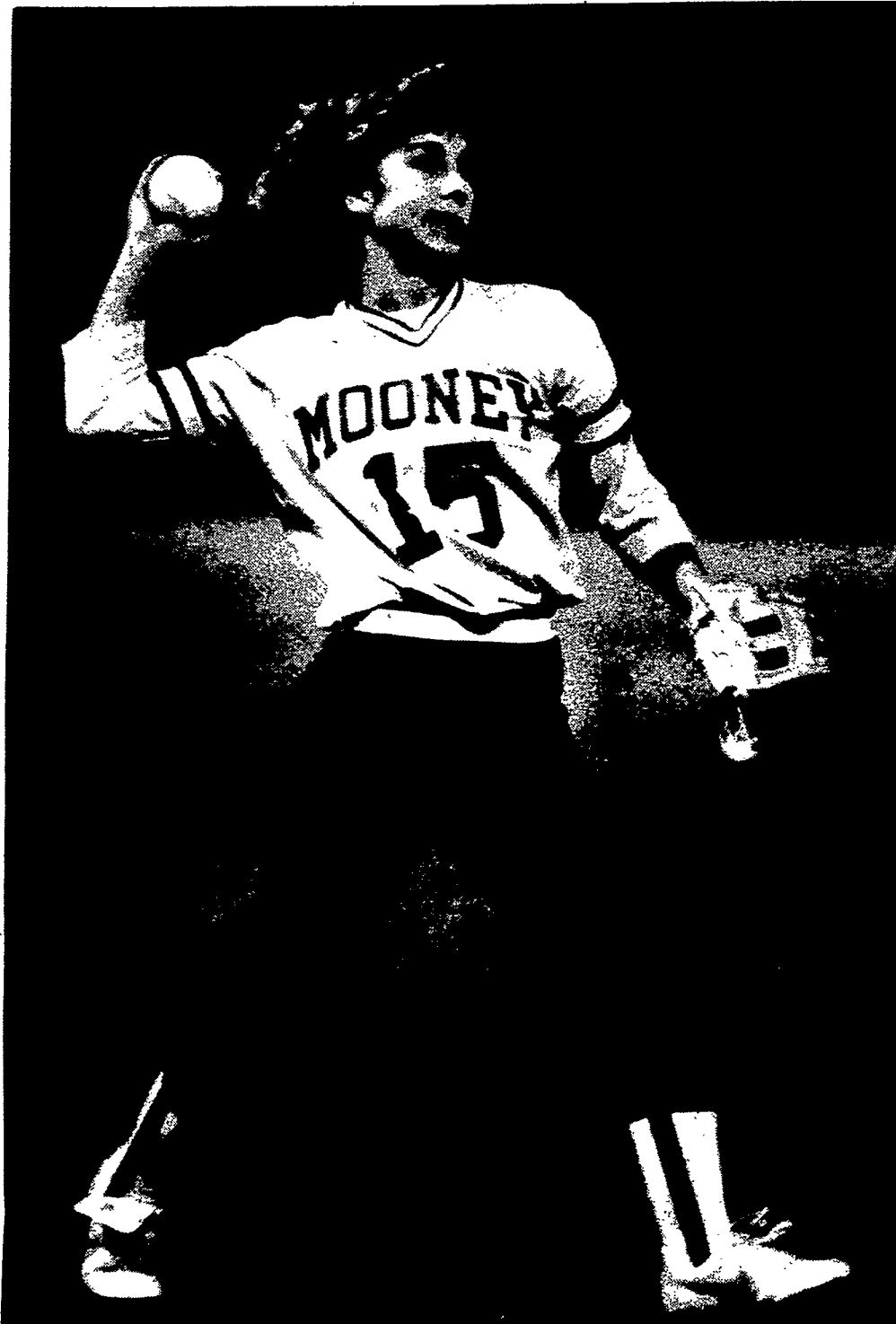


Sports

Avoca too much for DeSales in Class D final; Mooney falls



Mooney's Gia Cucinelli throwing to first base during Webster's 10-3 Section 5 Class AA semifinal win over the Cardinals at McAvoy Park.

By Richard A. Kiley

When Pat Luzzi took over the girls' softball program at DeSales High School before the 1987 campaign, he was simply looking to get the struggling program on its feet after the Saints had languished in mediocrity for several seasons.

The second-year coach accomplished that and then some this year, guiding DeSales' Saints to the Class D championship game against top-seeded Avoca — a sectional finalist seven of the past eight years.

Unfortunately for Luzzi and his team of predominantly underclassmen, their first trip to the final game together turned into a disappointing 12-4 loss to Avoca on Friday night, June 10, at Cohocton.

The win by the Tigers (17-1) earned them their second consecutive Section 5 Class D softball title. "They (Avoca) were a good team, but other than their pitcher, I thought we were evenly matched," Luzzi said after the game.

Avoca's pitcher, Christine Stewart, struggled early but had the stuff to keep DeSales (12-6) from mounting any sort of an attack after the Saints took an early 4-2 lead. DeSales scored one run in the first and three more in the third, but that was before Stewart took control. She allowed just three DeSales hitters to reach base after the third inning.

"She moved the ball around real well; she combined good control with good speed," Luzzi said. "You can tell she's been well coached over there."

DeSales pitcher Danielle Boncaro was able to get to Stewart for two triples and three RBIs in her first two at bats, but — with the exception of Tara Brague's one RBI — the rest of the Saints were not able to muster anything against the Avoca pitcher.

The loss ended what was an outstanding softball season at DeSales. The Saints finished third in the rugged Finger Lakes West Division, and came from behind in two of their three wins in the post-season.

What is even more impressive is that DeSales accomplished all it did with a relatively inexperienced team. Luzzi loses just three seniors — Carin Caravita, Stacy Marsteiner and Moira Connolly — to graduation this June, and he will have seven starters returning from this year's sectional runner-up next spring.

"They're already talking about getting to the finals next year," Luzzi said. "We hope to continue what we started this year."

Luzzi's Saints advanced to the Class D championship game with a 14-12 win over Bel-

fast at Cohocton on Wednesday, June 8.

Tara Brague smashed a three-run home run, and Boncaro scored two runs during the semifinal win.

DeSales, which scored eight runs on wild pitches, trailed 5-2 after the first inning as Boncaro experienced control problems of her own. She settled down, however, and Brague's three-run homer pulled the Saints even.

DeSales jumped out to a 14-7 lead heading into the bottom of the seventh inning, before holding off a late rally by Belfast to win by two.

Boncaro, Connolly and second baseman Tricia Long were named to the All-Tournament team.

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One bad inning kept the Cardinal Mooney girls' softball team from returning to this year's Section 5 Class AA championship game for the first time in four years.

No. 2 Webster (21-1) used an eight-run third inning to thrash the third-seeded Cardinals, 10-3, at McAvoy Park on Tuesday night, June 7.

The main culprit for the Warriors was Melanie Lippa — a former standout for Bishop Kearney back in 1986. Lippa, who transferred to Webster from Kearney last year, cracked a three-run home run to highlight the big inning for the Warriors. The Webster second baseman went 3-for-4 and also scored two runs for the Warriors.

"She's a good ball player, but Webster was beatable. We were just too busy beating ourselves," Mooney coach Paul Forte said.

Mooney pitcher Noelle Feeney was victimized by poor fielding behind her as eight of Webster's 10 runs were unearned.

"We hit the ball well — very well, but against them (Webster) you can't make any mistakes," said Forte, who took over the varsity program from Joette Abbey this spring. "(The errors) were relatively easy plays. It was like a snowball rolling down the hill ... we just couldn't stop it."

Liz Furey was one of the few bright spots for the Cards. Playing for right fielder Cindy Shalenberger, who is out with a broken hand, Furey smashed a second-inning home run to left-center for Mooney. In all, the Cardinal right fielder accounted for two of her team's three runs.

Webster pitcher Liz Helbig, who struck out three out of the first four batters she faced, held Mooney to five hits. In all, she struck out six and walked two Cardinal batters as she raised her record to 16-1 for the season.

Coaches tab players for all star game

By Richard A. Kiley

Players have been tabbed for the City-Catholic League Exceptional Senior all-star game, which will be played on Thursday, June 16, at 5 p.m. at Silver Stadium.

Seven players from McQuaid Jesuit and four from Bishop Kearney lead the East Team, which will be coached by Knights' mentor Tim Jordan and Franklin High's Bill Andrecolich. The seven McQuaid standouts are first baseman Todd Tonucci, third baseman Steve Peacock, infielder Steve Schott, outfielder Keith Boeck, outfielder Bob Wynne, pitcher Steve Wilmarth and pitcher John Baxter.

Brian Rice, Scott Thompson, Brian Reed, and Paul Viola were named from Art Carli's Fighting King team.

Reyes DeJesus (Franklin), Marty Hardisky (Monroe), Ramon Diaz (Monroe) and Oligaro DeJesus (Monroe) round out the East Team.

Four players each from Aquinas Institute and Cardinal Mooney were named for this year's West Team, which will be coached by Jefferson's Jim DeBell and Wilson's Steve Benedetto.

Pitcher/outfielder Mark Chapman, catcher Chris Culver, pitcher/first baseman Brian Monteleone and second baseman Freddie Rogers were tabbed from Rich Pillitter's Little Irish team, while center fielder Dave Brescia, catcher Pat Corrigan, first baseman Rob Hrankowski and right fielder/pitcher Scott Quinlan were named from Ed Nietopski's Cardinal team.

Rounding out this year's West Team are Willie Pantoja (Jefferson), Mark Namirr (Northstar Christian Academy), Don Bourbonnais (Marshall), Mike Teixeira (Wilson), John Muhs (Edison), Alan Roides (Edison) and Bill Hogan (Edison).

The game featuring City-Catholic League players will be followed by a game between Monroe County League standouts at 7:30 p.m.

Exceptional seniors will be honored in a ceremony before the Red Wings play Denver on Sunday, June 19 — Father's Day. Free tickets to the game can be obtained through Castle Hi-Tech Chemicals, participating Rochester-area merchants and high school athletic offices.

McQuaid's 3,200-relay team wins big at states

It appears the sky is the limit for the McQuaid 3,200-relay team.

At the New York State Public High School Athletic Association championships in Baldwinsville last weekend, the Knights' relay team of Chris Cusack, Chris Adin, Scott Romanowski and Brad Sumner finished in 7:50.16, nearly six seconds faster than second-place Somers' John F. Kennedy of Section 1 (7:56.06).

Romanowski finished his leg under two minutes (1:57.7) for the first time in his running career at McQuaid. Cusack (1:56.5) and Adin (2:00.2) had run strong legs of their own, enabling them to build up a huge lead for Sumner.

The same four runners finished fourth in the 1,600 relay about an hour later. Bob Bradley's

Knights finished the relay in 3:29.16. Prospect Heights (New York City) won the event in 3:24.46.

In the overall team scoring, Section 5 finished seventh with a team score of 48.7. Section 8 (89 points), Section 11 (65.5), Public Schools Athletic League (65), Section 9 (60.2), Section 1 (64), and Section 3 (51) were the top six teams.

Mercy's Laura Young (400 meters) and the Monarchs' 1,600 relay team failed to qualify for the states during qualifying races at Baldwinsville on Friday, June 10.

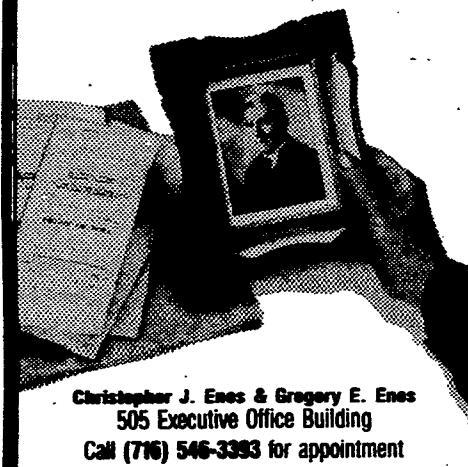
Section 5 girls finished fifth in team scoring with a score of 57. Public Schools Athletic League (92 points), Section 11 (81), Section 2 (65.5) and Section 1 (59) finished in the top four spots.

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